

visibility

A Parent's Newsletter

Volume 22, Number 2

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Sunny Easter Fun

On Saturday, April 15, VIPS-Louisville families came out in force for our first ever Breakfast with the Easter Bunny! Thanks to the talents of pancake master Phil Stevens, families could choose from chocolate chip or apple cider pancakes, link smoked sausage or sausage patties, and a variety of fresh fruit toppings, including blueberry, strawberry, and banana. There were Easter Egg hunts for different age groups, including four and over and three and under, plus a mini-egg hunt indoors for the youngest children. In addition, children made Easter crafts, including bunny ears and baskets and a frame for their picture with the Easter Bunny.

Thanks to Michele Renhager of UPS Brokerage for being our Easter Bunny, and to members of the Golden Club at U of L for their helping hands.

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Mike and Kayla Jenkins visited with the Easter Bunny.



Above: Logan Armstrong reached for an Easter egg, while dad Jeremy held his cane. Below: Jonathan (sitting) and Steven Miller look for treasures in the eggs Jonathan found.



Easter Fun

continued



Above: Our Pancake Master Phil Stevens is a veteran Pancake Breakfast Chef! Right: Little Hannah Jenkins got some help from mom Erin with a Bunny craft.



Right: Marva Malone clapped for daughter Jaylynn as she found and opened an egg.



The VIPS Parent Advisory Board

by Martha Hack, President

The Parent Advisory Board has been very busy the past couple months. We have been working hard on a new Parent Directory. The directory is a listing of children in VIPS and graduates of VIPS that filled out a directory sheet. The Directory will be mailed this summer to all VIPS families. Hopefully this will help families connect to other families.

Also we are working on some fund-raising events. Home Interiors Candles have always been a wonderful fundraiser for VIPS. So, this year instead of doing just a Christmas candle sale, we will also do a Spring Sale, ending May 1. If every family is able to sell just 5 of the \$6.00 candles, we will raise \$670.00!

Also, we are working on a Casino Night, which will be a really fun event with food, drinks, games, and an auction at the end of the night. This will be a group effort with the

VIPS Board of Directors, since I have asked them to help us. We will not be doing this fundraiser until January or February of 2007, but if anyone has ideas for a theme or auction items please call.

Planning more fun family events has also been one of our goals. On April 15, we had our Pancake Breakfast and Easter Egg Hunt. The Parent Advisory Board is also helping plan the Annual VIPS Family Retreat Weekend, to be held June 17 & 18. This is a fun weekend for the whole family with great speakers and group conversations. This year the Sunday breakfast will be a little different than 2 years ago. Bring your fishing pole and marshmallows, and get ready for a great weekend retreat. July is so hot we are planning a Family Bingo Night. This will be a great night for the whole family including food and prizes inside where it is cool.

The Parent Advisory Board will also be helping with the Texas Roadhouse Stampede for VIPS this year by selling Luminaries. These are small lunch-size bags containing a bit of sand and a candle that will line the route for the Stampede. We will be selling these before August 26 and at the race itself. We will need volunteers to help with getting the luminaries ready for the race, selling the luminaries at

the Stampede, and lining them along the bridge. We are hoping this will be a great success!! So we need all of our families' support.

If you would like to help with any of our fund-raisers or would like more information on the events coming up, please call Martha Hack at 762-1417 or Maria Jones at the VIPS-Louisville Office. We would love to have all of you there at all of our family-friendly events. If you have suggestions for family events or fund-raisers please let us know — we are open to new ideas, and the best person to know what you need and want to do as a family event is YOU!

(Other members of the Parent Advisory Board include Rhonda Burress, Garret Cawthon, Melanie Peskoe, and Jessica Whitmer.)

From a PAL's Pen:

by Jessica Whitmer

On November 17, 2004, my husband and I were overjoyed by the birth of our precious baby boy Ethan. The pregnancy was perfect with no complications whatsoever, and the birth was just as normal. A couple of minutes after Ethan was born, we noticed that he wasn't opening his left eye. The doctor assured us that everything was fine and that his eye was just closed because of the eye drops. A couple of days passed, and we were growing increasingly concerned because that left eye still hadn't opened, but we were still assured that everything was fine. It wasn't until a week later that we learned of Ethan's rare eye condition known as Microphthalmia. My husband and I were shocked and devastated to hear that Ethan would never have vision in his left eye. After grieving for a few days, we knew that we couldn't just sit back and feel sorry for ourselves, but that we had to look for ways to help Ethan and to make his life as "normal" as possible for a single sighted child. This is where VIPS and PAL come in.

When Ethan was just a few weeks old, I contacted VIPS to see what types of services might benefit Ethan. I was invited to come and visit the PAL (Play & Learn) Class which was to meet the next day. At the time, I wasn't sure if I was ready to get involved with the group, so I waited a couple of weeks and decided to give it a try. When Ethan was just 6 weeks old, we packed up and headed to PAL class. I remember crying on the way to the class, because I was having to admit to myself that my child wasn't completely "normal" and that he was going to have to have some extra help and intervention. We almost turned around to go home, but

then I told myself that this wasn't about me, it was about doing what was best for Ethan.

After being in the PAL class for only minutes, I was so glad that we decided to come. Ethan and I were welcomed warmly by the PAL teacher, and also by the other parents. It was so comforting to see other parents with their children who were facing some of the same challenges I was facing. Just after the first visit, I gained a whole new respect for parents of children with any type of special need. When I left that day, I knew that this was going to be a great experience for the two of us.

Week after week, Ethan and I would show up for PAL, and he would sleep through the entire class. Even though he wasn't able to play because he was so young, it was so beneficial and therapeutic for me. I learned so many different techniques to use with Ethan at home. It was also great for me to watch kids who were at other developmental stages so that I could know what to expect next. The greatest thing that I gained from PAL was the opportunity to talk to other parents who are having similar obstacles with their children. Wednesdays were always the highlight of our week just for that chance to interact with the teacher and other parents.

Ethan is now 16 months old and is one of the "veterans" of the PAL class. He absolutely loves to come and has so much fun playing with the other children. It's been such a joy to get to watch him transform from the adorable little baby who used to sleep the whole time to this curious toddler who is into everything in the PAL room! We have been so blessed to have VIPS and PAL as part of our weekly routine. Ethan has made such amazing progress, and you would never be able to tell by his development that he only has one eye. We credit much of his success to VIPS and the PAL class.



Ethan really enjoyed his pancakes at the Breakfast with Easter Bunny Party.

Early O&M

by Kelly M. Brown, Early Interventionist and O&M Specialist, VIPS-Louisville

Orientation and Mobility encompasses many aspects of a visually impaired child's early life. The motivation to move is the driving force behind early movement activities and catapults children into the exciting world of learning through exploration. From infancy and beyond, children need positive experiences in a secure environment that encourage interaction and exploration with their world. Parents play a key role in providing these early encounters with learning. Here are some ideas of activities to do with your child at various levels of their development to encourage skills related to Orientation and Mobility.

Infancy/Toddler Years

- ◆ Locate/Touch body parts; 1st your child's mouth, 2nd another person's mouth, 3rd a doll or stuffed animal's mouth.
- ◆ Touch various parts of your child's body with different textured fabrics or a feather and name them as you do. Let your child do the same to you.
- ◆ Sing songs/play games like "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes," "This Little Piggy," "Do Your Ears Hang Low?"
- ◆ Introduce and reinforce positional concepts constantly throughout your day, "Let's take your dress off," "Time to get in the bathtub," etc. Additional concepts include: over/under, up/down, on top/bottom of, left/right, in between, high/low, etc.
- ◆ Go on walks frequently with your child. When she is a baby, carry her against your body in a front pack carrier. This way, she begins to feel the natural movements our bodies make when walking. As you transition from a stroller to your child walking independently, point out down slopes, up slopes, curbs, sidewalk, grass, etc. Let your child push a doll in a baby stroller, a toy lawn mower, etc. These are great pre-mobility devices that help locate obstacles that might cause her to trip. It should also foster a greater sense of security in unfamiliar environments.

Preschooler Years

- ◆ Create home-made obstacle courses with pillows, empty boxes, blankets, etc. and have your child go through them.

- ◆ Make a tape recording of real environmental sounds and have your child identify them. Ideas could include a car horn honking, the potty flushing, the microwave timer going off, the water running, etc. Begin with simple sounds and progress as he is able.
- ◆ Take blanket rides over different surfaces and outside.
- ◆ Play dress-up and reinforce clothing and body parts (e.g. "this little soft hat goes on top of your head").
- ◆ Play hide and seek...make sounds so he can find you, and encourage sound localization skills.
- ◆ Provide more chores/tasks for him to help with around the house (especially those that involve movement).
- ◆ Play Red Light/Green Light.
- ◆ Do yoga for kids (with adult modeling).
- ◆ Put on music with a strong beat, and dance to it.
- ◆ Continue to venture out in the community often. Tactually explore the bark and leaves of a tree, mulch, a flower, ect. Take advantage of all the opportunities to learn, even when it takes extra time.

Ultimately, the goal is to help your child become a skilled, age-appropriate traveler with a deep understanding of concepts and situational experiences to draw upon when on new adventures. The key to success with preschoolers is strong family support and play. With these two components consistent in the early years, your child will love to learn and explore the world.



Kelly helps Chloe Yussman explore a tactual painting of a clown in the VIPS hallway.

The Best Kept Secret at VIPS

by Melinda Atkins, Education Coordinator

The best kept secret at VIPS is the Parent Libraries at each of the VIPS' offices, and it's a secret we're happy to share with you.

In Louisville we are so excited to have a place where parents can come and get all types of information and practical strategies for parenting a child with visual impairments. Parents often have questions about their child's eye conditions and spend a great deal of time looking for information that is pertinent to their child. That information is available through resource books such as the "NORD Guide to Rare Disorders" or "Understanding Low Vision," by Randal Jose, as well as many other reference books.

Interested in literacy activities for your child? Then the VIPS Parent Library is the perfect place for you. Besides the twin vision books that can introduce you and your child to Braille, there are story boxes filled with items for your child to hold as you read, such as a cookie as you read "When You Give a Mouse a Cookie," and many other stories that you can share with your children. VIPS is also a distribution site for the Louisville Talking Books Library where you can check out audiotapes of books by familiar children's authors, such as Karla Kuskin, Bernard Waber, and Dr. Suess. Another method of promoting literacy skills for your child is using the *Perkins Panda* (we have five). A series of audiotapes and large colorful books tackle topics for kids, including learning body parts or daily routines. Think of the fun you all can have holding your child on your lap as you share a story together.

VIPS has a video library that includes "Winnie the Pooh" and "Toy Story" on descriptive video to help your child fully appreciate the videos that many of their friends and siblings enjoy. The VIPS Library also has videos for parents and caregivers to learn more about visual impairments and how to teach their children about their world and how to make every day activities learning opportunities. The videos include those that VIPS has produced such as the "Can Do!" series or our newest series, "Growing My Way".

In the Lexington office, the library not only includes books, reference books, and videos, but also assistive

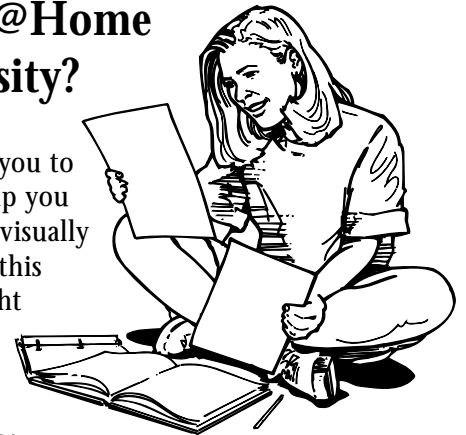
technology equipment! Thanks to grants, the Central Kentucky office is able to lend parents a variety of switches and switch-activated toys. You may borrow a switch to try it with your child before you invest money in the purchase of a switch. You can also borrow toys that work with the switch, cutting down on your toy budget.

Talk to your interventionist about items in the library of interest to you, or better yet, come by your VIPS office and spend some time exploring the library yourself. You are always welcome!

VIPS@HOME Parent University*

What Is VIPS@Home Parent University?

VIPS@Home Parent University is a way for you to gain information to help you raise your child who is visually impaired. You can get this critical information right in the comfort of your own home and at a time that is most convenient for you. The courses offered by Parent University are designed to provide important information in a relaxed and friendly manner. Parent University instructors are veteran VIPS parents, so as an added benefit, you can gain a "buddy" — or special friend who understands what you are going through because she or he has been there, too. Most VIPS@Home courses take about two hours to complete.



What Does It Cost?

Parent University is free. There is no charge for materials or for instruction. Parent University was started through a grant from the Humana Foundation.

* The grant for this program only covers the Louisville area. But we would like to expand statewide with additional funding.

How Do I Enroll?

Just call the VIPS Office and say that you are interested in Parent University and what course you want to take. It's that simple! You will be called by an instructor to set up a VIPS @Home class.

How Do I Get Ready for My Course?

You will be expected to be ready for your course when your VIPS@Home Parent University instructor arrives. Or, if you will be unable to keep your appointment, you are expected to call and cancel. Also, please make sure there is someone available to watch your child(ren) during the course so you can fully concentrate and get the most benefit from it.

Plan to be in a room of your house where materials can be spread out and a flip-chart can be used, such as in the kitchen at the table or in the living room at the coffee table. Minimize any distractions — turn off the TV or radio, don't answer the phone (if possible).

What Courses Are Available?

At this point, course offerings are somewhat limited, due to funding availability. However, the courses that have been developed are ones which VIPS believes offer you very important information to help your child both now and in the future. They are:

An Introduction to Braille

This course will use the video and handbook "Power At Your Fingertips," to give you a basic understanding of braille. You will learn how braille was developed, the braille alphabet and numbers, how to basically read braille by sight, and how to write braille, using both the slate and stylus and the braille writer. You will receive various handouts and the manual to keep.

Special Education: A Tour Through the Jungle

You will learn about IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, a federal law requiring a free and appropriate public education for children with disabilities, age 3 through 21. This will include the process for determining eligibility for special education services in the public schools. You will also learn the differences between the early intervention and the special education systems, what services are possible in the public schools, what placements are available for your child, how to draw up an Individual Education Program, and how to be an effective advocate for your child. You will receive a guidebook and handouts to keep.

Emergent Literacy

Your child is never too young for you to start working on literacy skills. This course will help you learn about the foundations of early literacy, the importance of reading to your child, and how to make story time come alive. The course will teach you about incorporating literacy opportunities into your daily routines. You will learn how to make a story box, adapt books, and create home-made books. You will also receive a guidebook and handouts.

Will More Courses Be Added?

More courses are being developed and should be ready by August. They will include:

Magical Moments: Making the Most of Everyday Experiences

In this course, you will learn how to turn everyday routines into fun and educational opportunities for your child.

Hands to Heart

This is an awareness level CPR training program, sponsored by Louisville Metro Government, Anthem, and the American Heart Association.

VIPS has just completed our first training for VIPS@Home Parent University instructors. They are an enthusiastic group of parents who are eager to share knowledge and support with other VIPS families. So the only ingredient we are missing with this project now is your participation! Give the VIPS-Louisville Office a call to learn more about VIPS@Home Parent University.

KY School for the Blind 2006 Summer Programs

June 18-30:

- Elementary Summer Enrichment Program for Students in Grades K-5
- Summer Enrichment Work Program for Students Ages 16-21 (graduates excluded)

July 9-21:

- Middle School/High School Summer Enrichment
- Continuation of Summer Enrichment Work Program for Students Ages 16-21 (graduates excluded)

For more information, contact KSB Programs Coordinator Darlene Middleton at 502-897-1583, ext. 243 or e-mail dmiddlet@ksb.k12.ky.us.

A Springtime Song

(Sung to the tune of "When the Saints Go Marching In.")

Oh, when the buds begin to bloom,
 Oh, when the buds begin to bloom,
 How I love to smell the flowers,
 When the buds begin to bloom!
 Oh, when the bees go buzzing by,
 Oh, when the bees go buzzing by,
 I'll be busy as a bumble,
 When the bees go buzzing by!
 Oh, when the frogs are hopping here,
 Oh, when the frogs are hopping here,
 I'll be jumping up for joy,
 When the frogs are hopping here!
 Oh, when the sun comes shining in,
 Oh, when the sun comes shining in,
 I'll be beaming like the sunshine,
 When the sun comes shining in!
 Oh, when the month of May is here,
 Oh, when the month of May is here,
 We will celebrate the sprintime,
 When the month of May is here!

SUMMER FUN for VIPS Children and Families

The 16th Annual VIPS Family Retreat Weekend

On the weekend of June 17 & 18, VIPS families will come together at the Kavanaugh Life Enrichment Center in Crestwood, KY, to play and learn at the 16th Annual VIPS Family Retreat Weekend. This fun-filled event is like a mini-vacation for the whole family, so mark your calendars now and plan to attend!

On Saturday during the Retreat, parents are treated to a fun and upbeat educational conference. Children who are four or over attend a weekend camp on the Kavanaugh grounds, while the younger children have a mini camp in Respite Care. Children may stay overnight so that parents have a break.

During the Parent Conference, there will be a Grandparents Panel and a session on Financial Planning. These will be followed by concurrent sessions during the afternoon; parents may choose to attend two out of a possible three sessions, including: individual financial counseling; a make-it and take-it workshop; and an activity where parents will wear glasses that simulate different visual impairments while they attempt to do typical preschool activities, like color or work a puzzle. There will be a Family Swim at the Aquatic Park, just a few miles away, where there are great swimming and water-play areas and super slides. In the evening, parents can choose between CPR training or a session on the wonderful online curriculum of the Texas School for the Blind. Then, on Saturday night, parents will be free to party or to just spend a little time alone. Families will be reunited on Sunday morning for a light breakfast and a Carnival, complete with pony rides and a bouncing pit.

The cost for this fun- and education-filled weekend is just \$35! So when your registration forms arrive, send them in right away. Space is limited and families will be registered on a first-come, first-served basis. You don't want to miss this great opportunity!!

VIPS-CK Summer Sensations

The 5th Annual Summer Sensations Summer Camp is set for June 6 - 8 at the VIPS-CK Office in Lexington. This 3-day camp provides a multi-sensory experience for all VIPS children. Not only will children enjoy music, they'll make crafts and do activities around a Hawaiian Luau theme. Watch your mail for more information, or give us a call if you have questions.

VIPS-Louisville Summer Enrichment

Once again, VIPS-Louisville will offer three different sessions of Summer Enrichment during the months of June, July, and August. *New this year will be a 2-week integrated experience at the Jewish Community Center, with VIPS children attending with sighted peers in a typical summer program.* These programs will be available to VIPS children who are in preschool, who will be entering preschool in the fall, or who have just graduated from VIPS. There is no cost to attend and lunch is provided. Limited transportation will be

available. Enrollment is limited, and children will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. If you have any questions, contact Maria Jones at the VIPS-Louisville Office.

**Session 1 — “Exploring the Jungle”,
June 19 - 23, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

The focus of this session will be the animal kingdom. We will explore animals big and small, wild and tame. There will be crafts, music, cooking and many other daily adventures to strengthen skills necessary for building independence. We will work on core concepts, pre-braille, O&M, and daily living skills.

**Session 2 — “Bugs, Bugs, Bugs!”,
July 17 - 28 (2 weeks), 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

This session will be held at the JCC and be taught by both JCC and VIPS staff. Campers will meet “Hungry Caterpillars,” “Busy Spiders,” and “Grouchy Ladybugs.” There will be lots of buggy art projects, music and fun. Campers will have swim time in the toddler pool or swim instruction with licensed instructors. The JCC is located near VIPS.

**Session 3 — “Safari Sensation,”
July 31 - August 4, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Children will engage in a variety of sensory experiences, exploring different textures, sights, and sounds of the many creatures that live in the jungle. There will be assistive technology, arts and crafts, stories and songs.



VIPS is pleased to welcome the following new children and their families into the VIPS program:

VIPS-Louisville

- Alex — 2 years old
Shepherdsville, KY
- Amber -- 5 months old
Louisville, KY
- Blake — 23 months old
Elizabethtown, KY
- Colin — 11 months old
Madison, IN
- Hannah — 13 months old
Elizabethtown, KY
- Skylar — 11 months old
New Albany, IN
- Trey — 2 years old
Bardstown, KY

Outreach

- Austin — 3 years old
Harlan, KY
- Blake — 10 months old
Corbin, KY
- Elijah — 2 years old
London, KY
- Marcus — 2 years old
Van Lear, KY
- McKayla — 2 years old
Cumberland, KY
- Riley — 18 months old
Williamsburg, KY
- Wesley — 9 months old
Blackie, KY
- Zavier — 9 months old
East Bernstadt, KY



New children to VIPS-Louisville PAL Class include Amber (above) with Mom Abby, Jontae (left), and Michael (below) with Mom Caroline.



CORRECTION:

In the last issue of VISability, the ages of four children were listed wrong. Their corrected ages are listed below. We apologize to their families for this mistake.

- Aiden of Goshen, KY, 10 months old
- Bella of Crestwood, KY, 10 months old
- Jontae of Louisville, 10 months old

Notes of Interest



Families can earn a computer by becoming involved in the Family Literacy and Adult Education Programs offered by local school systems. Contact your school system to find out more. In Jefferson County, you may call Emily Boseley at (502) 485-3892 or e-mail her at: eboseley1@jefferson.k12.ky.us.

New from American Printing House for the Blind — “SQUID Tactile Activities Magazine!!” While your child enjoys a variety of tactile activities, he or she will be honing skills needed for braille reading. The magazine includes puzzles, games, and brainteasers that foster: texture discrimination, systematic searching, shape identification, tracking line paths, pattern building and recognition, and understanding symbols. The premiere issue is \$45 and comes with an assortment of tactile activities sheets, in addition to the magazine. Catalog # 1-08862-01, available from American Printing House for the Blind, 1939 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, KY 40206, (502) 897-1583, 1-800-223-1839.

The International Children’s Digital Library includes a collection of international children’s books that reflect similarities and differences in cultures, societies, interests, lifestyles, and priorities of people from around the world. It is being made possible through a five-year project funded by the national Science Foundation and the Institute for Museum and Library Services. Checkout: www.icdlbooks.org.

Seedlings: Braille Books for Children has begun the “Keep Kids In Touch” program to encourage summer reading by providing 2 free braille books to registered children. This program is available only to children in the states of Michigan, Illinois, *Indiana*, Wisconsin, and Ohio.

Easy-to-put-on shoes for use with DAFO’s are available from Hatchbacks Shoes. Check out: www.hatchbacksfootwear.com.

Internet Resources for Special Children (IRSC) is a website offering the most up-to-date links for every disability, online special education magazines, and news articles dealing with special education. Check out: www.irsc.org.

Seedlings also has several new print/braille books for children, ages birth to five:

“*I Like It When*,” about a penguin parent and her child, # 934, \$7.00

“*My Clothes — Mi Ropa*,” features the names of clothing articles in English, Spanish, and Braille, # 935, \$6.00

“*The Napping House*,” a large board book, # 936, \$10.00

“*One Fish, Two Fish, Three, Four, Five Fish!*” a Dr. Seuss counting book, # 937, \$8.00

“*Touch & Feel Dinosaur*,” touch T-Rex’s tongue if you dare! # 938, \$7.00.

VIPS Board Honors Staff and Volunteers

On February 21, the VIPS Board of Directors held a reception to honor some very special people.

Sharon Bensinger was honored for her 21 years with VIPS as Co-Founder and Executive Director. It was difficult keeping this surprise from Sharon, who was actively involved in planning this reception to recognize the contributions of others. She said, “I knew something was going on, but I couldn’t figure out exactly what.” In his heartfelt address to honor Sharon, Dr. Tuck Tinsley, President of the American Printing House for the Blind, gave a retrospective on services for the blind in the United States, acknowledging Sharon’s compassion, dedication, and creativity in bringing VIPS into fruition to help the young visually impaired children of KY.

Sharon proceeded to honor *Melinda Atkins*, VIPS Education Coordinator, for her 20 years with VIPS. Melinda was VIPS second employee



Sharon with VIPS Co-Founder Dr. Sherri Moore.

and in her career with VIPS has visited many, many families, bringing them hope and knowledge to help their children grow and progress.

In addition, three VIPS Volunteers Extraordinaire were honored by Sharon and the Board. **Pete Laguens**, Director of Assets Protection for YUM Brands, Inc., was recognized for his years of dedication in chairing the VIPS/KFC Corporate Cup Golf and Tennis Tournament. Thanks to Pete's hard work, VIPS has raised over a half million dollars throughout the history of the tournament. **Ellen Prizant**, a past Board President, was honored for being Chairwoman of the Texas Roadhouse Stampede for VIPS over the course of its three year history. In addition, Ellen has coordinated all volunteers for the VIPS/KFC Golf Tournament. Finally, **Randy Witt** was honored for bringing the Governor's Cup Golf Tournament to VIPS. This exciting event raised over \$119,000 in it's first year for VIPS.

Each honoree received a "Shining Star" award and a plaque from the Mayor recognizing their contributions to Kentucky's children.

Thanks to Our Volunteers

For being just an incredible volunteer who is willing to perform any and all tasks that are needed, thanks to *Douglas Embry*.

For updating the VIPS website, thanks to VIPS-Louisville Dad, *Phil Seif*.

For helping with weekly VIPS-Louisville Play & Learn (PAL) Class, thanks to *Tracy Wright* and to Assumption High School students *Annie Noltemeyer* and *Lyssa King*.

For helping hands at REACH class, thanks to *Mary Dele Collins* for being such a dependable volunteer; to *Patty Johnson* for assisting with pre-braille activities and reading books to the kids; to *Matt Poppe* and *Jan Williams* for brailleing board and picture books for REACH and also helping in the classroom; and to *Dorothy Nolen* for the wonderful music lessons.

For offering VIPS-Louisville families information on O&M at the February Family Dinner, thanks to *Maury Weedman* and VIPS staff *Kelly Brown* and *Donna Brostek*.

For providing childcare, thanks to *Russell Biddle*, and *Annie Noltemeyer*. For bringing dishes to share, thanks to *Parent Board members Jayne Seif, Jessica Whitmer, and Maria Jones*.

For providing helping hands with PAL and REACH classes and the VIPS-Louisville Family Dinner the week of March 13, thanks to *Beth Andress*.

For helping with childcare at the VIPS-Louisville March Family Dinner, thanks to *Beth Andress* and *Greg and Russell Biddle*. For bringing dishes to share, thanks to *Parent Board members Marva Malone, Jayne Seif, Jessica Whitmer, Melissa Evers, and Maria Jones*.

For helping out with the VIPS-CK St. Patrick's Day Event, thanks to *Kaitlin Graff, Hillary Hadley, and Hannah Pauly*.

For replacing light bulbs and doing a variety of handyman jobs, thanks to *DJ Kelley*.

For creating items for VIPS-CK Welcome Bags on March 23, thanks to *Junior League of Lexington members Marcey Ansley, Sara Clark Davis, Jennifer Hurst, April Jackson, Christy McLellan, Joni Meade, Amy Meegan, Christi Nash, Joy O'Hara, Orla Rooney, Lee Stenger, Angie Straley, Jill Thomas, and Leeanna Webb*.

For translating many VIPS forms, the Parent Handbook, and the VIPS brochure into Spanish, VIPS-CK says "Bienvenida" (thanks) to *Anabelis Rodriguez-Chacon*.

For providing an awareness level of CPR training to VIPS-Louisville families on March 25, thanks to *Laurel Scott*.

For assisting with childcare during Parent University training at the VIPS-Louisville Office on April 11, thanks to *Chonna Camomot* and *Ashley Erwin*.

Assumption sophomores Annie Noltemeyer (left) and Lyssa King (right) have volunteered for PAL for several months.



THANKS TO OUR DONORS

Thanks to the following individuals and organizations who have supported VIPS with their donations over the past couple of months. These donations were received between February 7 and March 31, 2006. Please call the VIPS Office with any omissions or corrections.

General Donations

VIPS-Louisville

Aegon
 Arison Insurance Services, Inc.
 BB & T - Old Colony Insurance
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Bensinger
 Ms. Susan Berman
 Dr. & Mrs. Jerry Bizer
 Dr. & Mrs. Keith Brooks
 Mr. & Mrs. R. Clifford Browning
 Delta Dental Plan of Kentucky, Inc.
 Mr. & Mrs. Gino DeMarco
 Mrs. Maud Fliegelman
 Forget Me Knot Quilt Shoppe
 Global Compliance
 Jim Beam Brands
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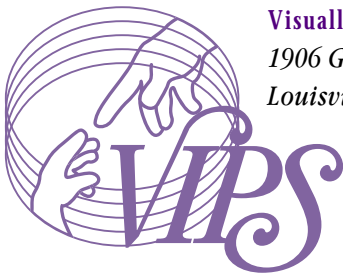
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Visually Impaired Preschool Services

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VISability is published through a generous grant from the *Linda Neville Foundation*.

Upcoming Events

Wednesdays

PAL Class for infants and toddlers and their parents will be held at the VIPS-Louisville Office, 10 a.m. Call Melissa Evers for more info.

Fridays

REACH Class for VIPS children who are 3-5 years will be held at the VIPS-Louisville Office, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Call Maria Jones or Barbara Kelley for more info. May 19 will be the last class for this school year.

Wednesday, May 10

VIPS-CK will hold our 3rd Annual Golf Outing at the University Club of KY.

Monday, May 15

VIPS-Louisville will hold Graduation for the Class of 2006 at Hikes Point Christian Church, 2601 Hikes Lane, 7 p.m. **(Graduates must arrive by 6:30!)** Come say good bye to our graduates and wish them and their families good luck in all of their future endeavors.

Saturday, May 20

Kathy Clause, a blind storyteller, and folklorist Doug Boyd will present a lively and humorous program at the American Printing House for the Blind, 1835 Frankfort Avenue, 11 a.m. Call 895-2405, ex. 357 to reserve your seat.

Monday, May 22

VIPS-Louisville will hold our 18th Annual VIPS/KFC Corporate Cup Golf & Tennis Tournament at Hunting Creek Country Club.

Tuesday - Thursday, June 6 - 8

VIPS-CK will hold Summer Sensations for VIPS children. For more information, call the VIPS-CK office at (859) 276-0335 or toll free at 1-888-254-6477.

Saturday - Sunday, June 16 - 17

The 15th VIPS Family Retreat Weekend will be held at the Kavanaugh Life Enrichment Center (see page 7).

Monday - Friday, June 19 - 23

The First Session of VIPS-Louisville Summer Enrichment will be held at the VIPS Office (see page 8 for details).

Monday - Friday, July 17 - 28

The Second Session of VIPS-Louisville Summer Enrichment will be held at the Jewish Community Center (see page 8 for details).

Wednesday - Monday, July 26 - 31

The 4th Bi-Annual Leber's congenital Amaurosis Conference will be held at the Cole Eye Institute in Cleveland, Ohio. For more information, go to www.tfrr.org or call (630) 978-0547.

Monday - Friday, July 31 - August 4

The Third Session of VIPS-Louisville Summer Enrichment will be held at the VIPS Office (see page 8 for details).

Saturday, August 26

The 4th Annual Texas Roadhouse Stampede for VIPS 5K rade will be run. **Save the date!!**

VISability is a bi-monthly publication of Visually Impaired Preschool Services, Inc. Please direct comments or suggestions to Sharon Bensing, Executive Director or Pauletta Feldman, Newsletter Editor. *Subscription cost is \$15 per year outside of Kentucky.*

Visually Impaired Preschool Services

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