



# The Visionary

## Helen Keller

Helen Adams Keller was born a healthy child on June 27, 1880 in a white, frame cottage called "Ivy Green." The illness that struck the infant Helen Keller, and left her deaf and blind before she learned to speak, was diagnosed as brain fever at the time; perhaps it was scarlet fever. As Helen Keller grew from infancy into childhood she was wild and unruly, and had little real understanding of the world around her.

**Helen Keller's new life** began on a March day in 1887 when she was a few months short of seven years old. On that day, which Miss Keller was always to call "The most important day I can remember in my life," Anne Mansfield Sullivan came to be her teacher. Miss Sullivan, a 20-year-old graduate of the Perkins School for the Blind, who had regained useful sight through a series of operations, had come to the Kellers through the sympathetic interest of Alexander Graham Bell. From that fateful day, the two—teacher and pupil—were inseparable until the death of the former in 1936.

Miss Sullivan began her task with a doll that the children at Perkins had made for her to take to Helen. By spelling "d-o-l-l" into the child's hand, she hoped to teach her to connect objects with letters. Helen quickly learned to form the letters correctly and in the correct order, but did not know she was spelling a word, or even that words existed. In the days that followed she learned to spell a great many more words in this uncomprehending way.

One day she and "Teacher"—as Helen always called her—went to the outdoor pump. Miss Sullivan started to draw water and put Helen's hand under the spout. As the cool water gushed over one hand, she spelled into the other hand the word "w-a-t-e-r" first slowly, then rapidly. Suddenly, the signals had meaning in Helen's mind. She knew that "water" meant the wonderful cool substance flowing over her hand. Quickly, she stopped and touched the earth and demanded its letter name and by nightfall she had learned 30 words.

Thus began Helen Keller's education. She proceeded quickly to master the alphabet, both manual and in raised print for blind readers, and gained facility in reading and writing. In 1890, when she was just 10, she expressed a desire to learn to speak. Somehow she had found out that a little deaf-blind girl in Norway had acquired that ability. Miss Sarah Fuller of the Horace Mann School was her first speech teacher.

Even when she was a little girl, Helen Keller said, "Someday I shall go to college." And go to college she did. In 1898 she entered the Cambridge School for Young Ladies to prepare for Radcliffe College. She entered Radcliffe in the fall of 1900 and received her bachelor of arts degree **cum laude** in 1904. Throughout these years and until her own death in 1936, Anne Sullivan was always by Helen's side, laboriously spelling book after book and lecture after lecture, into her pupil's hand.

This is just a glimpse into the remarkable life of Helen Keller and a reminder to us all that are many people who face the challenge of living with some type of disability. This tremendous challenge did not stop Helen Keller and we can help others overcome the challenges that they may be facing; all we have to do is take the time listen and lend a hand when needed.

Join a winning team today and lend a hand to those facing challenges that could be greater than any challenge you or I have or will ever face. It's so simple..... just give me a call at 642-6000 or email paulaf@blindcenter.org. It will make you feel so good, you won't regret it... and who knows, you might even have fun in the process!

**Come Join Our Team!**

*Paula A. Fike*  
Program Director



### Mission Statement

The Blind Center of Nevada assists blind and visually impaired persons of all ages in reaching their highest physical, social, intellectual, and economic potential. To achieve these objectives, there are three focus areas: personal development, social interaction, and meaningful employment

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# Interested In Volunteering?

Sometimes, one of the hardest parts of volunteering can be **finding** a volunteer opportunity that fits your personality. We created this comprehensive list to help you find the perfect match. There is much work to be done in many areas and you can be an important link in our strong chain of volunteers. We want your volunteer experience to be as valuable to you as it is to the Blind Center and the people we serve. We provide all necessary training for these and all positions.

- Activity Assistants/Leaders
- Arts & Crafts Leaders
- Bowling Team Assistants
- Computer Lab Mentors
- Cooking Class Instructors (Basic Cooking)
- English As A Second Language Teachers
- Fitness Instructors
- Low Vision Technology Assistant
- Maintenance/Repair Person
- Music Teachers
- Nutrition Instructor



Things to remember when you are working with those with Vision Impairments:

- Don't assume you know what a person with vision impairment needs - ask them first.
- Describe your surroundings.
- Use light touch to help communicate your message.

Many of our opportunities offer volunteers the chance to provide friendship and community activities to our visually impaired members. If you think you would enjoy working with blind and visually impaired individuals call 642-6000 and speak with Paula today about joining our team!

## Volunteers Needed for July 2006 Events!!!

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
30	31					1
	Bowling 11:00am					
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Center Closed	Center Closed	Shopping 9:30am	Shopping 9:30am		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	Bowling 11:00am	Shopping 9:30am	Shopping 9:30am	Shopping 9:30am		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	Bowling 11:00am	Shopping 9:30am	Shopping 9:30am	Shopping 9:30am	Spring Mt. Play 5:00pm	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	Bowling 11:00am	Shopping 9:30am	Shopping 9:30am	Shopping 9:30am		



### Quote Of The Month

Many persons have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy purpose. ~Helen Keller

## July's Featured Volunteer Opportunities

Have you been wanting to volunteer and aren't sure where you are needed? Every volunteer position at the Blind Center is an important link in our chain of support. However, sometimes it becomes clear that there are some positions that we need filled as soon as possible in order to keep the Center running smoothly. July's Featured Volunteer Opportunities spotlight four key opportunities.

The first is for a handy dandy Maintenance and Repair person. We are looking for an energetic, handy individual to oversee the upkeep and maintenance of the Blind Center building and grounds. This position requires a

couple of days per week, the hours are very flexible.

Second, the Blind Center is seeing a rise in the number of Spanish speaking people enrolling for services. We are seeking an English as a Second Language Instructor to come to the Center to teach English to our Spanish speaking members. This will help them stay as independent as possible in a community that can be very difficult for those with disabilities.

Third, if you enjoy the computer, we are seeking mentors to teach and guide members in basic computer programs, including word-processing, Internet use and key-

boarding for beginners. Low vision software is used for all these lessons. The Center will provide necessary training. This position requires an hour or two once a week, the days and hours are flexible.

Last of all we encourage you to check out the BCNV bowling league that meets on Mondays from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm. Volunteers are needed to assist bowlers at lanes.

If you are interested in any of these position or know someone who might be, please let us know A.S.A.P. As always thank you for all you do.

## Upcoming Events

Volunteers are needed for the following upcoming events:

Wednesday, July 5th at 10:00am we are holding an Ice Cream Social for our blind and visually impaired members. Come on down and help us serve up some ice cream and have some fun.

Friday, July 18th outing to Super Summer Theater at Spring Mountain Ranch. We will be taking our Blind and visually impaired members to see "Bells Are Ringing".

Friday, July 21st outing to Super Summer Theater at Spring Mountain Ranch. We will be taking our blind and visually impaired members to see "Return to the Forbidden Planet" and we would like your help. The Blind Center will cover the cost of your ticket and dinner is included in exchange for your volunteer services for this event.

Have you completed your timesheet and turned in your monthly comments and ideas? This is an important way for you to be involved in the Center's goal to provide vital services to those with vision loss!





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OF NEVADA**

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## BLIND CENTER OF NEVADA'S VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

# Here's An Idea!!!

Gather a group of your friends or co-workers and try one of these super fun volunteer opportunities.

Organize a computer recycling day at your office or local community center.

Organize a food drive to gather and collect food items to help support the daily lunches that are served at the Blind Center.

Hold a "Spare Change" week at the office, school or social group. This money can be used to help purchase much needed magnifiers and low vision items that visually impaired individuals use to remain independent.

Hold a drive to collect used eyeglasses for those in need.

Are you a hairstylist or manicurist? Come to the Center to give complementary haircuts or manicures to blind and visually impaired individuals

**Interested in any of these ideas? Have an idea of your own?  
Call Paula at 642-6000 or email paulaf@blindcenter.org**



*"Alone We Can Do So Little;  
Together We Can Do So Much"  
~ Helen Keller*

## REASONS TO VOLUNTEER

***You want to have fun, be involved, be active, give to the community, learn new skills, meet people, be appreciated and help others who need help.***

***These are just some of the reasons.***

***You're done with the 9 - 5 work routine, but you are not ready to "retire".***

Choose to stay actively involved by contributing your talents to making our community a better place.

***Enhance your resume or college application.***

As you learn and grow by volunteering, you will be gaining real skills that will enhance your professional and education goals, as well as making the world better for others.

***Balance your life, get out and meet more people.***

You may feel that you aren't "getting out" enough -- maybe you work too many hours or you are home with your family a lot. Provide information, work on an event, get involved with one of our many departments, the opportunities are all there. You'll help the Center, you'll get to interact with other people, you'll learn new skills, and you'll help a great blind center continue to provide outstanding services to our community.

***Studies show that health is often improved by participating in a meaningful, rewarding cause.***

And what could be more meaningful and rewarding than volunteering for the Blind Center of Nevada and helping the people in need who come through our doors?

