

# **Blind Center of Nevada**

## **March 2007 Chatterbox**

**Seeking opportunity**

### **Blind Center of Nevada hosts hospitality career course**

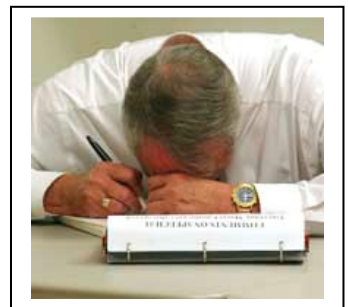
By MARIA PHELAN  
VIEW STAFF WRITER  
02/20/2007 Edition of the View

After 21 years of working for the U.S. Army, Alan Bredow retired, then decided it was time to re-enter the work force.

That re-entry should have gone off without a hitch, but for one hurdle -- Bredow is visually impaired and requires specific technology to do many of the jobs that people with sight never think twice about.

So when the Blind Center of Nevada and the National Statler Center for Careers in Hospitality Service joined forces last month to host a 10-week class, the arrangement just made sense, participants and officials said.

The program started Jan. 22 and will run until March 30.



Throughout the 10-week class, participants such as Bredow will learn the ins and outs of the hospitality service industry in general, as well as how to use the adaptive technology that will allow them to do the job.

"Being able to use the adaptive technology, like the closed-circuit TVs and digital recorders, has been the most exciting thing about the course," Bredow said. "I'm looking forward to using this program to work in the hospitality industry. I think I'd like to be a trainer for one of the hotels."

The Blind Center assists blind and visually impaired people of all ages in finding social interaction and work prospects.

The Statler Center is the result of a foundation started by Ellsworth Statler, founder of Statler Hotels, to educate and encourage people in the hospitality services industry.

Mary Ellen Mest, Statler Nevada Extension project manager, said the Statler Center and the Blind Center started working together to bring the hospitality services training course to Las Vegas almost three years ago. Mest said since she first started visiting Las Vegas in October to prepare for the classes, things have gone very smoothly, and she has found the community to be very supportive of the program.

"Sometimes in life, you take on a project and it just feels like you're swimming upstream the whole

time," she said. "This is not one of those projects. Everything has just fallen into place. A lot of the big casinos know we're here, and they're very eager to work with us."

Bob Waldorf, vice president of operations for the Blind Center of Nevada, 1001 N. Bruce St., said the nonprofit group opened its doors in a small Las Vegas building 51 years ago. The organization since has acquired an additional building and has expanded its services from a social club serving a handful of people to a center offering socialization, personal development, business opportunities, job training, support, products and employment.

"The Blind Center was really started by a handful of people who had a visually impaired family member and wanted a place for them to come, and it was basically a social club," Waldorf said. "It stayed like that until about 10 years ago, when the current board members, who were businesspeople in the community, got involved as volunteers and started to look for ways to give the center direction."

The socialization, personal development and business opportunities are among the most important services the Blind Center has to offer, Waldorf said.

"With socialization, it's really community atmosphere, where people can come in and visit, or get help reading their mail or go on shopping trips -- just any of the many things most people take for granted every day," he said. "The personal development includes things like arts and crafts

classes, a bowling league and a lot of other classes meant to expand people's horizons."

The business opportunities offered by the Blind Center include the center's computer recycling program, its eBay sales center, where employees upload pictures and information for items to be sold in Internet auctions, and sales of janitorial and cleaning products.

Waldorf said the Blind Center is the only facility of its type in the state. He also said Nevada is the only state that doesn't have a blind school, and currently ranks 49th out of 50 in services for the disabled.

The Statler Center's foundation started by awarding scholarships. Then, 10 years ago, the foundation's board decided to look for new ways to advance the industry.

"They thought, 'what about working with the blind and visually impaired?' "Waldorf said.

The Statler Center, based in Buffalo, N.Y., is in its ninth year and so far has an 87 percent job placement rate.

Eleven of the Blind Center's patrons are students in the first class. Nine of those students are visually impaired, and two others are physically impaired.

The Statler Center leads a 10-week intensive study of working in the hospitality industry in general, and also instructs students on the use of traditional hotel software through specialized technology for the blind and visually impaired.

To gain a spot in the class, potential students were required to have a high school diploma, have the ability to type at a rate of at least 20 words per minute, provide two letters of recommendation and interview with a Statler Center official.

The Statler Center normally hosts three courses a year in Buffalo, and subbed out the class it normally leads in Buffalo starting in January for the Las Vegas class. Mest said this will be the Statler Center's 23rd class since starting classes in 1999.

Mest also said while the center's officials are focused on making the current class a success, they hope to bring the program back to Las Vegas in the future. She said eventually, if the Las Vegas program is very successful, the program could expand to include a full-time center in Las Vegas meant to serve the West Coast.

"Bringing the program to Las Vegas just makes sense. It should be here," said Veronica Wilson, the president and chief executive officer of the Blind Center and a former president and chief executive officer of the original Aladdin hotel." We're very, very glad the Statler Center decided to do this with us."

Waldorf said an important aspect of the training program is that when someone loses their sight later in life, they often find it difficult to reenter the work force.

Wilson agreed that bringing the program to the Las Vegas Valley makes sense.

"I think it's fantastic. It's really a wonderful program," she said of the Statler Center. "Because of the high turnover rate in the hospitality industry, and the fact that when our people are able to get a job, they will be very thankful and very dedicated to that employer, it just makes sense. The labor pool here is always shrinking, and here's an additional pool of people that can be added and really want to do a good job."

For more information about the Blind Center of Nevada or the Statler Center, visit [www.blindcenter.org](http://www.blindcenter.org) or [www.statlercenter.org](http://www.statlercenter.org).



**Our 23<sup>rd</sup> class: (standing l-r) Jean Tuten, Don Bosso, Andre Ilie, Anthony Gravely, Slade Anderson, Alan Bredow, and Teresa Schlotfeldt. Seated are Bill Mattern, Jeremy Holland, Cheryl Lutomski, Matt Voigt, and Gabriella Torres.**

# MARCH 2007

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

COMPUTER LAB OPEN MON-FRI 9AM – 5PM  
COMPUTER MENTORING MON-WED 9:30AM-10:30AM  
MONDAY SHOPPING TRIP 9:30-10:30AM  
BOWLING MONDAY 11:15AM  
BAKERY GOODS EVERY MONDAY  
CHAT & GAMES IN THE KITCHEN CLUB TUES 9:30-11:30AM  
TUESDAY SHOPPING TRIP 9:30AM-10:30AM  
GUEST SPEAKER EVERY TUESDAY 12:15PM  
TUESDAY HARP LESSONS 1:00PM  
SHOPPING TRIP WEDNESDAYS 9:30-10:30AM  
VISITING PHARMACIST WEDNESDAY 10:30AM  
CLARINET LESSONS EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY  
TAI CHI WEDNESDAY 12:30-1:30PM  
DANCE LESSONS WEDNESDAY 3:30-4:30PM  
WEDNESDAY \$1 TACO DAY! ORDER BY TUESDAY  
MAIL READING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE  
MON-FRIDAY BYAPPOINTMENT  
WALMART SHOPPING TRIP THURSDAYS 9:30AM  
THURSDAY SUPPORT GROUP 1:00-2:00PM  
THURSDAY GUITAR LESSONS 2:30PM  
FRIDAY PIANO LESSONS 2:00-5:00PM

**\*\*SIGHTED ASSISTANCE PROVIDED FOR ALL EVENTS  
AND OUTINGS**

***The Hadley School for the Blind***

**Hadley has a course for you if you are:**

- **A blind adult (14+ years of age);**
- **A relative of a blind or visually impaired child;**
- **A family member of a blind or visually impaired adult;**
- **A professional in the blindness field.**

**The Hadley School for the Blind offers more than 90 distance education courses to eligible students completely free of charge. From "Braille Literacy 1" to "Birdsong Tutor," you can select from a wide variety of Hadley courses. You can study in the comfort of your own home at a time convenient for you. Course materials arrive in the mail or online and for students in the U.S. and Canada, instructors are just a toll-free call away.**

### ***Course Catalog***

**To obtain a Hadley course catalog in Braille, cassette, large print or computer diskette, call 1-800-323-4238**

### ***Contact Us***

**The Hadley School for the Blind  
700 Elm Street  
Winnetka, IL 60093-2554 USA  
Telephone: 1-800-323-4238  
Fax: 847-446-0855  
[Info@Hadley.edu](mailto:Info@Hadley.edu)**

## **Independent Living Resources and Products**

**American Printing House for the Blind  
1839 Frankfort Avenue**



P.O. Box 6085  
Louisville, KY 40206-0085  
Toll Free: (800) 223-1839  
Telephone: (502) 895-2405  
Fax: (502) 899-2274  
E-mail: [catalogs@aph.org](mailto:catalogs@aph.org) (request a catalog)  
[cs@aph.org](mailto:cs@aph.org) (customer service)  
Web site: [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)


The Adult Life Products catalog features Braille products, books, and supplies; large-print books; computer software and access products; labeling and marking products; lighting; low vision devices; mobility devices; personal care products; recreation and leisure products; talking products; and writing and reading devices.

**Assisted Access, Inc.**

P.O. Box 230  
Lake Villa, IL 60046-0230  
Toll Free: (800) 950-9655  
Fax/TTY: (847) 265-8044  
Web site: [www.assistedaccess.com](http://www.assistedaccess.com)  
<http://nfss.site.yahoo.net/>

Provides a large range of assistive products for the deaf/hard of hearing, blind/low vision, mobility/support and home/health related items for the disabled, aging, and those in rehabilitation.

# March 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 Bowling	6 BCU	7 Taco Day	8	9	10
11	12 Bowling	13 BCU	14  St. Patrick's Day Party 10:30am	15	16	17
18	19 Bowling	20 BCU	21 Taco Day	22	23	24
25	26 Bowling	27 BCU	28 Taco Day	29	30	31

## **March 2007 is an important month for eye safety awareness!**

Save your vision - Sports Eye Safety Month  
Eye Donor -Workplace Eye Safety Month

Omega-3 fatty acids - good for the eyes

Two new studies give one more reason to eat a diet rich in fish: prevention of age-related macular degeneration, the leading cause of blindness in old age.

The omega-3 fatty acids found in fish such as salmon are already known to help the heart and brain stay healthy. The new studies, appearing Monday in the Archives of Ophthalmology, add to evidence that fish eaters also protect the eyes.

The new studies aren't the strongest level of scientific evidence, but they confirm the findings of previous studies that also link fish consumption with prevention of macular degeneration.

Macular degeneration starts with blurring in the center of what the eye sees. It progresses to blindness, slowly or quickly depending on the type of disease. Six to 8 percent of people age 75 and older have an advanced form of the disease.

"We have a longer life expectancy so the prevalence and burden related to age-related macular degeneration will continue to increase," said Dr. Johanna Seddon of the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary in Boston, lead author of the U.S. study.

## Workplace Eye Safety Month

Why is eye safety at work important?

Eye injuries in the workplace are very common. More than 2,000 people injure their eyes at work each day. About 1 in 10 injuries require one or more missed workdays to recover from. Of the total amount of work-related injuries, 10-20 % will cause temporary or permanent vision loss.

Experts believe that the right eye protection could have lessened the severity or even prevented 90% of eye injuries in accidents.

What are the common causes of eye injuries?  
Common causes for eye injuries are:

- Flying objects (bits of metal, glass)
- Tools
- Particles
- Chemicals
- Harmful radiation
- Any combination of these or other hazards

What is my best defense against an eye injury?

There are three things you can do to help prevent an eye injury  
Know the eye safety dangers at work-complete an eye hazard assessment.

Eliminate hazards before starting work. Use machine guarding, work screens, or other engineering controls).

Use proper eye protection.

## Using Flaxseed Oil to Relieve Dry Eye

Flaxseed oil has been shown in certain studies to be an effective treatment for dry eye, a condition that affects millions of Americans. Dry eye can be caused by allergies, vision correction (refractive surgery), and other eye conditions.



Flaxseeds, also called linseeds, are rich in essential fatty acids, particularly the beneficial type known as omega-3. These fatty acids work throughout the body to protect cell membranes. Flaxseed is found in several forms. Liquid flaxseed oil is the easiest form to use, but it must be kept refrigerated. Although capsules containing flaxseed oil are more convenient, they can be expensive compared with the liquid form. A large number of capsules also may be required to achieve the equivalent liquid dose.

For best absorption, flaxseed oil should be taken with food such as drinks, cottage cheese, or yogurt. Check the expiration date on the label, because flaxseed oil spoils quickly particularly in the liquid form that begins to oxidize in the air once the bottle is opened. Keep flaxseed oil refrigerated for freshness.

Despite reports you may read to the contrary, medical experts tend to view cold-pressed sources of flaxseed oil as the most effective. While cold-pressed flaxseed oil may be the more expensive option, it is also a sign of higher quality.

Recommended dosage for use of flaxseed oil is 1 tablespoon or 14 g per day of the liquid form, or 3-6 capsules per day of the capsule form. As with any type of nutritional supplement, it is essential that you consult your physician first before taking flaxseed oil.

**Make the Most of Your Life-Start Today!**

Are you or someone you know experiencing vision loss and in need of assistance with magnifying devices, assistive technology, advocacy, referral, mail reading, daily living skills, support group meetings or other areas of assistance?

The Blind Center of Nevada offers this type of assistance as well as a host of other important programs and services to the blind and visually impaired community. Do not let another day pass by without getting the assistance you deserve. Call 642-6000 for more information.

BLIND CENTER OF NEVADA  
1001 N. BRUCE STREET  
LAS VEGAS, NV 89101

FREE MATTER  
FOR THE BLIND



**BLIND CENTER BOARD**

PRESIDENT: VERONICA WILSON  
CHAIRMAN: NEAL MAREK, DPM  
DON AHERN  
MICHAEL ANDERSEN  
LLOYD BENSON  
JEFF DAVIS  
CHUCK GIBLIN  
DANIEL V. GOODSSELL, ESQ.  
PHIL HORRELL  
DIX JARMAN  
WM. ALLEN KAERCHER  
CATHERINE LAW  
GARN MABEY, MD