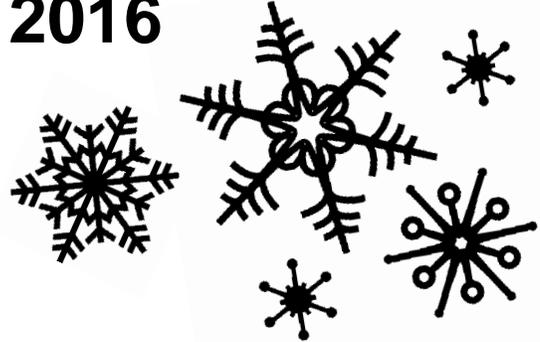


VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

December 2016



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to December!

“Chill December brings the sleet,
Blazing fire, and Christmas treat.”

--Sara Coleridge (1802–1852), "The Garden Year"

Holiday Hours – VLR offices will be closed on Monday, December 26th. Have a wonderful holiday!

CURRENT ONGOING VOLUNTEER NEEDS

We have a list of people waiting for volunteers for the following Reader and Shopper roles in the Twin Cities. Volunteers assist clients with household reading and paperwork and with shopping or errands. This is a personal way to make a big impact on someone’s independence. Volunteers set their own schedule and work on an on-going basis with the same person. This is an important way to make a connection with your community. Can you help?

Participant Location:	Volunteer Role Needed:
St. Louis Park	Shopper
New Brighton	Reader
Blaine	Reader
South St. Paul	Reader
New Hope	Shopper
Shoreview	Reader
Plymouth	Reader
Bloomington	Reader
Maplewood	Shopper
Minneapolis/Bryant Area	Reader
Minneapolis/Kingfield Area	Shopper
Rosemount	Reader
Bloomington	Reader

Need a timesheet to report your volunteer hours?

Go to <http://visionlossresources.org/programs/volunteer/volunteer-hours-reporting> and follow the link to print your own! You may also email volunteer@vlrw.org or call Jen at 612-843-3421 and leave a message with your hours!

VOLUNTEER IN VLR’S COMMUNITY CENTER IN DECEMBER!

We have a full calendar of outings and activities. Can you help? Please call or email volunteer@vlrw.org. Many activities fill up rapidly!

- 12/5 **Game Day** 10:00-12:00 VLR in Minneapolis 2 volunteers
Lively fun with board and trivia games. Laughter, conversation, and snacks included!
- 12/5 **Cookie Exchange & Bake-Off** 1:00-2:30 VLR in Minneapolis 3 volunteers
Help out with the tasty festivities! Enjoy live music and caroling, as well!
- 12/7 **Supper Club** 5:00-7:00 Cherokee Tavern, Saint Paul 3 volunteers
Read the menu aloud to participants, help with seating, and enjoy some tasty food.
Please save your receipt and send it in when you report your hours. VLR will reimburse you \$10 towards your meal when you turn in your hours and receipt!
- 12/12 **Walking Group** 9:00-11:30 Door 13, Southdale Mall 6 volunteers
Partners walk the mall for an hour, stop for coffee and conversation, and then walk for another hour.
- 12/14 **BINGO!** 5:00-7:00 VLR in Minneapolis 2 volunteers
Everybody loves BINGO! Help by guiding participants, handing out cards, and distributing prizes!
- 12/30 **Pottery** 10:00-12:00 VLR in Saint Paul 2 volunteers
(Moved to 5th Friday due to holiday.) Help participants create hand-built pottery items. No experience is necessary.

 = Highlight Event - volunteers especially needed!

EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

The following events are not affiliated with VLR, but may be of interest to our volunteers and community!

Senior Center Without Walls - an award-winning program of Episcopal Senior Communities offering activities, education, friendly conversation, and an assortment of classes, support groups, and presentations to seniors. Each week, seniors across the country can access over 70 groups by phone or online, all from the comfort of home for FREE. Visit www.seniorcenterwithoutwalls.org or call 1-877-797-7299 for more information.

Disabled and Proud Radio Show

A show that brings you insights, ideas, and discussions on disability topics. Many pertinent and practical topics are covered each week. Tune in every Thursday night at 6:30 on KFAI 90.3 FM in Minneapolis, or 106.7 FM in Saint Paul. If you don't have time to catch us on Thursday night, hear us online at www.kfai.org/disabledandproud. You have the option of hearing the current show, or the previous show. You must have a Real Audio Player downloaded to your machine in order for this to work. In order to express your ideas or comments for future shows, call 612-341-3144, or email: disabledandproud@tcq.net. To receive emails about this show directly, email us. Contacts: Sam Jasmine (Producer) and Charlene Doll (Assistant Researcher)

New OrCam Payment Plans with No Money Down

OrCam adjusted its payment plans with no money down. The OrCam device is an intuitive wearable device with a smart camera and discrete audio output that reads text, identifies

objects, and recognizes faces. The MyReader (text-only version) is \$99/month for 28 months with no money down and the MyEye is \$149/month for 28 months with no money down. Both plans include training, support, upgrades, warranty and a 30 day return policy. The program will last through December. Contact Aliza Olenick, Sales Consultant and Certified Trainer, OrCam Technologies, aliza.olenick@orcaml.com, 612-940-9037, www.orcaml.com

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: I have a friend, family member, or colleague who may be interested in volunteering. How do I get them started?

A: Ask them to contact us! Email volunteer@vlrw.org or call 612-871-2222. We'll get them started with the application process and get them matched with a participant or activity!

Q: What is Volunteer Reimbursement for Mileage & Transportation Expenses all about?

Who is eligible?

A: Vision Loss Resources Volunteers are eligible for mileage reimbursement. Volunteers who use Metro Mobility or other mass transit to travel to and from their volunteer assignment are also eligible to request reimbursement.

What is eligible?

A: Your mileage reimbursement request must be part of an active volunteer assignment. When you report your volunteer hours, indicate your round-trip miles or mass transit costs to and from your volunteer assignment. Other expenses may be eligible for reimbursement. For example, if you join your client for an occasional coffee or snack, you can request reimbursement. Please ask if you are unsure. You will be requested to submit receipts.

Policy for Meal Reimbursement

In an effort to create a more sustainable Community Center and Volunteer Program, volunteers will be responsible for paying for their own meal at an activity (i.e. at Lunch Bunch, Supper Club, etc.). Please save your receipt and send it in when you report your hours. VLR will reimburse you \$10 towards your meal!

When will I receive reimbursement?

A: Reimbursement checks are requested each month, the second week of the month. (Volunteer hours are requested by the 5th day of the month.) Checks are usually prepared and mailed the 3rd week of each month. Please note: VLR's Business Office prepares checks in rotation with payroll and other expenses. This schedule is subject to change. Additionally, reimbursement requests for less than \$10.00 will be held until either the total request is greater than \$10.00 or until the following month. This policy reduces administrative costs.

Q. If I'm coming to VLR, where do I park?

A: *Minneapolis office:* we have two parking lots available. The larger "lower lot" nearest to Lyndale is the closest to our front door. Due to the nature of the intersection on Franklin & Lyndale, if you are coming from south on Lyndale, take a left on Franklin (westbound) and take the first right on Aldrich Ave S. Follow to the end of the street and continue to the right down the hill to our lower lot.

Saint Paul office: For those parking, being dropped off, or needing an accessible ramp at our Saint Paul office, please use the back entrance (215 Starkey Ave).

Q. I know someone who may need services provided by Vision Loss Resources. How do I help get them started?

A: Wonderful! Please have them call our main line (612-871-2222), where they will be directed to schedule an In-Home Assessment. One of our Community Service Specialist will get in touch with them to schedule this appointment, which takes about an hour and can be scheduled at the participant's home or in one of our offices. From there, they can have any questions answered, learn about available resources, receive useful items and get connected with VLR services that may be helpful to them – Volunteers, Community Center activities, Support Groups, Living with Vision Loss Training, and more!

Q. How do I turn in my Volunteer Hours every month?

A. You may turn in your hours by sending a quick email to volunteer@vlrw.org, calling, or by going online to print off and mail a timesheet (available online at www.visionlossresources.org/programs/volunteer/volunteer-hours-reporting). We appreciate receiving hours for reporting to our grants and annual reporting! Please turn them in by the 5th of the month!



Vision Loss Resources

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