



The Chicago
Lighthouse



the Beam

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From the
President and Chief
Executive Officer:
Janet P. Szlyk, PhD

A favorite photo of me with Brian and Bill—two of CRIS radio's greats.

Dear Friends,

Last month, The Chicago Lighthouse lost a major talent, a great crusader for people with disabilities, and a cherished friend when our beloved William 'Bill' Jurek passed away following a prolonged illness.

Bill, who was Director Emeritus of our CRIS Radio operation, was a broadcast giant who held major posts with NBC, WLIT and many other outlets. In fact, Bill was so talented that he was once offered a staff announcer position with the NBC radio network in New York, but turned it down to stay in his hometown of Chicago.

Since joining The Lighthouse about a decade ago, Bill not only helped to revitalize CRIS but successfully launched "The Beacon," the only advocacy program on the radio for people with disabilities. Airing every weekend on WCPT-AM, the popular broadcast was Bill's brainchild and he excelled as its host. The program featured a wide array of knowledgeable guests like Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White and Commissioner Karen Tamley who

offered their own keen insight into issues of concern to people with disabilities, seniors and Veterans. Other special guests included then Senator and future President Barack Obama, Senator Richard Durbin, Congressman Danny Davis and acclaimed musicians Lisa Hilton and Nikki George (aka Georgiann Pangere).

In tribute to Bill's remarkable career and for all he did for The Lighthouse, we will continue his legacy with a revived "Beacon" program featuring members of his broadcast family: Brian Hawkins, Lainie Kleemann, Sandy Murillo and Brett Shishkoff. To read their comments on how Bill touched their lives, please see the accompanying article in this edition of The Beam.

To hear "The Beacon," please tune in to 820 AM every Sunday morning at 7 am or catch the podcasts of each show on our website.

We will also hold a special memorial service in honor of Bill in our cafeteria on Friday, October 27. All of his many friends are welcome to attend and share with us their recollections of this kind and good man. As an added treat, we will serve Bill's favorite Beggar's Pizza at the service! More details will come, but please mark your calendars.

We love you, Bill! You are our very own rock star who will be sorely missed!

Remembering Bill JUREK



A RADIO FAMILY PAYS TRIBUTE TO A BOOMING VOICE AND KIND HEART

The late Bill Jurek, director emeritus of CRIS Radio and host of “The Beacon,” was a larger than life personality who touched the lives of everyone who knew him.

Here are some special reflections about Bill from those who worked most closely with him at The Lighthouse, members of his own radio family: Lainie Kleeman, Brian Hawkins, Sandy Murillo and Brett Shishkoff.



“Bill was such a treasure to work with,” says his “Beacon” co-host Lainie Kleemann. “He had an absolute passion for his work and a golden voice that was made for radio!” She fondly remembers that when Bill decided he wanted to hire her, he called her repeatedly to offer her the job. “He was so persistent that I couldn’t say no,” she laughs.

Kleemann also recalls how impressed she was with Bill’s dedication to the show. “When he and his partner Stacey moved to Florida a few years ago, Bill would fly back to Chicago every three months and record nine shows in one sitting, even though he was in the midst of his illness.”

Brian Hawkins, director of both CRIS Radio and The Beacon, observes that in addition to his talent, Bill had a tremendous heart and was a loving, compassionate person.

Hawkins points out that his compassion went beyond just humanity. “When Bill’s guide dog, Abner, retired, Bill threw a party to commemorate him,” he smiles.

Both Sandy Murillo and Brett Shishkoff started working with Bill as CRIS Radio interns. They point out how they gained invaluable insight about the business while “learning at the master’s knee!”

“Bill knew so much about the media and he always was quick to come up with a program idea or someone interesting to interview,” Murillo says.



Bill’s illness and his ongoing fight with cancer helped bond him with Shishkoff who also had to cope with the disease. “He was very understanding about my situation and we would often compare notes,” Shishkoff says.

All four of his colleagues agree that carrying on with “The Beacon” is the best way to honor Bill’s legacy.



“Bill’s passing means that The Lighthouse family has lost a key member,” Hawkins says. “We grieve, but we persist with his vision. That’s just how Bill would have wanted it!”

NEW LIGHTHOUSE BOARD CHAIR TELLS GOALS



Chicago Lighthouse Chairman of the Board Gary Rich

“First, I want to thank all the individuals and organizations who generously support The Lighthouse and our mission to serve individuals who are blind, visually impaired, disabled and Veterans. Without their support, we wouldn’t have survived and been able to serve the Chicagoland community for 111 years,” said new Chicago Lighthouse Board Chair Gary Rich who assumed the role in June.

“The Lighthouse is nationally recognized as the undisputed leader in low vision care, assistive technology, and employment for the blind, handicapped, and Veterans. It is a fact that no other organization does the kinds of things we do.”

Mr. Rich added that we also need to thank our outstanding staff of highly motivated and caring professionals who provide the emotional as well as

professional support and services for our program participants. **“At The Lighthouse, our staff truly changes lives each and every day!”**

In terms of items high on his wish list as Board Chair, he pointed to generating a cash surplus from our call center and clock manufacturing businesses to ensure the agency can continue to fulfill its mission for years to come.

Mr. Rich noted that our customer care centers have not only been successful in bringing in new revenue, but they have created a significant number of jobs for the people we serve. He added that including our call centers and Industries program, we employ 202 people who are blind, visually impaired, disabled and Veterans.

Having a lifelong passion and an expertise in marketing, Mr. Rich is also interested in expanding The Lighthouse brand by utilizing social media outlets, including bloggers and other social media influencers to expand the awareness of The Lighthouse and the services we offer.

Mr. Rich succeeds attorney Richard Schnadig who lead The Lighthouse Board since 2014.

“I want to commend Dick for his exemplary service to The Lighthouse,” he said. “Working with our President & CEO Dr. Janet Szlyk and her team, he kept us on a sound financial footing and positioned the organization for future growth.”

LIGHTHOUSE ROLLS OUT NEW FASHION CLOCKS

To help celebrate the 40th anniversary of securing the federal contract to make clocks for the U.S. government, Chicago Lighthouse Industries is unveiling a new line of unique fashion clocks to sell to the public.

Featuring a broad array of bright designs and images, they are ideal for home, school and office. Among our most popular designs are those featuring the City of Chicago flag and CTA route map. The clocks are made right here at The Lighthouse by a dedicated team of workers who are blind or visually impaired. For many, assembling clocks has been their primary source of income for decades. With the introduction of this fashion line, we’ve been able to grow our business, securing employment for these workers.

In a first-time development, The Lighthouse has entered into an agreement with a big box retailer, Target, to sell the clocks at three select locations in Illinois. (See right for locations.)

“We are so grateful to Target for the confidence they have shown in our clocks and in us as a business partner,” said Lighthouse President and CEO Dr. Janet Szlyk. The hope is that we will be in more locations across the state and in time, around the nation.



Pam Tully, COO for The Chicago Lighthouse visits the fashion clock display at Target in her hometown, Wheaton. The clocks received several media placements including radio, newspaper and prime newstations like CBS, NBC and FOX32. Courtesy, Daily Herald



AVAILABLE at these **TARGET** LOCATIONS
Chicago Near North | 2656 N. Elston
Chicago Division | 1200 N. Larrabee
Wheaton | 601 S. County Farm Rd.

#GIVING TUESDAY

Please remember The Lighthouse as you consider making a donation for Giving Tuesday on November 28 this year. An international day of supporting non-profit and charitable causes, Giving Tuesday takes place at the start of the holiday gift-giving season.

Your donation continues our efforts to keep people with disabilities employed. For more details or to donate visit: www.chicagolighthouse.org/GivingTuesday.

PHILANTHROPY IS IN FASHION AT FLAIR 2017

Three iconic Chicago institutions—The Chicago Lighthouse, The Service Club of Chicago, and the Walnut Room at Macy's united in support of our Children's Programs at FLAIR 2017, our annual philanthropic fashion luncheon which continues a longstanding Lighthouse tradition of women changing lives.

From the circular runway around the Walnut Room's central fountain to the delicious signature chicken pot pie and Frango mint chocolate cheesecake, a unique sensory experience was created for our guests. Our models, including Lighthouse employees who are visually impaired and members of The Service Club of Chicago, an all-volunteer women's philanthropic organization, were radiant as they walked in fall fashions from Macy's.

Noted philanthropist Cheri Lawrence was presented with our Fourth Annual Hood/Swift Woman with FLAIR Award in recognition of the valuable contributions she has made to The Lighthouse and many other local charitable organizations.

We thank all of our guests and volunteers for their generosity which raised over \$64,000 for our children's programs.



FLAIR's Honoree, the lovely Cheri Lawrence, models beautiful Macy's fashions.

LIGHTHOUSE PARTNERS WITH ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER & JETPAY TO HELP VETERANS, VISUALLY IMPAIRED

In an August 9 press briefing held at The Chicago Lighthouse, Illinois Treasurer Michael Frerichs announced a partnership with The Lighthouse and JetPay Corporation to provide customer support for the state's electronic banking and payment services.

Treasurer Frerichs noted that the arrangement will ensure excellent customer service for individuals and local government using the state's ePAY services while supporting The Lighthouse's efforts to provide employment for Veterans and people with disabilities.

"This is an investment in people and in the power of possible," he said. **"For more than a century, The Chicago Lighthouse has been inspiring individuals to their fullest potential."**

Lighthouse customer care centers will answer questions about the Treasurer office's ePAY program, which provides a safe, timely and competitively priced payment tool for units of local government that offer electronic payment of bills.

JetPay Corporation, based in Pennsylvania, was selected as the service provider following a public bidding process. JetPay is a leading provider of vertically integrated solutions for businesses.



Representatives from The Chicago Lighthouse, Illinois State Treasurer's office and JetPay.

PAUL McCARTNEY CONCERT DEEPENS FRIENDSHIP & RESPECT FOR LIGHTHOUSE CO-WORKERS

The recent Paul McCartney concert in suburban Tinley Park that was attended by several Lighthouse employees helped illustrate the importance of socializing with co-workers.

Case in point was José Martinez, desktop support specialist in The Lighthouse's IT department.

Blind since birth, José has been involved with The Lighthouse since his earliest days in the Birth to Three program. He received additional training at the agency and went on to earn a degree in sound engineering which ultimately landed him his Lighthouse job.

While at the concert, José got into the excitement, took photos and texted his friends. Co-worker Bayron Salgado who also attended the concert stated **"I was amazed to see just how skilled José was in using his camera to take pictures, request an Uber for the ride home and even record most of the performance."** I knew how capable he was at providing IT support at work, but I have an even deeper appreciation for him now after this experience."



Co-workers Jose Martinez and Bayron Salgado enjoy a fun night out at the Paul McCartney concert.

WHOLE FOODS MAKES GENEROUS DONATION TO LIGHTHOUSE

Following a successful run as beneficiary of the popular supermarket chain's "One Dime at a Time" giving campaign, The Lighthouse received a generous donation of more than \$63,000 from Whole Foods Market, Inc.

Launched during the first quarter of this year, **the campaign gave customers at all 26 Whole Foods Market stores in Illinois an opportunity to contribute their 10 cent reusable bag donation directly to The Lighthouse.**

This special program represented the first time that Whole Foods partnered with one not-for-profit organization for all its stores in a state. As a result, there was a substantial increase in the total amount of money that was raised for The Lighthouse.

In presenting the check to Lighthouse President & CEO Dr. Janet Szlyk, Viviana Proano, senior marketing specialist for Whole Foods, said: "We are delighted to support The Chicago Lighthouse as they provide life-changing services to the blind, visually impaired, disabled and Veteran communities."

Dr. Szlyk expressed her deep appreciation on behalf of The Lighthouse and thanked Whole Foods for being such a great partner.



Whole Foods' "One Dime at a Time" campaign yielded over \$63,000 for The Lighthouse!

To receive our most up-to-date Lighthouse happenings, sign up for our electronic newsletter and events at:

www.chicagolighthouse.org/newsletter-signup

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The Chicago Lighthouse

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Tribute to Bill Jurek

Friday, October 27 | The Chicago Lighthouse

SIPS for Sight

Wednesday, October 18 | The Erie Café, Chicago
www.chicagolighthouse.org/event/sips-for-sight

Giving Tuesday

Tuesday, November 28
www.chicagolighthouse.org/GivingTuesday