



**Blind Community Center of San Diego**  
1805 Upas Street San Diego CA 92103  
Phone: 619-298-5021  
Donate with PayPal at <https://bccsd.org/>  
Email: [info@bccsd.org](mailto:info@bccsd.org)

## **MAY 2022 NEWSLETTER**

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY BLIND COMMUNITY CENTER  
73 YEARS YOUNG! SINCE MAY 13 1949**



### **Something New - Look for our New BCCSD Logo**

**BCC MISSION:** To enrich the lives of blind and visually impaired adults preparing them for a normal, active life in a society that is principally sighted by encouraging independence.

The Blind Community Center of San Diego gives blind and visually impaired people in our community an opportunity to socialize and interact. It helps members build skills, confidence and self-esteem through our various, social, recreational and educational, activities. Beginning in June, we are phasing in on-site craft classes and continuing virtual experiences where participants can join by telephone and/or computer.

### **BUSINESS HOURS AND REOPENING THE BCCSD:**

Believe it or not, it has been more than 2 years since we temporarily closed our doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our building in Balboa Park has

remained closed to in-person classes while virtual programs have kept everyone connected.

**Dedicated volunteers have been preparing the center and getting everything ready for the return to on-site activities. Thanks to everyone who helped make this happen.**

Although more than **one million people** have died in the United States from COVID and COVID related illness, the government previously reported declining COVID-19 cases and has lifted restrictions. However, right now, cases are rising and we will keep a close watch on the situation.

We are pleased to announce that the Blind Community Center of San Diego will begin a phased re-opening in June and we are looking forward to welcoming you back in-person and continuing to provide remote activities at the same time.

We appreciate your patience and understanding during this phased re-opening plan.

**Our first priority is to protect our members, participants, and volunteers. Therefore, we have implemented the following mandatory procedures:**

- Only individuals with scheduled appointments may visit the center on their appointed day. The center will only be open to members, participants and volunteers who have a valid in-person appointment.
- All members, participants and volunteers with in-person appointments must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and provide proof of vaccination. No exceptions – Please don't ask.

**Definition of “fully vaccinated”** is having received both shots of a two-dose vaccination series (Pfizer or Moderna) or the one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine AND received a booster once booster-eligible, which is 6 months after the second dose for Pfizer or Moderna, or 2 months after the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

We recognize there is not 100% accuracy in screening for COVID and many of our BCCSD members and participants are in the high-risk

population. We will do everything necessary to have the safest environment possible.

**If you are sick or don't feel well, please do not come to the center.**

**The first classes to be held at the BCCSD will be craft classes.  
June Mondays and Tuesdays - 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

- Everyone must have received a return phone call to confirm your reservation date and time. Sign-up procedures are listed below.
- You will be greeted at the front door and your reservation will be confirmed on the daily reservation list. If your name is not on the list, you will not be permitted to enter the building.
- Everyone will show their vaccination record card or photo of their card, proving they are fully vaccinated before entering the building. Vaccination cards will be scanned and put on file, so you will not need to provide it again.
- Everyone will have their temperature taken. We recognize that this isn't a 100% fool proof method for screening for COVID but will allow another layer of screening for protection.
- Everyone will wear an N95 or KN95 face mask while inside the building, no exceptions. You may lower the mask temporarily for drinking water or coffee.
- The BCCSD will provide a mask if needed.
- Everyone needs to schedule their ride home by 1:00 p.m. We realize that MTS has a window around departure times.
- During class, everyone will be asked to keep their own area clean. Disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer will be available at each table.
- Following doctors' advice, the center will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected at the end of each day.

- Coffee and water will be available and served by volunteers.
- Everyone will receive a to-go lunch as they leave the building.

**These procedures may seem extreme, but they are temporary and will change as conditions change. We thank everyone in advance for your patience and cooperation to make the BCCSD re-opening successful and safe.**

### **SIGNING UP TO ATTEND CLASSES:**

1. Sign up by calling the BCCSD at 619-298-5021 and leave a message on ext. 206 before 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday before class.
2. Priority placement in classes will be given to members first.
3. The first 10 people who sign up for Mondays will receive a callback and be given a reservation date and time to attend class.
4. The first 10 people who sign up for Tuesdays will receive a callback and be given a reservation date and time to attend class.
5. The second group of 10 people who sign up for each day will be confirmed for the second week in June. Please remember, the signups are just for craft classes for now. Other classes will follow as we gear up for a full re-opening.
6. If you made a reservation by Thursday and did not receive a confirmation callback by noon on Friday, please call Christie at (619) 997-8058.

Procedures may be modified once we are back and have an opportunity to evaluate the situation.

Here is the short list:

- Masks at all times
- Mandatory vaccinations and boosters for everyone, must show proof. No exceptions – Please don't ask.
- Temperatures will be taken

- Call in to sign up for classes, you must receive a return phone call confirmation with a date and time before returning to center.
- No one allowed entry unless they are on the daily appointment list.
- Limited class sizes
- Blind members receive sign-up priority
- Craft class first
- Bingo, trivia, etc will remain virtual for now
- Sack lunches provided as you leave for the day – no eating at the center
- Classes end at 1 p.m. - time to go home so cleaning may begin.

**Please note that these Blind Community Center of San Diego guidelines and policies are subject to change based on latest COVID-19 cases and/or updates from the CDC, Cal OSHA, state or local authorities.**

### **CONTACTS:**

**We are here for you:**

President Sharlene: [\*\*president@bccsd.org\*\*](mailto:president@bccsd.org)

phone: 619-298-5021 ext. 208

Vice President Ethel: [\*\*ethel@bccsd.org\*\*](mailto:ethel@bccsd.org)

Business Operations Manager Christie: [\*\*christie@bccsd.org\*\*](mailto:christie@bccsd.org)

BCCSD email: [\*\*info@bccsd.org\*\*](mailto:info@bccsd.org)

Website: [\*\*https://bccsd.org/\*\*](https://bccsd.org/)

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President: Sharlene Ornelas, Blind Member: [president@bccsd.org](mailto:president@bccsd.org)

Vice President: Ethel Kirtley, Blind Member: [ethel@bccsd.org](mailto:ethel@bccsd.org)

Secretary: Claude Edwards, Blind Member: [secretary@bccsd.org](mailto:secretary@bccsd.org)

Treasurer: Brook Logan, CPA, Associate Member: [treasurer@bccsd.org](mailto:treasurer@bccsd.org)

Past President: Gwendolyn Edwards, Blind Member

Directors:

Business Operations Manager: Lion Christie Greene, Associate Member: [christie@bccsd.org](mailto:christie@bccsd.org)

Diane Hall, Blind Member: [dianehall73@yahoo.com](mailto:dianehall73@yahoo.com)

Eric Linebarger, MD, Ophthalmologist, Associate Member

Magdalena Guillen, Blind Member: [nenaguillen6610@gmail.com](mailto:nenaguillen6610@gmail.com)

Lion Mary Manning, Associate Member: edandmarym@cox.net  
Rochelle Harris, Blind Member: rdjharris@gmail.com  
Yvette Lee, Blind Member

### **FROM PRESIDENT SHARLENE:**

In case you missed the membership meeting and the special announcement, we plan to reopen the Center on June 6<sup>th</sup> by reservation only. Things will be a little different. We will be using safety precautions to prevent members, participants and volunteers from getting COVID. Opening policies and procedures are included in this newsletter. Our newsletter is printed in small print, large print and Braille and mailed via USPS. It is also emailed to those who have opted for email. By whatever means we will ensure that everyone is notified.

Attendance will be limited each day and priority for attending will go to members. In-person Monday and Tuesday craft classes will be offered first. Ceramics and cribbage will be added at a later date. If you were playing cribbage, pre-covid, Pat will call you to schedule your times. Martial Arts may start in July. All virtual programs, membership and board meetings will remain virtual for now. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in person at the Center.

“You don't have to control your thoughts you just have to stop letting them control you”. Dan Millman

### **USEFUL INFORMATION**

California seniors can now read for FREE with Bookshare! Use promo code: Read4LifeCA when you subscribe for this service at [www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org)

Be safe

**Sharlene Ornelas**

## **FROM VICE PRESIDENT ETHEL KIRTLEY**

### **A little food for thought.**

“If we could look into each other's hearts and understand the unique challenges each of us faces, I think we would treat each other much more gently, with more love, patience, tolerance, and care.”

Marvin J. Ashton

**Ethel Kirtley, Vice President**

## **FROM BOARD MEMBER CHRISTIE GREENE:**

When we have sadness and heartache and are feeling down:

Here is a quote from **Helen Keller**, “When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.”

I hope to see each and every one of you soon at the BCC – Craft classes first. Trivia, Bingo, Name That Tune, Blind Rhythm and Writers class remain virtual for now! Beach programs and parties are just around the corner.

**Christie**

## **FROM BCC PARTICIPANT JOYCE PORTER:**

Greetings to all of my friends at the BCC. I miss each and every one of you dearly. I will always be grateful to the BCC because when I walked in the door, I found LOVE and lots of patience and compassion. I really miss my craft class but I am enjoying ZOOM bingo on Fridays! I will be forever grateful to the BCC and all of the volunteers and staff.

**Joyce Porter**

## **HERE IS OUR NEW BCCSD LOGO**



## **BCC FACEBOOK PAGE**

Thanks to our multi-talented treasurer, Brook Logan, the Blind Community Center's Facebook page is looking GOOD! Check it out and 'like' it.

Did you know? When you 'like' an article on our Facebook page, you are supporting the BCC!

Why not share our Facebook link with friends and family? They will learn about the BCC, our fundraisers, our activities and about our blind and low vision community.

<https://www.facebook.com/bccsdcommunity/>

## **WATER SKIING**

### **WITH THE SAN DIEGO MISSION BAY BOAT & SKI CLUB**

**Mark your Calendars:**

**May 21, June 25, July 30, August 27, and September 24**

Our annual tradition of free blind water ski clinics will continue in 2022.

There will be water skiing, tubing, boat rides, fun in the sun and lunch. You don't need to know how to water ski and you don't have to get your feet wet if you choose to stay on dry land. **Please call 619-298-5021 ext. 206 to sign up for May 21. We will call you back with details.**



**NORTH PARK LIONS** continues to sponsor monthly 'We Are Thinking of You' food deliveries for the BCCSD. **Our next delivery is scheduled for the week of May 9.** Active members and participants will receive a phone call prior to the delivery to coordinate their delivery date.

Please let us know if you have any questions about the deliveries.  
Thank You. [christie@bccsd.org](mailto:christie@bccsd.org)

## **WEEKLY ACTIVITY SCHEDULE**

### **MONDAYS**

**Craft Class – see re-opening procedures above**

### **PLEASE USE OUR WEBEX NUMBER FOR SPANISH CLASSES**

#### **Join by phone**

+1-510-338-9438 USA Toll+

Access code: 623 586 039

#### **Join by computer:**

<https://giftedback.my.webex.com/meet/pearl.a.mecenas>

Access code: 623 586 039

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. **BEGINNING SPANISH** taught by **Nena**

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. **INTERMEDIATE SPANISH** taught by **Nena**

### **TUESDAYS**

**Craft Class – see re-opening procedures above**

### **WEDNESDAYS**

### **PLEASE USE OUR WEBEX NUMBER FOR WEDNESDAY CLASSES**

#### **Join by phone**

+1-510-338-9438 USA Toll+

Access code: 623 586 039

#### **Join by computer:**

<https://giftedback.my.webex.com/meet/pearl.a.mecenas>

Access code: 623 586 039

12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**BLIND RHYTHM** led by **Shon**

12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**OPEN MIC** led by **Pearl**

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**TRIVIA** led by **Pearl**

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**NAME THAT TUNE** coordinated by **Shon**

## **THURSDAYS**

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

### **BLIND COMMUNITY CENTER WRITERS WORKSHOP with CLYTIE**

All are welcome!

Please call or email Clytie - 760-271-8138 [writers@bccsd.org](mailto:writers@bccsd.org)

## **FRIDAYS**

### **PLEASE USE OUR ZOOM NUMBER FOR FRIDAY CLASSES**

#### **Join by Phone**

1 408 638 0968 USA Toll+

Meeting ID: 494 996 8569

#### **Join by computer:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4949968569>

Meeting ID: 494 996 8569

#### **LIFE HACKS and TABLE TALK**

**10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.**

Let's talk!

**BINGO** led by **Christie**, with a bingo caller app and sighted volunteers.

**12:00 p.m.- 2:00 p.m.**

## **SATURDAYS**

10:00 a.m. -11:00 a.m. **LIVE MARTIAL ARTS ZOOM CLASS** taught by  
**SENSEI JOSH LOYA**

**All abilities welcome. If you are interested in attending, please send an email to [info@bccsd.org](mailto:info@bccsd.org).**

**You can also message on Facebook link -**

**<https://www.facebook.com/Blind-Community-Martial-Arts-211126265596001>**

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**Tuesday, May 10 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

### **Join by Phone:**

1 408 638 0968 USA Toll+  
Meeting ID: 494 996 8569

### **Join by computer:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4949968569>**  
Meeting ID: 494 996 8569

**Guests are welcome.** If you would like to address the board, please call 619-298-5021 ext. 208, 24 hours prior to the meeting to be added to the agenda.

## **MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**Tuesday, May 24 2021 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

### **To Join, please use the ZOOM number below:**

1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)  
Meeting ID: 494 996 8569

### **Join by computer:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4949968569>**  
Meeting ID: 494 996 8569

**Membership Meetings are held every month on the 4th Tuesday using the ZOOM virtual link from 1:00-2:30. Members, participants and guests are all welcome to attend. Attendance shows your support and appreciation for the BCC and our generous speakers. Please connect 10 minutes early so we can get started on time. The meetings are one way to catch up on what is happening at the BCC.**

## **THANK YOU**

**AT&T Pioneers  
Chula Vista Host Lions Club  
Del Sol Lions Club  
El Centro Lions Club  
Encinitas Lions Club  
Foundation for Delta Gamma at San Diego State University  
Friends of the BCC  
PDG Lion Rick Hannum  
Harbison Canyon Lions Club  
La Jolla President's Club  
La Mesa Lions Club  
Mira Mesa Senior Center Garden Club  
National Charity League  
Oceanside Sea Lions Club  
Rancho Bernardo Lions Club  
Rancho Santee Lions Club  
San Diego County Employee's Charitable Organization (CECO)  
San Diego Executive Lions Club  
San Diego Hillcrest/Mission Valley Lions Club  
San Diego North County Lions Club  
San Diego North Park Lions Club  
San Diego United Lions Club  
Singing Hills Lions Club  
Spring Valley Lions Club  
UCSD Pre Optometry Club  
University of San Diego**

Please visit our web site at <https://bccsd.org/> for more information about our wonderful supporters and find out how they contribute to the Blind Community Center of San Diego.

**The Lions Optometric Vision Clinic** is now open by appointment only. It is a non-profit 501C3 agency, located on the third floor of the Blind Community Center building. Their Mission is to provide basic vision care for **low-income** individuals throughout San Diego County. For vision screening or a pair of quality, **low-cost** glasses, **call 619-298-5273 for an appointment.**

### **Did you know?**

#### **Older adults already at higher risk of shingles from an article in AARP**

Adults age 50 and older infected with COVID-19 are 15 percent more likely to develop shingles within six months of the diagnosis compared to people who weren't infected, according to a large observational study published in the journal *Open Forum Infectious Diseases*. The risk rises to 21 percent if you've been hospitalized with COVID-19, according to the study.

Shingles, an outbreak of a blistering rash, is caused by the same virus (varicella zoster) that causes chicken pox. After you've had chicken pox, the virus lies dormant in your body. Years later, it can reactivate as shingles.

Ardeshir Hashmi, M.D., a geriatrician and section chief of Cleveland Clinic's Center for Geriatric Medicine, calls the study "incredibly important." He says his clinic has seen a "striking" jump in shingles cases among older adults since the pandemic hit.

"We thought it was related to the stress and strain of the pandemic," he says. "This is interesting in the sense that we will now keep a closer eye on older adults who get COVID, who are more likely to get shingles." Surveys show a "major increase" in the number of adults who reported stress, anxiety and depression during the pandemic according to the Mayo Clinic.

About 1 out of 3 people in the United States will develop shingles in their lifetime, usually after age 50, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). And, as with COVID-19, older adults are at significantly higher risk of shingles because immunity naturally declines with age, says Thomas Holland, M.D., infectious disease specialist and associate professor at Duke University Hospital.

Other diseases, such as HIV, that attack the body's defenses are already known to increase shingles risk. So it's logical that COVID-19 — which is known to lower immune function — would act in a similar way, Holland says. "This is just one of the many, many things that can happen that can prompt an episode of shingles," he says.

### **Vaccines can protect you**

Experts say the study underscores how important it is for older adults to get both the COVID-19 vaccine and the shingles vaccine.

The COVID-19 vaccine has been found to be highly effective in preventing severe illness from COVID-19. Hospitalizations in February 2022 were nine times higher in unvaccinated individuals age 65 and older, compared to their vaccinated and boosted peers, federal data shows.

To prevent shingles, the CDC recommends the two-dose Shingrix vaccine for all adults age 50 and older. However, only about 35 percent of Americans ages 60 and older reported that they had received the vaccine as of 2018, according to the most recent CDC data.

Shingrix is about 97 percent successful at preventing shingles in people in their 50s and 60s, and 91 percent successful for those age 70 and older. The vaccine may also lower the risk of shingles-related strokes in older adults.

Although the main symptom of shingles is a blistering rash, lingering pain from the disease can last for months or years after the rash goes away.

"The rash is bad, but the pain is what you really want to avoid," Hashmi says. "This pain is significant — it's excruciating pain — which there is really not a great treatment for. For a lot of patients, just from moving the bedsheet, they are screaming in pain."

"People who have had the (Shingrix) vaccine, even if they get the rash, the pain associated with it is almost zero compared to people who have never had the vaccine," he says. "If the vaccine can cause you to have no pain, that's a huge benefit."

### **What's So Important About Medical Device Accessibility?**

**From Mark A. Riccobono, President National Federation of the Blind**

Staying healthy is something we all desire and is necessary to lead independent and productive lives. Sometimes medical equipment helps us maintain our health, and managing that equipment safely, independently, and privately is essential. Unfortunately, many medical devices use digital interfaces which prevent blind people from operating them safely. Some medical devices which used to employ buttons and knobs have moved to touch screens with no auditory or tactile outputs.

One of our members shared her experience with new equipment:

“The leading cause of blindness in the United States is diabetes, but tools like blood glucose meters are less accessible than they were in the past. I need to manage my sugar actively to avoid more damage to my eyes, and that is hard to do without equipment that gives me nonvisual access. We need speech output built into our medical devices.”

The National Federation of the Blind has been working with manufacturers to encourage them to include nonvisual access for some time now, and we have a bill in congress, the Medical Device Nonvisual Access Act (H.R. 4853), which would require nonvisual access be built into home medical devices. The work we do around access to healthcare fosters independence and helps blind people live the lives we want in better health.

To learn more about the Medical Device Nonvisual Access Act [visit our Advocacy page](#).

### **SHOP WITH AMAZON SMILE and GIVE to the BCC**

Do you order items from Amazon? If so, Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to the Blind Community Center of San Diego when you select us as your supported charity. It costs you nothing, and it provides us with funds to keep putting smiles on our members' faces! Bookmark the link <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/95-6067253> and support us every time you shop. Thank you!