

scene



Instructor Hugo G. (left) showing student Cliff S. (right) how to use voice technology on his phone.

Spring/
Summer
2017

"I'm Independent Once Again."

Cliff S. was stunned when his ophthalmologist told him in 1998 that he had retinitis pigmentosa and would eventually go blind. During the next six years he continued to work, and to drive, while his vision gradually declined. In 2004, Cliff retired.

But then a few years later, as Cliff was driving into a parking lot, he almost hit a woman he hadn't even seen. "I realized I'd lost my peripheral vision, so I went home, put my keys away, and have never driven since," he remembers.

Cliff was reluctant to take advantage of our FREE services. But seeing him struggle, a friend eventually convinced Cliff to get help, and he paid us a visit.

Cliff's goal was to become as independent as possible. "Losing my sight was a terrible blow, but I realized I could either sit around or I could live." His first class taught him to listen more acutely and gave him tips that made his life a lot easier. Then he learned adaptive cooking techniques, the basics of braille, how to get around town safely with a white cane, and much more.

When his wife broke her foot recently, Cliff was able to manage the household successfully until she recovered — a big milestone for him.

"I am so grateful for everything I've learned at Braille Institute — especially all the great teachers

[see [Independent, P2](#)]

[Independent from cover]

and volunteers who helped me along the way. Now, I can do things for myself," Cliff says enthusiastically. Cliff also benefits from the weekly Men's Group at Braille Institute where he's an integral part of a beneficial support system. He especially likes helping those who are new to sight loss. "Our one rule in the group is 'no whining,' and that's my rule for myself too."

Having experienced the transformative power of Braille Institute firsthand, Cliff and Karen give generously to us knowing that they are helping so many others who are blind or visually impaired regain their independence.

USE YOUR IRA to Help Braille Institute

An IRA Charitable Rollover is an easy way to make a gift:

- Donors age 70 1/2 or older simply transfer all or a portion of their annual Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) directly from their financial institution to Braille Institute.
- Gift counts toward your annual RMD requirement.
- You pay no income taxes on the IRA distribution.

Call our Philanthropy Department at 1-800-BRAILLE (272-4553), Ext. 1256 for more information.



Mary and Howard McCorkle

"My grandparents knew that the fruit of their life's work would benefit others who were experiencing vision loss."

— Liz Morton

Through a Bequest, My Grandparents' Memory Lives On

Many of us are lucky to have had extraordinary people in our lives whose influence shaped the very nature of our character. For Liz Morton, the Director of Philanthropy in our Orange County and San Diego Centers, it was her beloved grandparents — all three of them — who helped lead her to a career at Braille Institute. Liz tells her inspiring story here:

"My grandfather, Dr. Howard Y. McCorkle, was born in 1919 — the same year Braille Institute was founded — in a tiny rural town in Idaho to a very poor family. As a child, Grandpa knew he wanted more from life.

"Grandpa met and married my grandmother, June Shafer, a nursing student, during his time as a pilot in WWII. After the war, Grandpa went to medical school and then transplanted the growing family to California. He practiced family medicine, with June at his side, in the Long Beach area for many years. Both were devoted to financially supporting several charitable organizations.

"After Grandma June died, Grandpa eventually remarried shortly after I was born. Mary Brady had been a longtime friend of Grandpa and Grandma June, so it was an unexpected, but welcomed romance. As I grew up, Grandma Mary and I became two peas in a pod. I always knew that she respected June's legacy, including June's emphasis on philanthropy.

"Mary's daughter, my Aunt Linda, had been diagnosed with type 1 diabetes in her youth and suffered many of the associated complications, including diabetic retinopathy. As Linda's sight loss progressed, it was Braille Institute that helped. An Orientation & Mobility Specialist trained her to use a white cane so she could get around; she learned independent living skills that allowed her to live alone; and our library kept her reading. Braille Institute's services significantly improved Linda's life, even when her health failed.

"My grandparents felt strongly about a bequest to Braille Institute well before I became a staff member. They knew that the fruit of their life's work would benefit others like Aunt Linda who were experiencing vision loss. Now that all three of them have passed, I feel tremendously grateful to see how their gift impacts our students each and every day. Their memory lives on through our work and inspires me to do as much as I can for others."

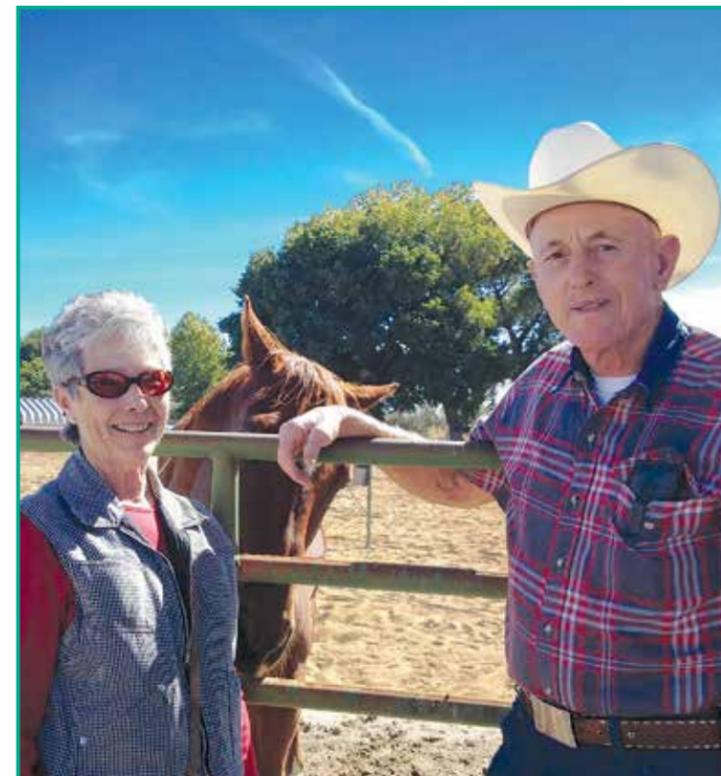
Couple's Compassion Spurs 50+ Years of Giving

With a cowboy's plainspoken modesty, Herb F. sums up his life in three words — "I've been lucky." But his story could fill a book. At age 16, he left home to join the Marines. Next, he became a professional bull rider on the rodeo circuit, touring the West Coast and Japan, and performed as a Hollywood stuntman, doubling for Little Joe in the *Bonanza* TV series. He was also cast as the original Marlboro Man, where his rugged silhouette was photographed for a black and white print ad that ran in national magazines. Ironically, Herb never smoked.

At a rodeo in 1966, he met Starr, who became his wife. "It was love at first sight," she says. The couple moved to Nevada where Herb built their own house and worked as a journeyman carpenter. Later, he became a business agent for the Northern Nevada Carpenters Union. Starr raised their two daughters, worked as a church secretary and treasurer, and currently teaches Sunday School and 4-H quilting. Both competed in long distance running races.

Today, the couple celebrates 50 years of marriage and as many years of loyal support for Braille Institute. In fact, Herb was surprised to learn that his very first contribution dated back to when he was 20. "Helping those who are blind or visually impaired is the right thing to do," Herb said as he reminisced.

Wanting to make a greater difference for people who have vision loss, the couple also funded two charitable gift annuities with Braille Institute. The investment earns high returns while providing them with guaranteed



Starr and Herb F. with their horse Red

"Helping those who are blind or visually impaired is the right thing to do."

— Herb F.

annual payments throughout their lifetime. "It's a good deal," says Herb. He quotes a favorite saying: "A cowboy is entitled to one good horse, one good dog, and one good woman. I've been blessed with all three. So it's only right to help those who aren't as fortunate."

Earn Up to 9% Annual Income for Life

With a Braille Institute **Charitable Gift Annuity**, you can enjoy a safe, high return on your money while helping people with vision loss — a true win-win situation. In exchange for your contribution, you receive a return of up to 9%, depending on your age, in the form of annuity payments for the rest of your life. You also get a current income tax deduction, and part of each annuity payment may be tax free.

For more information, return the enclosed reply card, or call 1-800-BRAILLE (272-4553), Ext. 1256 today for your free, no obligation gift illustration, or just to ask questions. Never a fee and no hidden charges.

Sample Gift Annuity Rates for One Recipient

Age	65	75	85	90+
%	4.7	5.8	7.8	9.0

Call for rates of other ages, or for two recipients. Rates in effect as of 02/2017

This is not legal advice. Prospective donors should seek the advice of a qualified estate and/or tax professional to determine the consequences of their gift.

Include 40,000 People IN YOUR WILL

While it's natural to leave bequests to loved ones, there's another group that deserves your generosity: children and adults who are blind or visually impaired.

By including Braille Institute of America in your will or trust, you'll help **brighten the lives of the thousands of children and adults served by Braille Institute each year.**

Please designate your bequest to "Braille Institute of America, Inc., a California Nonprofit Corporation with principal offices currently located at 741 North Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90029-3594."

Tax Identification Number: 95-1641426.
To request more information, call our Philanthropy Department at 1-800-BRAILLE (272-4553), Ext. 1256.



From the President

Dear Friend,

People who come to Braille Institute have significant or complete vision loss and are seeking a new way of living — a way that will help them live as independently as possible.

They have definitely come to the right place! At Braille Institute, our staff and volunteers are committed to providing a broad range of FREE services to people of all ages who are experiencing vision loss. Through our individual and small group programs, students learn new ways of doing the things they love — like getting around safely with a white cane and adaptive techniques for both cooking and computing.

In this issue of *Scene*, you'll read about Cliff who lost his vision later in life and then achieved exactly what he wanted through Braille Institute — independence. And you'll read the story of Liz's grandparents who were so grateful for the help a family member received, they decided to support Braille Institute through a bequest.

Braille Institute's ability to give hope and change lives — and to provide all of our services at no charge — is fueled by the generosity of our donors. As our donations grow, so does our capacity to deliver life-changing programs for the blind or visually impaired people we serve.

Thank you profoundly for your support.

Sincerely,

Peter A. Mindnich
President



741 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029
1-800-BRAILLE (272-4553), Ext. 1238
www.BrailleInstitute.org



Your Gift Today Will Change a Life!

Thanks to Braille Institute's FREE classes and services, a new world of opportunity and independence has opened up for thousands of men, women, and children! But right now, so many more people living with vision loss are in desperate need of the help and support we can give.

Please rush your generous gift today. And do not forget to include this reply form to ensure faster processing. To make an immediate difference, go to www.BrailleInstitute.org and make your gift online. Thank you!

Gift from Mr. and Mrs. John Smith

Yes! I want to give men, women, and children who are blind or visually impaired the support and skills they need to live confidently and independently. Here is my gift of:

\$35 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$_____

Please make your check payable to **Braille Institute of America** and return it with this reply form in the envelope provided.

To give by credit card, please see the back of this form. Thank you!

Mr. and Mrs. John Smith
1234 Main Street
Anytown, USA 12345-6789

Braille Institute
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Your contribution is tax-deductible as allowed by law.