

Include Braille Institute 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,

Loneliness can affect anyone, but someone who cannot see may feel even more isolated. That's why Braille Institute is more than just a place where people who are blind or visually impaired learn the skills to succeed in the sighted world. Just as important, we provide a supportive environment where people can connect with others who face the same challenges.

"I would rather walk with a friend in the dark, than alone in the light," said Helen Keller. At Braille Institute, we brighten hearts and minds through shared activities, experiences, and conversation. Here, people discover they are not alone. Here, in our caring community, friendships are made that can last a lifetime.

As you join with friends and family over the holidays, I want you to know that your generosity helps light the way for thousands of people who rely on us. Thank you for your gifts that provide hope and happiness.

Sincerely,

Peter A. Mindnich
President



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

Scene

Winter
2017

Painting Is Her Passion

Despondent over the loss of her husband, Joan L. felt her world was falling apart. Her eyesight had deteriorated due to macular degeneration. She no longer enjoyed painting landscapes, which once brought her great joy. Alone and in her 80s, Joan didn't know how she would cope.

Capturing nature's splendor in watercolors had always been her passion. Growing up in England, she received a scholarship to London's Royal Academy of Art. When World War II interrupted her studies, she enlisted in the Royal Air Force, serving as a radio operator. During this time, she met a young lab technician from Boston named Bart who was helping at a local hospital. They fell in love and got married.

After the war, Joan and Bart moved to the United States and raised three children. She continued to paint whenever she had time, including backdrops for a ballet company's performances. But as the years went on, Joan's vision loss put an end to her creativity. Unable to see the world's beauty, she tossed out all her art supplies, convinced she would never pick up a brush again.

But Joan's daughter learned about Braille Institute and urged Joan to make an appointment. Although reluctant, Joan agreed and signed up for a watercolor class. "What am I doing?" she thought. "I have thrown everything away!"

Joan learned how to maximize her remaining vision with magnification,

[see **Painting Is Her Passion, P2**]



Joan L.

Put Your Home Where Your Heart Is



Your home means security and independence, not just for you, but for thousands of people who are blind or visually impaired. Please help our students through a gift of residential, commercial, or undeveloped real estate through an outright donation or a bequest.

Groundbreaking News!

Braille Institute is building a new regional center in Anaheim, California. Expected to open in 2019, in concert with Braille Institute's 100th anniversary celebration, the new center — one of six regional centers — will help more than 7,000 blind children, adults, and seniors annually throughout Southern California.



[Painting Is Her Passion from cover]

lighting devices, and touch. Now, at 96, Joan's passion for painting is still going strong. "I've decided to just go modern with my art and skip the details," she says with a laugh.

In addition to the watercolor class, Joan gets audiobooks from Braille Institute's Library Services, participates in book clubs and a history class, and enjoys the many new friends she has made here. "Going to Braille Institute keeps me alive and in touch," she says.

A Bequest to Help "The Best of the Best"



Davis and Jean V.

"Braille Institute is a fabulous place that offers many courses and services for people dealing with vision loss." — Jean V.

Jean and Davis V. have led full and happy lives together. So they consider it only natural that they should share their blessings — and that includes making a bequest in their will to Braille Institute. "We love to give to our community," says Jean, "and what better place than to Braille Institute?"

A graduate of Stanford University, Jean pursued a life of public service, including volunteer teaching and working at the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce. Davis, who served in Europe as a U.S. Army infantryman during World War II, graduated from UCLA and went on to practice law.

After the couple retired, Jean began volunteering in her community. At a friend's suggestion, she visited one of Braille Institute's regional centers. Jean was so impressed by what she saw that she joined the Braille Institute Auxiliary, a local group of volunteers who raise funds and awareness to help support the Institute's programs and services. As Jean explains it, "Braille Institute is a fabulous place that offers many courses and services for people dealing with vision loss. And everyone who works or volunteers there has a very caring attitude."

For the past 25 years, Jean has been a dedicated member of the Auxiliary. So when Davis was later diagnosed with macular degeneration, he knew immediately where to find assistance. At Braille Institute, Davis learned about the latest adaptive digital devices, which are now helping him continue his love of reading.

From volunteering to personally benefiting from Braille Institute's services, the couple has come full circle by deciding to support the Institute through a bequest. Says Jean, "We have no stipulations, just whatever and however our gift can be used to help the best of the best."

Generosity Inspired by a Friendship

It was at a yoga class where Eric G., an author and journalist, first learned about Braille Institute. Noticing that a fellow student in the class was blind, he struck up a conversation with him afterward. The student, Ruben P., turned out to be an artist who took classes at Braille Institute. Eric was impressed by Ruben's refusal to let blindness be an obstacle to living fully, and the two became friends.

As a writer who focuses on the arts and social issues, Eric believed Ruben's ceramic and mosaic art deserved to be seen by a wider audience. So he arranged for the art gallery at Workmen's Circle, a social justice and cultural center in Los Angeles, to host an exhibit of Ruben's work.

"The show was a great success and gave Ruben a sense of accomplishment and self-worth," says Eric. "It was such a validation of how Braille Institute helps people."

But Eric wanted to do more to help people who were blind and also express his personal gratitude for the gift of sight. He decided to make a contribution in the form of a charitable gift annuity. It was a way to support Braille Institute's services for years to come; plus the annuity payments for life were "better than the one percent interest from a CD," Eric says. "With a charitable gift annuity, I can help people like my good friend Ruben while getting a little something back," he explains.

Eric also helped other Braille Institute art students gain more exposure for their work by hosting a holiday group show at the Workmen's Circle art gallery last year. "It's so rewarding to see people getting encouragement for their art," he says.



Ruben P. and Eric G.

"With a charitable gift annuity, I can help people like my good friend Ruben while getting a little something back."

— Eric G.

Rolling Over Your IRA Is Easy

An IRA Charitable Rollover is a PURR-FECT way to make a gift:

- Donors age 70½ or older roll over assets from their IRAs to Braille Institute.
- Funds must be transferred directly from the donor's financial institution to Braille Institute.
- Gifts can be in any amount, up to \$100,000 per person per calendar year.
- Gifts count toward your annual Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) requirement.
- You pay no income taxes on the IRA distribution.

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



Earn Up to 9% Annual Income for Life

With a Braille Institute **Charitable Gift Annuity**, you can enjoy a safe, high return on your savings 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 11/2017.

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.