

BVRS Centennial Celebration

A Night of Remembrances

BVRS celebrated 100 years of service on Wednesday, October 20th at Carnegie Music Hall in Oakland. The Centennial Celebration marked an important milestone for BVRS. The evening highlighted 100 individuals, companies, and organizations who were recognized for their past record of support and dedication to BVRS and its predecessor organizations. Each of these individuals received a centennial medal to thank them for their service. Approximately 350 guests attended the program which began in the auditorium and was followed by a beautiful dinner in the Grand Foyer.



From left are Annie Hanna Cestra, Peggy Snavelly, and Helen Hanna

Larry Richart of KDKA radio was the Master of Ceremony for the program and was assisted by Julie Unitas Giba, a long-time volunteer and former president of St. Lucy's Auxiliary to the Blind. The program was divided into three parts: a historical review of the past, the awarding of Centennial Medals, and a tribute to BVRS' past and current staff. Thanks to the research skills of Dr. Richard Welsh, former Pittsburgh Vision Services President, a wonderful historical presentation began the evening.

The presentation of medals which followed was very inspirational. Several former and current clients, volunteers, board leaders, donors, and cooperating organizations were awarded medals. Over 85 people were seated on the stage after all the medals were presented. For many attendees, the centennial was like a reunion of old friends and classmates.

The third portion of the program featured a salute to our current and past staff which showcased clients and the level of caring service they received while at BVRS. Comment after comment reinforced the importance of our staff and the essential role they play in the rehabilitation of our clients. There was hardly a dry eye in the audience after this program was over.

Fabulous displays of every program currently offered at BVRS were presented in the registration and reception areas. Included were both historical memorabilia and descriptions of equipment, programs, and services currently offered. Also displayed were group photographs of staff from each department.

The Hanna Family, who have had four generations of family members active in the support of our agency, took on the role as Honorary Chairs. They also accepted medals on behalf of themselves, their mother, grandmother, children, and grandchildren. Helen Hanna Casey, Annie Hanna Cestra, and Hoddy Hanna all made comments about the importance of our work and how proud they were to be involved. Howard Hanna Real Estate Services was one of our Diamond Centennial Sponsors as was The Auxiliary, BVRS.

Every person who attended the event received a beautiful diamond-shaped paper weight with our Centennial logo etched into it as a souvenir.

A lot of hard work and dedication went into making this the most special event in our 100 year history. Hats off to the committee under the direction of Peggy Snavelly, a member of our board of directors, who worked diligently on this for over a year. As well thanks go to the Development staff and to Deb Mendenhall for planning the event and utilizing the team's creative skills to pull off a perfect evening. The event raised close to \$100,000 for our programs and reinforced relationships with many old and new friends. BVRS looks forward to continuing our service to the community for the next 100 years.

***Many thanks to the
Centennial Committee***

Peggy Snavelly, Chair

The Hanna Family, Honorary
Chairs

Cheryl Akers-Stanton

Bonnie Anton

Alan Boarts

Julie Giba

Joe Gordon

Pat Hauser

Dennis Huber

Elizabeth McCarthy

Mary Nelle McLennan

Cathy Mullin

Dick Roberts

KC Sokol

Betsy Teti

Richard Welsh, Ph.D.

Jane Yallum

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Appreciation to the
Centennial Sponsors***

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