Growth and expansion are ahead for the Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth. With goals for the future stated, the Board of Directors could reflect on the successes of 2005 at the Annual Meeting of the Board on February 7 at Ridglea Country Club. Board chairman Jim Haddock reviewed the exceptional progress made during 2005 and praised the dedication of the staff and the involvement of the Board (see remarks on next page.)

Several awards were presented during the evening with Michael David Milburn recognized as Employee of the Year. In accepting the plaque and cash award Milburn said: “I want to thank everyone I work with, the supervisors and Mr. Mosteller.”

The Beacon Award recognizes an organization or agency that helps to provide employment opportunities for the visually impaired. The 2005 award went to the Texas Council for Purchasing from People with Disabilities. John Luna, chairman of the Council, accepted the award with Wanda Stovall, a Council member and former board chairman of the Lighthouse. They received a commemorative plaque.

The Lumen Award, the highest recognition from the Lighthouse was awarded to Mike Smith, one of the longest serving board members who has held every office and is in his third term of service with 27 years as a member. The Lumen Award is etched glass on a wooden base.

He said “I’ve received more from the Lighthouse than I’ve ever given . . . this is a great award and I really appreciate it.”

New officers are: Michele Hahnfeld, board chairman, Lee Johnson and Steve Peglar, vice chairmen, Kathleen Knight, treasurer, R. Blake Hailey, secretary, and Stephen Wilson, member-at-large.

Major developments are ahead for 2006 as the Lighthouse begins implementing parts of the Long Range Plan and a new board officers assume their new responsibilities.
Jim Haddock summarizes 2005 at Lighthouse

We had an excellent year in 2005, our 70th year of operation. Our year end report shows that we served 1,185 men, women and teenagers who are blind through our five programs: community services, vocational training, senior services, white cane training, and our employment programs met their goals.

In the Industrial Division, a combination of paper, boxes, pads and Servmart sales totaled $13,640,000, a new sales record. In producing our products, and at the retail store, 85 men and women earned $887,000 and worked more than 14,000 hours. All of these numbers are an increase over those in 2004 that were driven by a 10 percent increase in sales.

Another important number is our labor ratio. Ninety-eight percent of direct labor in our operation was performed by employees who are blind. The standard we are expected to meet is 75 percent. At the base the Servmart exceeded budget in posting sales of $1,170,000. We are in our fourth year of operation. Sales have increased steadily each year. The Servmart is a dependable part of the base infrastructure.

Our Service Programs were fully staffed for the year. Gayle Bruns provided individual assistance to help elderly people adjust to their loss of vision and maintain their independence. We expect her program to grow in the future.

In Orientation and Mobility, Kent Bowers and Michelle Gatton built their local caseloads and also provided training to people as far away as Wichita Falls. Wayne Pound supervises these programs and also provided Community Services to more than 800 people this year.

One of our major accomplishments this year was the Board adopting long range plans to expand the programs that we provide. The Planning Committee was chaired by Michele Hahnfeld. They worked with the Nonprofit Service Center to set goals for the place we will be in three to five years. The plan that was approved by the Board calls for expanding employment from 70 to 100 jobs, expanding services to 1500 people annually and increasing the Endowment to $20 million to meet funding needs in the future.

To accomplish these goals, we will be adding people to the staff. One key move was internal. Wayne Pound has been asked to devote half of his time to Development. He has been in training the last several months and we are seeing the results of his efforts. An example is the $100,000 he help us purchase the property on the northwest corner of the building.

A new Development Advisory Council will assist Wayne. The Council includes Janis Brours, Bill Cranz, Jim Creel, Bob Lansford, Pat Massad, J. T. Rogers and our Board Chair. All of these individuals have a long history with the Lighthouse and we are pleased that they will be helping us achieve our goals. Wayne will continue to work in Community Services with the assistance of Todd Icard, as well as supervise the service programs. We are in the process of adding the people who will concentrate on developing projects to provide new positions.

Our accomplishments in 2005 are due in large part to our very capable staff. From the Industrial Division: VanDell Bryant, Tommy Jaynes and Charlie Wood. Wayne Pound from the Service Programs, Jim Walker from Servmart and from Administration Deanna Conner, Phyllis Looney and Bob Mosteller. Thank you and to our employees for a job well done.

I would also like to give a special thank you to Louis Daniel. For 19 years, Louis had donated an original lighthouse drawing for our Christmas card. Finally I want to thank each of the Board and Endowment Trustees. Your efforts, time and dedication are essential to the continued success of the Lighthouse. I would like to recognize two of our former Board Members, Ruth Ann Kearley and Beth Whitaker. They finished the 10 year terms in 2004 and since we didn’t have an Annual Meeting last year, I want to recognize them tonight. Thank you all. Your support has made my two years as Chairman a time I have enjoyed. In summary, we had a great year in 2005. 1,185 people served, a sales record, more work for our employees and plans to expand in the future and I appreciate the guidance of Bob Mosteller.

2005 Annual Report
Summary of Services

Community Services

Community Services is a vital part of the Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth. Wayne Pound provided varied services for 800 people last year. He might offer information on transportation, Social Security or various resources in Tarrant and surrounding counties. Todd Icard joined with Pound to supplement the work and provide additional assistance to the visually impaired and blind community. They met 106 percent of goal and 6106 units of service for 102 percent of goal.

Orientation and Mobility

Learning to gain independence and mobility in travel throughout the workplace, the community and within the home are goals of this program under the guidance of Michelle Gatton and Kent Bowers. With the addition of the Texas Confidence Builders Program from the Department of Rehabilitation Services, the number of referrals dropped. But during 2005, Kent Bowers reached 44 individuals to attain 63 percent of goal and 95 percent of units of service. Michelle Gatton worked with 45 people to reach 82 percent of goal and 89 percent of hours of service goal. Other innovations include having a traffic light with a sound device installed on Seminary Drive and adding signage to assist Lighthouse employees on bus routes.

Senior Services

As Gayle Bruns, rehabilitation teacher, reaches out to Seniors with Vision Loss, she devises methods for seniors to learn new ways to do familiar things. She took her outreach program to 251 seniors to reach 100 percent of goal and attained 928 hours of service for 97 percent of goal. She placed 15 Closed Circuit Televisions in homes and expanded the Telephone Support Group, a network of visually impaired seniors, to 27 people.

Industrial

Eighty-six blind or visually impaired people found employment through various manufacturing departments within the Industrial Division. Headed by Tommy Jaynes, vice president/manufacturing, with a crew of capable supervisors, they reached 95 percent of year goal and 100 percent units of service at 253. Among products manufactured during 2005 are: energy dissipation pads for the United States Army and some private businesses, all purpose copy paper, continuous feed computer and green bar paper, cushioned containers, pens under the State Use Law and a variety of subcontracts for General Services Administration and for the commercial marketplace.

Our 70th Anniversary

The Lighthouse observed its 70th anniversary with a special celebration on September 20. Rep. Kay Granger delivered the keynote speech and was presented with The Champion award in recognition of her support of the Javitz Wagner O’Day Act. Also recognized were 2004 Employee of the Year, Hervey Gutierrez, and Van Dell Bryant for his 30 years of service.
Mike Smith honored with Lu- men Award at Annual Meeting

Mike Smith, a 27 year Board member of the Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth was honored for his commitment and service to the Lighthouse at the recent Annual Meeting.

In presenting the award, Chairman Jim Haddock cited contributions Smith has made.

“The highest honor our organization may confer is the Lumen Award...Established in 1988, the Lumen Award exists to recognize individuals or organizations that have demonstrated an exceptional degree of concern for the Lighthouse and its mission of service to the blind.

“Many remarkable men and women have their names on this award: Catherine Alexander, Pat and Bill Massad, Allan Howeth, LeNelle Campbell. Adding another name to this distinguished group is another outstanding individual.

“He is the longest serving member and there is just isn’t much he hasn’t done. Served in every office, chaired every committee and most recently was involved in the Long Range Planning Committee which established the strategic plans to expand employment opportunities and service programs at the Lighthouse.

“He was actively involved so many years ago as we planned the move from the old, red brick two-story house to our current building. He is a donor and has been someone who talks about the Lighthouse to other potential donors.

“His own area of expertise - banking and finance have been extremely helpful resulting in significant cost savings to the Lighthouse. He enjoys an open and warm relationship with many of our staff. I know they appreciate his interest and concern and the work they do.

“For his long and distinguished legacy of service, we wish to honor him this evening with the Lumen Award.”

Smith is executive vice president of Summit Bank, Alta Mesa, a position he’s held for seven years. There have been other banks he’s joined earning a high profile in the banking community for his solid reputation and knowledge.

A native of Mississippi, he graduated from Mississippi State with a Bachelor of Science and later received a MBA from Texas Christian University.

He became involved with the Lighthouse through M. C. Hamilton while at Continental National Bank. He has watched the growth, the struggles, the successes.

Smith remembers the years of ad specialty ballpoint pens and the financial difficulties the Lighthouse faced. He watched the turnaround that came with good management, good employees and the introduction of paper related manufacturing.

He and Sue have been married 36 years and have two sons and a daughter - and new grand-daughter Emerson Grace. Brad is a businessman with his own company, Steven is finishing up at Texas A & M and Jennifer is a UT graduate who works in Austin.

Smith’s other activities include South Area Chamber of Commerce, Westside Rotary, Ridgeley Country Club, golf, tennis, hunting, reading and Arlington Heights Methodist Church where they are longtime members.

Sue teaches preschool there; helping to shape lives. Mike Smith, 27 years with the Light house; helping to secure futures.

Employee of the Year has varied interests

David Milburn has had many ups and downs in his 43 years. One major “ups” came in December 2005 at the annual Christmas dinner when he was named employee of the year at the Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth.

“I can’t believe it,” he said. “I’ve only been here four years. I can’t believe it.”

But staff members believed he was worthy of the honor. A lead worker in the copy paper division, Milburn is considered “the best of the best”, and was deemed an “excellent example of what a lead worker should be, very dedicated and takes a lot of pride in his work, polite, respectful and very productive, consistently delivers high quality work and is a great example for other employees.”

Milburn has held a variety of jobs before coming back to the Lighthouse in 2001. He has done sales, construction, fast food, moving furniture, and working as a lighting and audio technician for a band, his favorite job, he says.

Born in Iowa, his family moved to Oklahoma City where he graduated from high school in 1981. His family moved about and he relocated to Texas in 1990.

His sight began to diminish due to pigmentary glaucoma and Milburn is quick to admit he wishes he’d done more about it in the early stages. His vision has declined and he is legally blind. His mobility is good and he acknowledges he is sure to be very aware of his surroundings.

A self taught artist, his acrylic works have been shown in the Four Star Coffee Bar on West 7th Street. He paints mainly in primary colors. He also plays keyboard and favors “the blues.”

Milburn enjoys books on tape with non-fiction his choice for reading.

He is very appreciative of Tommy Jaynes who hired him in 2001. “I needed this job,” he said, “And I enjoy being here.”

Texas Council Receives Award

The Texas Council for purchasing from People With Disabilities was recognized by the Fort Worth Lighthouse for outstanding contributions to the agency at the Annual Meeting. In presenting the award, Michele Hahnfeld said the Council consists of nine members with a goal to create employment opportunities for disabled individuals. They approve products and services that are purchased by state agencies that create thousands of jobs.

In the 27 years the Fort Worth Lighthouse has participated in the State Use Program, scores of blind employees have produced ballpoint pens, computer paper, award products and copy paper. Many have used this work experience to move on to jobs in the community. State Use sales represent more than half of the Lighthouse revenue and jobs for 37 employees. The Council is made up of private citizens and representatives from state agencies. Among them are individuals who have been with Community Rehabilitation Programs. Former Board Chair Terry Boyd had served and Wanda Stovall, a former chair, is a current member.

The Texas Council has an excellent 27 year history and has grown from serving hundreds to serving thousands. The program has grown, is productive and is an invaluable asset to all Texans.

“Consistent and dependable jobs for our employee is one of the primary goals,” said Hahnfeld. “A key component at the Lighthouse to provide steady jobs is the state program that enables us to sell our products to the state agencies in Texas. The Beacon award recognizes a long time partner.”

John Luna, chairman of the Council, accepted the award saying the Council was very pleased at the recognition and that they enjoyed the relationship with the Fort Worth Lighthouse.
Freda Craig provides CCTV’s for 10 seniors with vision loss

Freda Craig is an independent senior who has faced many adversities in her 70 plus years. She became widowed a few years ago and other deaths have come to her and her family. Another trouble entered her life a few years ago when she was diagnosed with macular degeneration.

The Macular Degeneration Foundation estimates more than 10 million people, 55 or older, have aged related macular degeneration. It gradually reduces central vision, and like glaucoma, allows a gradual loss of vision. It may result in blurred central vision and distortion. Freda Craig said her occurred suddenly when a blood vessel broke behind her retina.

She finally found the Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth and Gayle Bruns, rehabilitation teacher in the Seniors with Vision Loss program. Bruns visits with Freda in her cozy apartment off Bryant Irvin Road. She determines any needs for the independent Craig and recently was able to provide her with a very special aid.

It’s a CCTV, or closed circuit television, that is located in Freda Craig’s bedroom. By placing reading material on the base of the device, enlarged words appear on a television-like screen. The words are magnified about 200 percent and provide easy viewing for Freda Craig’s well read Bible, or other reading material.

The CCTV was provided by a gift from the Crystelle Waggoner Charitable Trust administered by Bank of America, through Darlene Mann, senior vice president.

Wayne Pound, vice president/rehabilitation and community services company, wrote: “We wanted to let you know that the Lighthouse for the Blind recently purchased 10 CCTV-low vision magnification devices and these are now going into the homes of visually handicapped individuals. As a result of the grant from the Crystelle Waggoner Charitable Trust, elderly men and women with significantly limited vision and on limited income, will have access to equipment which will permit them to enjoy a much greater degree of independence...Again may I express our appreciation to the Bank of America and the Crystelle Waggoner Trust for their interest and support of the Lighthouse.”

Despite Freda Craig’s limited vision, she still enjoys crocheting - sometimes using a monocular device behind her glasses, keeping up with the Winter Olympics and making her much praisedudge and peanut brittle. Her visits with Bruns are special times and marked by assessing needs by Bruns, and meaningful conversations. She is part of a telephone network set up by Robbie Stutes, another of Bruns clients.

Freda recently confided to Bruns that three times she has had a recurring dream. She dreams that she can see. With advances in the study of macular degeneration and new pharmaceuticals being developed, perhaps that dream may come true.

For now, having the Closed Circuit Television is a step to that dream.

Summit Bank Honors Mike Smith

Summit Bank, where Mike Smith is executive vice president, joined the accolades he is receiving as winner of the Lumen Award from the Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth.

A recent letter to Lighthouse President Robert W. Mosteller said:

“We at Summit Bank, N.A., are very proud to know that Mike Smith, Executive Vice President, Alta Mesa location, is to be honored by your organization with the Lumen Award for his commitment and concern for those affected with blindness in our community. Mike is dedicated to the Lighthouse for the Blind and has demonstrated this well by continuing to serve in many capacities for the past 27 years.

“On behalf of the officers and employees at Summit Bank, N.A., we are pleased to know that you value our good friend and co-worker, Mike, and present to you our contribution of $1,000 for the Lighthouse for the Blind.”

The letter was signed by Philip E. Norwood, Chairman.

In honor of Elijah Arrast
Martha Rush

In honor of Elizabeth Schell Smith
James W. Schell

In honor of Mike Smith
Micky M. Severson

In honor of the Clients, Friends and Employees of The Whitney Smith Company, Inc.
The Whitney Smith Company, Inc.

In honor of Fielden E. Williams
Fielden E. Williams

In honor of Bob Mosteller
Stephen and Aubra Wilson

Memorial Contributions

In memory of Emilie Jean Hacker
James H. Atkinson, DDS

In memory of Victoria Collins
Mr. and Mrs. T. F. Campbell

In memory of Dan G. Poland
Chiles Survivor Trust

In memory of Victoria M. Collins and C. O. Ted Collins
Ted Collins, Jr.

In memory of the Rev. Gethrol Naomi Barnes
Tom and Robbi Griffin

In memory of Nelda M. Jackson
Jackson Family Foundation

In memory of Ann Scroggie Ward
James and Quinby Rainbolt

Students enjoy annual outing to Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo

Two children get ready to enjoy the Rodeo.

Headphones, Paula Reed-Tollett’s great descriptions, and the Telephone Pioneers-Cowtown Chapter, help make the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo a glimpse into Fort Worth’s heritage.

Telephone Pioneers installed headphones and a sound system in Will Rogers Coliseum during the Stock Show outing.

Lee Johnson, a Lighthouse for the Blind board member, donated tickets through his financial counseling services company.