



STAYING FOCUSED

Magnifiers & More

Volume 5 Issue 1

Dear Friends,

Winter Greetings to all of you! We hope that you are staying warm and safe this winter. As we write this letter, Ground Hog Day is just around the corner and it brings a comparison to low vision! You are thinking, what do Punxsutawney Phil and Low Vision have in common? Well, Phil has to make a decision as to whether or not he is going to come out of his hole, looks to see if he sees his shadow, which then is "suppose" to give us a sign of how much longer winter will last. In dealing with people who have low vision, they too have to make a decision as to whether they are going to embrace the disease and move forward or whether they are just going to bury themselves and try to ignore the disease.

Our *mission* at Magnifiers & More is to help you embrace that disease. Our *goal* is to make life more enjoyable and tolerable for you by educating, encouraging and being emphatic to you.

February is *National Macular Degeneration Awareness* month. To many this is a foreign word, to others it is as bad as the word cancer. For this newsletter, we have dedicated a lot of information towards the disease of Macular Degeneration in hopes that it will give a better understanding of the disease. We have also included in this newsletter, some magnificent news about some "visually impaired" friendly devices that we feel will greatly help you in your everyday life.

Just like Phil, we hope that you see the light and are willing to embrace your disease and spring into action.

February is also "Have a Heart" month; so please remember that we are here to help you in any way that we can.

Debbie & Murphy Kogler and Staff

*DIS-EASE OF:
AGE-RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION*

Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is still not a commonly known eye disease yet millions of Americans suffer from this disease. Macular Degeneration occurs most often in people over 60 years old, which is why it is called Age-Related Macular Degeneration (ARMD).

AMD is classified as a low vision disease. Fifteen million Americans have a low vision disease.

Macular degeneration is caused by the deterioration of the central portion of the retina, called the macula. The macula is responsible for focusing your central vision. The macula controls our ability to read, drive a car, recognize faces or colors, and see objects in fine detail. Since only the center of your vision is affected, you will not go completely blind from this disease. You will still have peripheral side vision.

There are two forms of AMD: "dry" and "wet". Dry AMD is the most common form of the disease. It involves the presence of Drusen - fatty deposits that form under the light-sensing cells in the retina. Vision loss in dry AMD usually progresses slowly. Wet AMD is less common, but more rapidly threatening to vision. Wet AMD causes tiny blood vessels under the retina to leak or break open. This distorts vision and causes scar tissue to form. However, the wet form is treatable, whereas the dry form is not.

The exact cause of AMD is unknown, but there are certain risk factors. (See the following chart)

Although there is no known cure for AMD, research continues on the disease. Promising new drug therapies, designed to slow the effects of AMD, are showing great strides in stagnating the progression of wet AMD. Routine dilated exams are the most important prevention for vision diseases. If you experience any changes in your vision, seek help from you eye care professional.

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Common Symptoms of Macular Degeneration

- Straight lines such as telephone poles, the sides of buildings or Street light poles look wavy.
- Written text and/or type can appear blurry.
- A dark or empty spot may block the center of your vision.
- Difficulty in see faces

Risk Factors For Macular Degeneration:

Genetics - If others in your family have macular degeneration, you have a greater risk of developing it.

Age - AMD signs are present in about 14% of people 55 - 64, 20% of age 65 - 75 year olds and up to 37% of people over age 75.

Smoking - A MAJOR risk factor for Macular Degeneration.

Gender - AMD is more common in women than in men.

Race - AMD is more common in Caucasians than other races. This may be partially due to the pigment in the eye or eye color.

Eye Color - AMD is more common in people with blue eyes. This may be related to damage associated with exposure to ultraviolet light. Blue eyed people may have less protective pigment in their eyes.

UV Exposure – UV (ultra violet exposure) to the damaging sun rays.
Wearing of UV filter sunglasses is a must for anyone.

AMD in One Eye - If you already have AMD in one eye, your chance of developing it in the other eye is higher. Dry AMD in one eye may predispose you to wet AMD in the other eye.

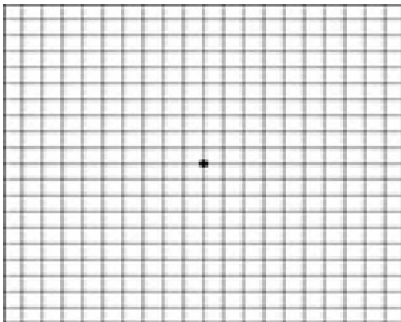
VIEWS FROM THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED



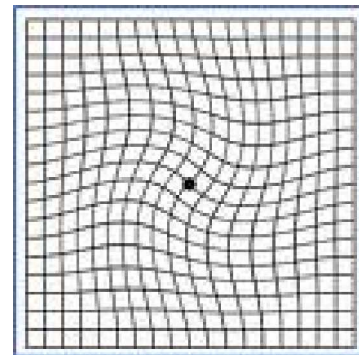
Normal Vision



Vision with Macular Degeneration



Normal Vision



Vision with Wet Macular Degeneration



What Time is it?

MAGNIFICENT NEWS

THE JITTERBUG DIAL™ CELL PHONE

You have been asking....Now, there's a cell phone that's easy to see for anyone AND the Visually Impaired!

- Ideal if you want an easy-to-use phone to dial direct and keep in touch.
- The sound is loud and clear
- A soft ear cushion makes it easy to hear
- The screen is bright and easy to see
- The phone fits in the palm of your hand. Open size approx. 2-1/4" X 7-1/2"
- Access all the features including voicemail by answering simple 'Yes' or 'No' questions
- The bigger, backlit buttons make it easy to dial
- Dial '0' and Jitterbug operators are ready to assist you day or night

For More Information go to
<http://www.jitterbug.com>



FOR YOUR INFORMATION:



Tax Deductions

If you itemize on your income tax returns, any aids that you have purchased for your vision impairment is deductible under your medical expenses. In addition, large print tax forms are available. Call 1-800-829-3676 for more information.

Telephone Tax Refund

Anyone who paid the long-distance telephone tax will get the refund on their 2006 Federal income tax return. The telephone tax refund is a one-time payment available on your 2006 federal income tax return. It's available to anyone (including individuals, businesses and non-profit organizations) who paid long-distance taxes on landline, cell phone or Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) service. The IRS is offering a standard refund amount of between \$30 and \$60, so you don't need to gather old phone bills. Taxpayers who choose the standard amount will only need to fill out one line on their tax returns.

Unity in the Battle Against Vision Impairment



Show your support for the millions of Americans affected by Vision Impairments.

Wearing a V.I.P. (Visually Impaired Person) wristband will show your support or help identify that you have a vision impairment.

Proceeds from the sale of these wristbands will go towards research & rehabilitation of eye diseases.

The wristbands are white with red lettering.

Your thoughtfulness has just brightened a visually impaired persons' life!

STAYING FOCUSED

Lake County, Ohio installs A Reverse 9-1-1 Resident Notification System

This new countywide Reverse 911 system will contact you in case of an emergency via your telephone. An automatically pre-recorded message will alert you of any important public safety information in your area.

The Reverse 911 system will be used when:

- a serious risk of life and/or property exists
- a social emergency threatens your neighborhood such as an escaped criminal
- a lost child is reported and your help is needed to find him/her.

All residents of the county with a published telephone number are already listed in the Reverse 911 system. If your number is unlisted, you can register with the county. To register call: 440-350-5499 (for Lake County Residents only) or visit their website at: www.lakecountyohio.org

For residents outside of Lake County, Ohio, you can contact your local county Emergency Management Agency for information on a Reverse 9-1-1 notification system and to register with them.

Looking for a new way to communicate with friends and family? Is it hard for you to see to type an email to someone? There is a new Internet site available to anyone who has access to the Internet. A site called HelloWorld lets you connect with your loved ones via a video email. All you do is record your email and send it. You do not have to download any harmful software. No worrying about seeing to type an email. To learn more go to: www.helloworld.com/magnifiers and then click on 'join now' to get more information.

MURPHY'S PAGE



Dear Friends,

It's Wintertime... finally! I have been waiting for months now and it just seemed to take forever to get here. I got worried when there was no snow at Christmas time; you know Rudolph follows the yellow snow to find his favorite canine friends!!

But at last winter is here and I am having a "snowball" of a good time. I love to catch and chase snowballs. Mom calls the snow "doggy cocaine" because I and my canine friends love to sniff it, lick it and bury our heads in it. Then we run around like wild dogs and make doggy angels in the snow! Oh, it is so *woof-funderful!*

Mom and I play this game where she throws miniature marshmallows out into the snow and I have to find them. She thinks she is being smart because they blend into the snow (no contrast), but my nose can find them with no problem. Sometimes I pretend that I can't find them so she will throw me more; I fool her all the time.

I have been keeping the staff busy at the store, no sitting around for them. Our support group is going very well and I am learning who the softies are that will slip me a cookie or two during the meetings! We finally have our low vision cookbooks ready; you have to check it out - my picture is in there along with some of my own personal recipes. Yes, I do cook, but I am much better at clean-up than preparation. Unfortunately, mom did not let me taste test all the recipes in the book, but I am sure they are really lip-smacking delicious and *paw-rrific!*



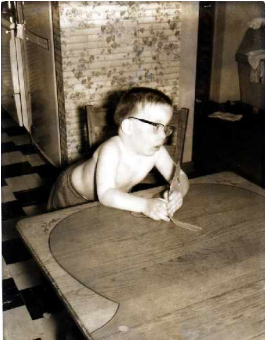
Enjoy the rest of the winter; it is a shame that it comes to an end so soon, but think of it this way: it's on the *heel* of Spring!

Stay warm, safe and be sure to throw a snowball for me!

Woof Woof,

Murphy Kogler, CEO (canine executive officer)

EDWIN'S CORNER



Do Not Give Up!

In my last article, I mentioned about my premature birth and how it caused my visual impairment. I never knew what it was like to have 20/20 vision.

My first recollection of an eye problem was at the age of 2 and 1/2 when my mother was teaching me the alphabet. My mother cut out alphabet letters from plastic and handed them to me in a dark room. Mom sat next to me and would hand me a letter and ask me what it was. Through time, I learned my alphabet. By age 4, I was enrolled in Head Start to ensure that my lack of vision wasn't going to affect my future learning.

How are you doing with your adjustment to your vision impairment? Do you find yourself giving up because you can't do things like you use to? Do Not Give Up!

Yes, there were times when I wanted to give up, but I didn't. The key to overcoming a disability is to educate yourself about the products and services available to you. But YOU must want to do this. You need to retain your quality of life so that you CAN do the things you did before but just in a different way. Being employed now for 8 months at Magnifiers & More, I have been educated in a wide variety of possibilities. I promise you, you won't regret it.

Thank you for all the wonderful feedback on our website and newsletters. If I can do what I am doing, you can do the same in your life too!

LOW VISION SUPPORT GROUP
Every FOURTH Wednesday of the month
Mentor Senior Center - 2 to 4 PM
8484 Munson Road
Mentor, OH 44060
440-255-1100

Now Available for the Chefs and Novice Cooks
A Large Print Cookbook



Simple recipes and helpful hints
Featuring recipes in large print

The Recipes are simple and fun to make. Along with helpful hints for cooking when visually impaired. All the recipes in the book were contributed by members of the *Visionaries Low Vision Support Group*. Proceeds from the sale of the book will go to a non-profit organization.

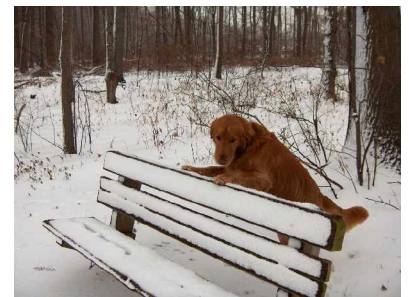
A Note of Interest



One of the most common comments that we get from folks like you is "Why didn't my doctor tell me that there are aids to help with my vision?" We've been listening and we have decided that we will now be publishing two newsletters; a quarterly newsletter for you and another edition for the professional community. This professional newsletter will be geared towards educating the medical professionals about the availability of help for their visually impaired patients. If there is a medical professional that you would like us to add to our list; please let us know. We will be sending one to all the eye doctors in the area.

Believe In Angels?

Thanks to '*Visiting Angels*' of Mentor, OH, a home care living assistance company; who believes in educating their clients and staff about available options for the visually impaired.



We need more angels to spread the word and Help change the lives of the visually impaired!

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Mark your calendars for these events:



Saturday March 24, 2007

Macula Vision Research Foundation's *SupportSight* & Retina Associates of Cleveland will be presenting their annual informational meeting. This meeting will be held at the Middleburg Community Center on Bagley Rd. in Middleburg Heights from 10-12 pm. Doctors from Retina Associates of Cleveland will be talking about the latest research in Macular Degeneration and our own Debbie will be answering questions on low vision and what is available to help the visually impaired.

Friday April 20, 2007

The Vision Concerns Support Group in Avon Lake, Ohio will be holding their second annual Low Vision fair. The event will be held at the Avon Lake Senior Center located at the Corner of Lake Rd. (SR 6) & SR 83 from 10 – 5 pm. For more information call Gary at 440-933-8486.

Looking for someone to run errands?



We just learned about a company in Lake County, Ohio called '*Time Finders*'. This company is your personal assistant! You can hire them to run errands for you; grocery shop, pick up dry cleaning, pick up your medications, etc. They will also do some light housekeeping for you as well. The company is geared to helping those in the later stages of life who need some extra assistance and who can no longer get out on their own. For more info call 440-391-9494.

This company comes recommended by several of our clients!

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Edwin Janoch
Magnifiers & More
7775 Mentor Avenue
Mentor, Ohio 44060
440-946-3363
E-mail: cbetter@earthlink.net
www.magnifiersandmore.net

FREE MATTER FOR THE
BLIND AND PHYSICALLY
HANDICAPPED



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Feb 28, Mar 28, Apr 25: Support Group Meeting
Mentor Senior Center 2 - 4 PM
- March 10: Join us for the *March For Meals* at the Great Lakes Mall,
Mentor, Ohio 8 – 10 AM
- April 20: Avon Lake *Vision Concerns* Fair, Avon Lake, Ohio
For More Information Call *Magnifiers & More*
440-946-3363