Sight Loss Services, Inc.
Cape Cod and Islands
The CandleLight Newsletter
October 2026

"I want to age the way that life makes you age, because there's beauty in autumn and winter and I think people forget that."

- Helen Baxendale

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Sight Loss Services Needs You!

We are looking for Support Group Meeting Coordinators, fill-in Support Group Meeting Coordinators and Technology Assistants for our Support Group Meetings. These positions are volunteer but do receive a stipend. Please call Rhonda at 508-394-3904 for more info or an interview.

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I Have Been Diagnosed With Macular Degeneration, Now What? will be presented at the Sight Loss Services office on Sunday, November 15th at 1:00pm and Thursday, December 3rd at 4:00pm. View an uplifting short film and learn about adaptive aids and other resources that are available. Space is limited. Registration is required. Call 508-394-3904 to register.

The Carroll Center for the Blind is presenting a virtual Technology Fair via Zoom on Friday, November 20th from 12:00-4:00. It is free to attend. For more info visit www.carroll.org/events or call 617-969-6200, extension 236. The info is also posted on our website www.sightloss.org

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Did you know the Lions Clubs of District 33S, which includes the Cape and the Islands, offers assistance with low vision adaptive aids and hearing aids to income qualified individuals? Contact Zone Chair Rhonda Garran at 508-274-1266 to be connected with the Lions Club nearest you.

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New Veterans Medical Transportation Service from Cape Cod to the Providence VA Medical Center. Operates Tuesdays and Wednesdays by reservation. Call the CCRTA 1-800-352-7155 for more information.

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The large print 2027 calendars have arrived! Pick one up at your next Support Group Meeting or call the office at 508-394-3904 to have one mailed to you.

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Nacuity Reports Reduced Photoreceptor Loss in Clinical Trial for Oral Antioxidant

Dallas-based Nacuity reported that NACA, its oral antioxidant, reduced photoreceptor loss by 50 percent in a Phase 2 clinical trial in Australia. The trial is for people with Usher syndrome (retinitis pigmentosa with hearing loss). The Foundation Fighting Blindness is investing up to $7.5 million to advance the promising, emerging drug for retinitis pigmentosa, Usher syndrome, and related conditions.

IN FOCUS SPRING /SUMMER 2026 (fighting-blindness-dot-org.s3.amazonaws.com)

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FIGHTING BLINDNESS CANADA

Each year, researchers, clinicians, companies, and organizations from around the world gather at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) meeting to share the latest advances in eye and vision research. This year's conference in Denver highlighted just how quickly the field is evolving - particularly for inherited retinal diseases and AMD. While there is still much work ahead, one message came through clearly: researchers are not only developing more

potential treatments, they are also thinking more deeply about how to make those treatments work in the real world and reach more people. Gene therapy continues to be a major area of momentum in IRD research. Several companies and academic groups shared updates from clinical trials for conditions including X-linked retinitis pigmentosa, X-linked retinoschisis, Stargardt disease, Leber congenital amaurosis, Usher syndrome, and retinitis pigmentosa. Researchers also shared updates on emerging approaches for geographic atrophy, including stem cell-based therapies designed to replace damaged retinal pigment epithelial cells.

While still in early-stage clinical testing, these approaches reflect growing interest in regenerative strategies for retinal disease. ARVO 2026 reinforced that there is no single solution for blindness and vision loss, and that progress will likely come from many different approaches working together.

What ARVO 2026 Told Us About the Future of Vision Research - Fighting Blindness Canada (FBC)

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Blood vessels grown from stem cells restore retinal function in mouse models.

NEI-funded research at Duke University used induced pluripotent stem cells to grow specialized blood vessel cells critical to retinal health, according to a report published in Nature Biomedical Engineering. When injected into mouse models of retinal disease, these retinal endothelial cells integrated into the damaged tissue to regenerate blood vessels and restore retinal function. Researchers also demonstrated these cells' ability to form functional retinal vascular tissue in a lab-grown environment, providing a pathway to model and research various eye diseases. The findings point toward the potential of using these retinal cells and models to develop new methods of vision loss treatments and eye disorder research.

NEI-funded research grows retinal blood vessel cells | National Eye Institute (nih.gov)

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NEI-funded research identifies molecule that strengthens the eye's response to damage in retinal disease

Research funded by the NEI shows that a naturally occurring molecule called erucamide plays a role in how cells communicate in the retina. While erucamide

levels drop as light-sensing cells known as photoreceptors begin to die, restoring the molecule activates cellular responses that support retinal stability. These findings suggest that erucamide may be part of a natural protective response in the retina, and could offer a new way to slow the progression of diseases that lead to vision loss. The findings were published in ***Nature Neuroscience***. Many conditions that cause vision loss share a common feature: the gradual breakdown of the retina. Although scientists know some of the structural changes that ensue as this damage progresses, less is understood about the molecular signals that shape how the retina copes with disease. “The retina doesn’t simply deteriorate; in fact, it actively responds to injury,” says senior author Martin Friedlander, M.D., Ph.D., professor at Scripps Research. “Our work identifies erucamide as a signaling molecule that helps coordinate that response.” Scripps conducted the study in collaboration with UC San Diego and Lowy Medical Research Institute. The retina depends on constant communication between neurons, glia, blood vessels and immune cells. This

system keeps visual tissue functioning. In diseases associated with loss of vision that tight coordination wanes. Photoreceptors start dying, and eyesight fades.

NEI-funded research identifies molecule that strengthens the eye's response to damage in retinal disease | National Eye Institute (nih.gov)

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Sight Loss Services Donations

Sight Loss Services, Inc. does not charge for the services it provides for those with vision loss. We do, however, rely on the generosity of people donating to keep our non-profit 501c organization going. Will you help to support us? If so, please make your check payable to "Sight Loss Services, Inc." and mail to 900 Route 134, Unit 3-25, South Dennis, MA 02660.

Thank you for your support!

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Note Cards for Sale! Artwork created by blind and visually impaired artists! Mail a check to Sight Loss Services for $35 to cover the cards and postage and we will mail your set of 20 cards. Four each of five different designs.

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Sight Loss Services, Inc.
Town Plaza, 900 Route 134, Unit 3-25
South Dennis, MA 02660

Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Organization
US Postage Paid
South Yarmouth, MA 02664
Permit 7

To be removed from our mailing list please call: (508) 394-3904 or email: info@sightloss.org