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

“Today or any day that phone may ring and bring good news.”

- Ethel Waters

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Reminder that support group meetings are on summer break and will pick back up again in September. The schedule is remaining the same, but with the addition of two new groups! The Martha’s Vineyard Group will be meeting on the second Monday of every month from 1:00pm until 2:30pm at The Anchors in Edgartown. A new Thirwood Group on the Assisted Living side will also be beginning soon. Please contact Sight Loss Services at 508-394-3904 for more information.

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Brooks Free Library, 739 Main Street in Harwich provides assisted technology demonstrations on the third Tuesday of the month from 1:00-2:00. August 18 will be the National Library Service and the Braille and Audio Reading Download Service,

September 15 will be accessibility options on the Windows Operating System, October 20 will be artificial intelligence (AI) and the ChatGPT chatbot, November 17 will be Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library's Library of things, December 15 will be iPhone accessibility options for blind and low vision users. The program is free and open to all. Preregistration is not required. Contact Carla Burke for more information 508-432-7562, extension 5. A limited number of rides will be available to Sight Loss Services clients but will require at least 7 days notice. We understand that emergencies do happen, but in the event you need to cancel for a non-emergency, you must do so at least 48 hours in advance of the program otherwise we will be charged for your ride and we will have to pass that charge along to you.

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I Have Been Diagnosed with Macular Degeneration, Now What? will be presented at the Sight Loss Services office on Friday, August 7th at 4:00pm and Saturday, August 29th at 10:00am. View an uplifting short film, learn about adaptive aids and technologies as well as other services that

are available. Open to those recently diagnosed and their families/caregivers. Pre-registration is required and space is limited. Call 508-394-3904 to register.

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NEI News

National Eye Institute scientists have found that the way the retina metabolizes glucose directly controls which genes get switched on and off in light-sensing photoreceptors. The findings suggest that metabolic disruptions seen in aging and disease may directly destabilize the gene expression needed to keep photoreceptors healthy, opening new avenues for treating retinal diseases. The work is published in PLoS Genetics. "We show that glucose metabolism controls expression of critical photoreceptor genes by epigenome changes," said the study's principal investigator, Anand Swaroop, Ph.D., chief of the Retinal Development, Genetics and Therapy Section at the NEI. Retinal photoreceptors depend on the availability of glucose for energy as well as for structural maintenance. For the study, the researchers leveraged the fact that lactate, a byproduct of glucose metabolism,

chemically tags the DNA-packaging proteins in photoreceptor cells. A specific molecular tag, called H3K18 lactylation, rises and falls in direct response to how much glucose the retina is metabolizing, acting as a live and dynamic readout of the metabolic state of vision-related genes. The results were clear and consistent: more glucose meant more lactate, and higher expression of genes critical for vision, including those involved in light detection, photoreceptor development and maintenance. “Future studies will examine how H3K18La patterns change during aging and in disease models of AMD and diabetic retinopathy. We also plan to test whether dietary interventions that affect glucose metabolism can influence these epigenetic marks in a meaningful way,” said the study’s first author, Mohita Gaur, Ph.D., a postdoctoral fellow in the NEI Retinal Development, Genetics and Therapy Section.

RP News

MeiraGTx recently announced that it has reacquired botaretigene sparoparvovec

(bota-vec), a potential gene therapy for X-linked retinitis pigmentosa, from Johnson & Johnson and plans to move ahead with regulatory filings in the U.S., Europe, and Japan. The announcement is notable because many in the inherited retinal disease community feared the therapy had been shelved after the Phase 3 LUMEOS study did not meet its primary endpoint in 2025. While there are still important unanswered questions about whether the therapy will ultimately be approved, the decision to continue development is encouraging. Although the trial missed its main endpoint, researchers reported positive results across several secondary measures, including improvements in low-light vision and other aspects of visual function. Clinicians involved in the study have also continued to speak about meaningful benefits seen in some participants. It remains unclear what additional data regulators may require but the program appears to have a possible

path forward again.

Research News | Monthly Updates | Fighting Blindness Canada

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Sunlight and Your Health

Exposure to sunlight can have healthy effects. For example, we need a little natural light every day to help us sleep well. The light-sensitive cells in our eyes play a role in our bodies' natural wake-sleep cycles. This is especially important as we age and become more apt to get insomnia.

Protect Your Eyes From Sun Damage in Every Season

Many sunglasses shoppers forget to check the UV rating before purchasing a pair. Be sure to select sunglasses that provide 100% UV or UV400 protection, or block both UV-A and UV-B rays. Wear a hat along with your sunglasses. Broad-brimmed hats are best.

Protect children and senior citizens with hats and sunglasses. Everyone is at risk for sun damage.

Know that clouds don't block UV light.

The sun's rays can pass through haze and clouds.

Sunlight is strongest midday to early afternoon. It is also stronger at higher altitudes and when reflected off of water, ice, or snow.

The Sun, UV Light and Your Eyes - American Academy of Ophthalmology (aao.org)

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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!

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

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