

# LIONS LOW VISION CENTERS, INC.

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## Reducing Glare for the Visually Impaired

Every seven minutes, someone in America will become blind or visually impaired. Our clients range in age from 10 to 102 years of age, with most of them in the 65 years and over category.

Each case is handled on an individual basis. There is no standard cookbook, nor general prescription. An action plan is developed to meet the needs and goals of each client.

One of the greatest obstacles for a person with low vision is glare. Not only can it obscure vision, it often causes physical discomfort. Glare is present in almost every area of our lives—indoors and out. Glare sensitivity increases with normal aging. With eye disease, this sensitivity actually diminishes vision. Exposure to UV (ultraviolet rays) can play havoc with your vision. Some studies have shown that UV rays increase the risk of macular degeneration and cataracts.

Filters can help to control glare, increase depth

perception, increase contrast and improve function to accomplish many tasks. For this reason, sun filters such as Solar shields and NoIRs are often distributed to clients coming to the Lions Low Vision Centers.

We know that yellow filters let in maximum light (98%), enhance vision, and reduce glare. These can be worn indoors and out. They are often used to watch television. They are favored on cloudy days when contrast is at a minimum. They give greater definition to the object being viewed and ever so slightly enhance depth perception.

A light to medium amber lens accomplishes the same UV protection, but is darker. These are most effective in areas that are bright, such as the beach or a pool area where glare is bouncing off the water, sand, and or white cement. However, most of our clients find them too dark for normal use.

Sunglasses should always be



put on while you are still in the building prior to going outside and removed just before entering a building. This reduces the time it takes to adapt to the light change, of light to dark, or dark to light.

The Low Vision Center evaluation will help the client determine the correct adaptive device to reduce glare and therefore allow them to perform their daily tasks more comfortably and effectively.

### Did you know ? :

- Vitamins C and E, antioxidants, such as Lutein and Zeaxanthin, and minerals, such as zinc and copper, reduce the risk of vision loss from moderate to severe macular degeneration.
- A local Lion celebrated a significant birthday milestone. In lieu of gifts, she requested her guests make cash donations to the Lions Low Vision Center. Creative ideas such as this one, help us serve the visually impaired. We are grateful for her generosity.
- Annual Dinner November 23, 2009 Watch for more information!

## ***Lions Low Vision Centers, Inc.***

### Lions Low Vision Center Funding:

Funding for the Lions Low Vision Centers, Inc. is provided by Lions Clubs of District 23B. Special fundraising events have been established by Lions Clubs in Berlin, East Windsor, Enfield, Plainville, Bristol, West Hartford, and Harwinton.

As a 501(c)3 organization, all donations are tax deductible. We are especially pleased to receive donations from individuals whose company has a matching gift program.

Please consider making a small donation to assist us in serving the visually impaired so that they can lead fuller and more productive lives.

### Lions Low Vision Centers, Inc.

33 Highland Street  
New Britain, CT 06052  
1-800-676-5715

Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation  
103 Old Iron Ore Road  
Bloomfield, CT 06002  
1-800-676-5715

Sullivan Senior Center  
Albert Street  
Torrington, CT 06790  
1-800-676-5715

Rehab Dynamics  
975 Farmington Ave.  
Bristol, CT 06010  
1-860-589-3587

## **Client Spotlight**

Victoria, age 72, is a retired college English teacher, from Buffalo, New York. She and her husband relocated to Torrington to live with her daughter and son-in-law. They were married for 47 years, and raised three children.

She lived for the challenge of the daily jumble and the New York Times crossword puzzles. Several years ago, she learned the art of calligraphy. She enjoyed creating personalized cards for her colleagues and former students with illustrations and her calligraphy.

Several years ago, a college physician told Victoria her sugar numbers were higher than normal. He prescribed a diet. Victoria had a sweet tooth, and was not ready to give up her afternoon cookies and bowl of ice cream.

Drawing and writing became difficult. She complained she couldn't clearly see her writing and the detail in her illustrations. Her daughter made an appointment with her ophthalmologist. His diagnosis confirmed Victoria had Diabetic Retinopathy.

The best know treatment is to prevent the development of the disease as much as possible. Victoria began a strict diet and routinely monitored her blood sugar. This helped to reduce the risk of further vision loss. Her ophthalmologist began a series of laser treatments to stop fragile blood vessels from further bleeding.

He recommended that she visit a specialist in treating in low vision. Victoria approached a local state agency. They gave her some assistance. They told her she needed a Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) unit.

Unfortunately, because her husband was still living, she would not qualify to receive a CCTV. They only provided CCTVs to heads of households.

Victoria approached the Lions Low Vision Center. Following her evaluation, it became clear that she would benefit from a CCTV unit. Fortunately, someone had just donated a CCTV unit. She brought it home. She uses it for her projects, and uses it to draw up her insulin.

A week later, her husband called. He told the Low Vision Center that they forgot to include a long pole with a hook with the CCTV. We told him the CCTV did not have a long pole attachment. He laughed and said he was just joking. He explained the long pole was for Victoria. She was so happy, he thought he might need the pole to pull her down off the ceiling.