

# **EyePower** *Winter 2005*

*News and Information from the Low Vision Center*

---

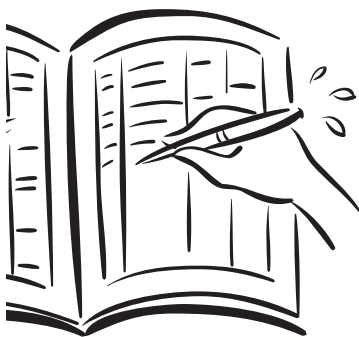
## **EyeView**

*by Bill Rolle, Executive Director  
Low Vision Center*

We begin this issue with two pieces dealing with emotional issues resulting from low vision, and then switch to a suggested way to develop the ability to better read using your peripheral vision. After that we move to the practical side to remind you of the importance of tax planning and how to organize your money. We end with thanks to those foundations who support us and to our wonderful board of directors. Last is a list of four helpful hints that we hope you'll find useful.

## **Year End Tax Planning**

Now is the time to do some tax planning prior to the year-end. Please consider a tax-deductible donation to the Low Vision Center before December 31, 2005. Contribute now,



include the amount on your 2005 tax return and pay less tax for the year. You and the Center both benefit. It sounds like a win-win opportunity.

## **Managing Stress**

Everyone has stress and learning to manage your stress can help you deal with your vision problems and stay healthy. Anne Williams, PhD, RN, CDE, defined stress in the fall edition of *Voice of the Diabetic* as a



reaction to a change or a strain. "The change or strain can be primarily physical, such as having an illness or injury. Or it also can be primarily emotional, such as being worried, upset, anxious or depressed," she said. "It's how you react to stress," she reports, "that makes a big difference in how the stress affects your health." "Recognizing your stress, and realizing you have choices about how you respond to it are necessary for beginning to learn to handle stress," Williams added. She suggested a simple technique to use to become more aware of one's stress. That is to put your stressed feelings into words. "Doing that," she said, "can help you begin to be aware how you react and how you might have more choices than you previously realized." Contact IVC for a complete copy of Dr. Williams article.

## Overprotection?

Over protection in older adults with vision impairment was the focus of a recent Lighthouse International study in the Arlene R. Gordon Research Institute. The study showed that family and friends might be over protective in order to prevent falls and injuries. Over protection also may happen when support providers feel it's easier and faster to take over certain tasks rather than watch relatives struggle to accomplish them on their own. Some comments made by study participants supported that claim. They said, "Family members and friends would rather do it themselves than wait." "People aren't that patient towards someone with low vision." "Family members may simply not realize the potentially negative impact of their actions." The study also found that those who feel overprotected are more likely to report symptoms of depression. The overprotection makes people feel helpless, which in turn, may lead to depression. Other research has found that overprotective care can hinder successful rehabilitation outcomes. The more help people reported receiving, the more likely they felt that the help was overprotective. It appears that receiving a lot of support with daily living tasks sets the stage for feelings of overprotection. The study concluded that the more overprotected the participants' felt, the less likely they were to adapt psychologically to their vision loss.



## Eccentric Viewing

When you have macular degeneration, your central vision deteriorates, but you still have your peripheral vision. This continues to allow you to see things. It's called "Eccentric Viewing". It's simply looking to the right or left of an object so that the light entering the eye is focused on the retinal tissue right beside the macula but not directly on it. This allows the peripheral vision to come into play. It is *not* looking directly at what you want to see. However, you must not move your head. You move only your eyes. Some people with Macular Degeneration can see better if they move their eyes high right while others see best when they look high left. Others do better when they look down to the left or right. Each person must determine which way is best for him or her. One possible way to discover the spot in your peripheral vision where you see best is to take a photograph and *while you look straight ahead*, slowly move the photo in a circle in front of your face. The place where the photo is clearest is where your peripheral vision is the best.

## Foundation Support

We would be remiss if we didn't thank those foundations that have supported the Center this year. Without their generous help we would not be able



to provide our low vision demonstrations at no charge. Our foundation supporters include: **Aid Association for the Blind of DC**, **DaCapo Fund** and **The Walter A. Bloedorn Foundation**.

## Money Organization

Organization is the key to your independence. You need to be able to identify the cash you have in your possession. Coins are simple: dimes, quarters and 50-cent pieces have nicks around their edges. The dime is the smallest and thinnest. The quarter is larger and thicker. The 50-cent piece is even larger. Pennies and nickels have smooth edges. The penny is smaller and thinner. The nickel is larger, thicker and has a slightly thicker rim around its edge. You must sort and fold your paper money in a consistent pattern. One suggestion is to take \$1 bills and fold them twice, from left to right. Take \$5 bills; fold them left to right and then again from top to bottom. \$10 bills are folded lengthwise and then folded again from left to right. \$20 bills are folded into thirds. \$50 bills are left unfolded and \$100 bills are clipped with a paperclip at top and kept unfolded. Keep all bills of the same denomination together.

## LVC Board

The Low Vision Center is fortunate to have an active, experienced Board of Directors to oversee our activities. They meet four times each year and provide the staff with invaluable counsel pertaining to our everyday activities and strategic planning. The Board members include: **Dr. Melvin Alper, Dr. Michael Berenhaus, Stan Cohen, President Patricia Coupard, Barbara Dahlman, Barbara Glaser, Secretary/Treasurer Dr. Dan Glick, Dr. Joel Gordon, Mary Hoyt, Vice President Soo-s Stein, Jim Summers, and Elly Waters.**

## Helpful Hints:

**New Book On Low Vision:** Dr. Myers has written, “**The Way I See It**”, a compilation of 21 depictions of the author’s experiences in living a life with low vision. Dr. Myers is one of 20 people in her family who are legally blind.

**Social Security Disability Starter Kits:** The SSA has developed a “Disability Starter Kit” that provides help with the process of applying for assistance due people with disabilities. To get the kit, go to: [http://www.ssa.gov/disability\\_starter\\_kits.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/disability_starter_kits.htm)

**Talking Prescription Bottle:** Next time you have a prescription filled, ask the pharmacist to place the product in a **Rex- The Talking Bottle**. The manufacturer claims the bottle identifies the contents through the simple push of a button. That allows the user to hear information about the medication.

**VIP Consumer:** Recently announced the launch of a new web site that offers consumer reviews and discussions from a visually impaired viewpoint. It will help the visually impaired to become more informed consumers. Visit [www.vipconsumer.com](http://www.vipconsumer.com) to check it out.



# Top Banana Home Delivery

Some of us are no longer able to do our own grocery shopping. There are times when we cannot rely on family or friends to do the shopping for us. One answer might be Top Banana Home Delivered Groceries, Inc. They provide “old fashioned” service and bring your groceries right to your kitchen. They carry brand name products you know and love along with fresh dairy and baked goods. They hand-select the highest quality produce and the meats are butcher-cut to your specifications. All grocery prices are competitive and there are several ways to save on the service

fee. The staff is always patient and thorough. Try them and let us know what you think. The Top Banana phone number is: 301-372-3663.

## Share Tears & Laughter

Share tears & laughter at our support groups. There's room for one or two more individuals in our currently running support groups. One meets on the first Tuesday of the month from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. with a “bring your own lunch” from 12:30 to 1:00 p.m. The second support group meets on Friday from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. with the date shifting from month to month. It's a great place to pick up useful tips on coping with vision loss.

*Newsletter design and production services provided through courtesy of Graphics by Gallo LLC.*



**LOW VISION  
CENTER**

*Winning Ideas for  
Failing Sight*

7701 Woodmont Avenue #604  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
301-951-4444

Free Matter for  
the Blind  
Handle as First  
Class Mail