



Lighthouse for the Blind
of the Palm Beaches

Illuminations Newsletter

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November, 2017

What's New? Early Intervention and Free Vision Screenings



So you want to know what's new at the Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches? We are very excited to be providing Early Intervention Services and free vision screenings. Pictured above: On the left, a Lighthouse employee is conducting a vision screening on a young child. On the right, a young toddler participates in the Lighthouse's Early Intervention Services. (Articles on pages 3 and 4).

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Pictured below: Transition students during college week activities in Miami.



EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

Birth to five years of age



Did you know that a baby's brain will double in size during the first two years of life? This is only one of the reasons that we must get to these families as soon as possible and why early intervention is so crucial. Babies who are blind or visually impaired do not learn about their world in the same way as sighted children. Parents do not always understand how they learn. Babies may not bond as easily due to the lack of eye contact and facial expressions. It takes many hours of working with the babies and educating their caregivers on how they learn to start preparing them for their future. If services are not provided, this lost opportunity can cost them dearly in the future. Motor development is one of the most important areas, being that if a child cannot maneuver safely to explore their environment, they do not get stimulated. If they are not stimulated, cognitive growth can be stunted. The Lighthouse now provides the following Early Intervention Services:

- Parent-Child early intervention in the natural environment consisting of at least 60 minutes per week educating the parent on critical skills for their child
- Adaptive toys and therapeutic equipment to stimulate learning and sensory development
- Vision stimulation and exercises to foster the child's full visual potential
- Orientation and Mobility Specialists provide early mobility skills for motor development
- Advocacy
- Events with children of all ages and their families for socialization

FREE Vision Screenings

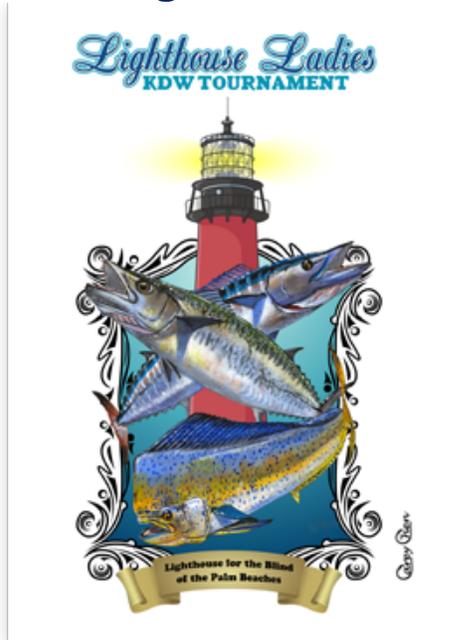


Pictured above from left to right: A young girl wearing colorful occluded glasses, the Welch Allyn Spot Vision Screener, and Elizabeth, a Lighthouse Teacher, conducting a vision screening on Michelangelo, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle!

The Lighthouse conducts free vision screenings for toddlers and children 6 months to 5 years of age. Children who are not treated early in life can develop permanent vision loss that can't be corrected later in childhood or as adults. Catching a visual impairment early makes a world of difference. Even young children and babies can have eye problems that can and should be corrected. Children don't know if what they see is typical or atypical. Many babies over the age of 6 months have refractive errors that are not caught until they get tested using an eye chart at their third birthday. This could be caught much earlier and allow the child to see clearly from infancy. What can take minutes to complete, can change their lives forever. Early detection and treatment is so important. Do not delay! This is not a comprehensive eye exam; however, the screening can detect these issues that you, your child, or their teachers may not notice:

- Near-sightedness (Myopia)
- Far-sightedness (Hyperopia)
- Unequal refractive power (Anisometropia)
- Eye misalignment (Strabismus)
- Pupil size deviations (Anisocoria)
- Blurred vision, eye structure problems (Astigmatism)

Lighthouse Ladies KDW Fishing Tournament



The 8th Annual Lighthouse Ladies KDW Tournament will be back in June 2018! Stay tuned for updates, including exact dates and times of all events. This fundraiser benefits the children's programs at the Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches. Why give to the Lighthouse? Your support of our children's programs pays for activities, supplies and, most importantly, teachers dedicated to empowering children with visual impairments from birth through graduation. Not only do these children learn the mobility and social skills necessary to succeed in life, mentoring services are also provided to them and their families free of cost. For details, visit: lighthouseladies.com

Focus Group

The Focus Group is a social club for adult participants that meets on the first Friday of the month at the Lighthouse. We had some great speakers and educational presentations in 2017, including: Back Into Life Again, Palm Tran Connection, Alzheimer's Association, and Consumer Affairs. In March, the Creative Writer's Club from Dreyfoos High School of the Arts, led by their president, Hannah Butcher, entertained participants with readings of colorful, meaningful, and highly descriptive short stories and poems. Although, the writers themselves are much younger than the Focus Group participants, their stories provoked deep thought and conversation between the two groups. Both groups are looking forward to their next encounter in December.

Upcoming Meetings:

December 1, 2017: Holiday Celebration and Dreyfoos High School of the Arts

January 5 and February 2, 2018: Topics TBA

Technology Team Accomplishments

Our Technology Team at the Lighthouse is always expanding their skills to offer training in a variety of areas to ensure that we offer informed choice to our participants. We are very proud to announce some of this year's incredible accomplishments and hope you will join us in congratulating our amazing staff. Anne Hatton received a certificate of endorsement in Screen Reading Assistive Technology by the Florida Division of Blind Services (DBS). Winston Callum and Mark Gracey have passed phase one and are working on phase two for their endorsements from DBS in Screen Reading and Screen Magnification software respectively. Diane Salina has added Certified Assistive Technology Instructional Specialist for People with Visual Impairments (CATIS) to her list of credentials. This is a new and much needed certification in our field. Rachael Sessler Trinkowsky, PhD was one of the first dozen CATIS and was also on the Subject Matter Expert (SME) Committee for the development of this certification. Rachael was also nominated for and received the 2017 Outstanding Rehabilitation Professional for the Blind Award from Florida FAER.

Music for the Mind (Save the Date)

The 7th annual Music for the Mind concert will be held at the Harriet Himmel Theater in West Palm Beach on March 20, 2018. This concert will feature David Crohan, a concert pianist who has been blind since birth. All proceeds will benefit the Lighthouse's Children's services, offering services for children who are blind or visually impaired from birth through high school graduation. Pictured below: David Crohan playing to the audience.



Florida Vision Technology, Inc. Presentation

Florida Vision Technology will be presenting at the Lighthouse on Thursday, December 7th, 2017 from 10 a.m. to noon. Please join us for a brief presentation and hands-on round table session where you will have the opportunity to try the technology yourself at one of three workstations.

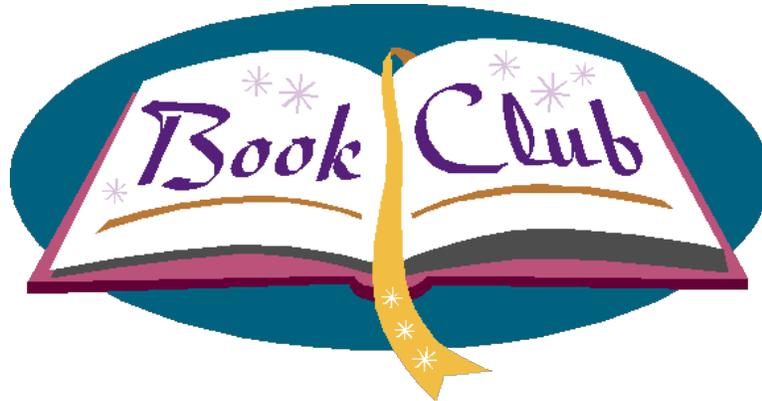
Highlights will include:

- Humanware BrailleNote Touch
 - Google certified braille tablet, Keysoft Application Suite
- Humanware Prodigy Connect 12 V2
 - Tablet video magnifier for near & distance viewing)
- Humanware Explore 5 & Explore 8
 - Portable video magnifiers
- Humanware Victor Reader TREK
 - Talking GPS, digital book player and recorder all-in-one!
- Iris Vision Glasses
 - NEW Wearable video magnifier for near & distance viewing
- OrCam MyEye
 - Attached to glasses frame: Glasses included or use your own
 - Text to Speech
 - Currency, Color and Facial Recognition
 - Bar Code Reader
 - Multi-language: English, French, Spanish
- HIMS BrailleSense Polaris
 - Braille Tablet – Android OS

Presented by: Jose Cintron, Lesa Kretschmer & John Ryan
Please RSVP to info@lighthousepalmbeaches.org



Book Club Update



In November, the two Book Clubs at the Lighthouse in West Palm Beach and in Sebastian will be celebrating Thanksgiving with a finger-food potluck celebration. If you'd like to attend and bring something to the potluck, or if you have questions about the Book Club, please email Diane Salina at dsalina@lighthousepalmbeaches.org. For those using Blind Café to attend the meetings virtually, there have been several changes recently. Please contact Michael at mjcolorado89@aol.com for help accessing the new software for BlindCafe.net to participate in our discussions online if you are unable to attend at the Lighthouse.

Upcoming West Palm Beach Book Club meetings at the Lighthouse:

- November 17: Thanksgiving potluck at 11:30 a.m. and "A Man called Ove" (DB 84392) from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.
- December 15: "The Orchardist" (DB 75312) from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.
- January 19: "Stranger in the Woods" (DB 87755) from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

Upcoming Sebastian Book Club meetings at the United Church of Sebastian from 2 to 3 p.m.:

- November 30: Thanksgiving feast and "Nov 9" (DB84183).
- December: The Sebastian Book Club is not meeting in December.
- January 25: "Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet" (DB 71540).
- February 22: "Uncle Tom's Cabin" (DB 50070).

VFO Presentation at the Lighthouse

VFO, the company that merged Freedom Scientific, AiSquared, and Optelec will be presenting at the Lighthouse on Friday, March 16, 2018 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. They will be demonstrating new features in JAWS, ZoomText, ZoomText Fusion, low vision products, and braille products. There will be three separate sessions. Like last year, you will be able to sign up for one, two, or all three sessions. This is a free event and VFO will provide lunch.

- Session 1: 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Low Vision Technology and ZoomText screen magnification software
- Session 2: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Optical Character Recognition Technology
- Lunch: 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Session 3: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. JAWS, ZoomText Fusion, and Braille Technology

Please RSVP to let us know which sessions you will attend. Please indicate if you plan to attend Session 1, Session 2, Session 3, two sessions, or all sessions. Please let us know if you will attend lunch.

Please RSVP to info@lighthousepalmbeaches.org
or call the Lighthouse at 561-951-4957.

Independent Living Skills Classes for People with Visual Impairments: Questions and Answers

- **What is it? Classes for people who have visual impairments.**
- **Who is it for? Adults who have significant vision loss.**
- **What does it Cost? Nothing! Classes are free.**
- **Where are the classes held? West Palm Beach, Delray Beach, and Sebastian**
- **When are the classes held? Days and times vary**
- **What will I learn? You will learn how to work safely in your home, identify money, use your telephone, coping skills, handwriting techniques, talking books, identifying medications, cooking, sewing, and much, much more!**
- **How do I register? Contact the Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches to register at 561-586-5600 or email: info@lighthousepalmbeaches.org**

Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA 2018)

Rachael will be speaking at the Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA 2018), January 30 to February 3, 2018 in Orlando, FL. She is presenting a full-day pre-conference session for professional instructors who teach assistive technology on Tuesday, January 31st and another regular session on Using ChromeVox on Google Chromebooks for People with Visual Impairments on Friday, February 2nd at 8:00 a.m. For information, please visit the [ATIA 2018 Information Page](#) or [ATIA Registration Page](#). Can't afford to attend the conference? You can obtain FREE passes for the Exhibit Hall! Contact registration@atia.org for details.

Children's Services Activities

The Children's Services Programs provide instruction and activities to help our students prepare for their future. This includes community exploration, mobility skills, independent living skills, technology training, career exploration, and college prep. Activities are incorporated into fun camps and activities throughout the year. The children build friendships that last a lifetime. Our annual Children's Holiday Party will be held on December 2nd.



Pictured above: (Top left) Halloween party activities. (Top right) Field trip to the Chocolate Spectrum. (Bottom) Transition students in front of the University of Miami's Giant U during college week.

Being Blind: An Essay by Roberta Cook

I am writing this to let you know what it feels like to be visually impaired. There are a lot of things that go through a person's mind that can only be experienced by those who have lost their vision. Most people do not understand that people with visual impairments can lead successful, independent lives, but they require training. If you are no longer doing many of the things that you like to do, you may find another way to do them. For example, watching television is a different experience. It is not the same as seeing what you are hearing. There may be audio description features available. However, listening to television and seeing it are two different things. Today, most things are better than years ago. There are descriptive movies and assistive technology devices that can assist you in your everyday life. One usually needs training for their use. There are screen readers, locator dots, color aids, product identifiers, and even ways to contact people on the Internet to help you.

Fortunately, I have received very good training from the Lighthouse and have the support of a wonderful family. Friendship is another thing. I want to explain the way I believe people view me. When I meet new people, I am often told that I am unbelievable! I do appreciate this, but it frustrates me. They don't understand that I am living my life. They want me to think that I should be sitting in a rocking chair, twiddling my fingers, not being able to do anything. I plan to keep going and doing the things that I like to do!

One friend asked me how I washed myself. I answered that my body parts haven't moved! I have many hobbies, including: cooking, knitting, reading, playing with my dogs, and taking care of my home. I think people are afraid of saying the wrong thing. I try to make people comfortable by letting them know that I am not offended when people say things using the word "see." "See you later," is not a statement that will offend me. I use this expression too. I want to be treated just like everyone else.

Enhanced Vision: Low Vision Technology Open House

Hosted by the Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches

Join us as we introduce some of the newest low vision technology available to help individuals remain independent. **Hands-on demonstrations will be provided at this FREE event.**

Date: Friday, April 20, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Where: Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches
1710 Tiffany Drive East, West Palm Beach, FL 33407

Please call or email to RSVP:

(800) 440-9476 Ext. 2231 or rmayer@enhancedvision.com

Low-vision technology can help you read, write, see loved ones, and enjoy hobbies again. Barbara Brown, an authorized Enhanced Vision distributor with Light and Magnify Technologies, will be on hand to answer questions and help you find the right solution for your low vision needs.

A FREE Pebble-mini electronic magnifier (Value \$295) will be given away as a door prize to one lucky winner!

enhanced
vision
Low Vision Solutions



Light & Magnify
TECHNOLOGIES

Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches Luncheon "Through a Child's Eyes"

Benefiting the Lighthouse's Children's Programs

Date: Friday, February 16, 2018

Time: 11:30 a.m.

Location: Sailfish Club of Florida

Address: 1338 North Lake Way, Palm Beach, FL 33480

Ticket Price: \$120 (sponsorship opportunities available)

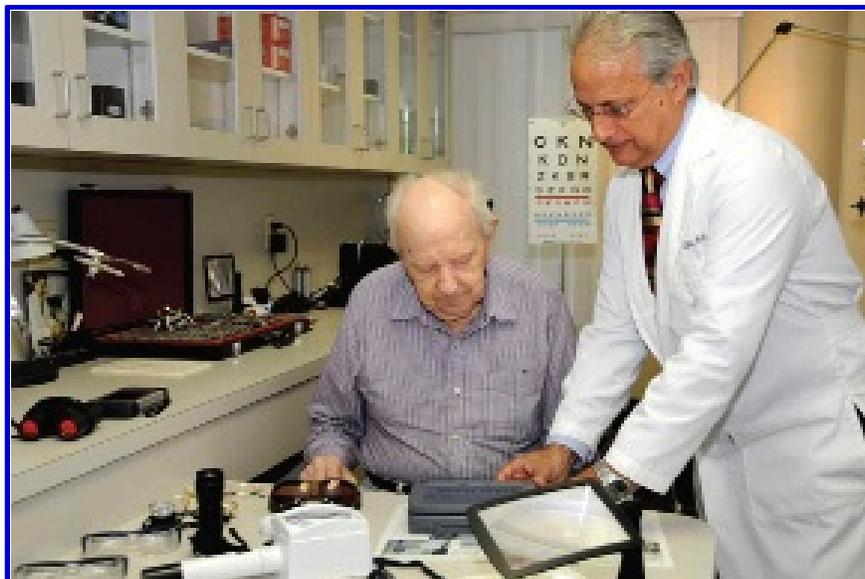
To RSVP, call: 561-586-5600

Luncheon Chairs: Roshan Massoumi and Joyce McLendon

Event description: The benefit will begin with lunch and entertainment followed by an awards presentation recognizing exceptional contributors to the Lighthouse. A special guest from the Lighthouse's youth programs will also be joining to share their story of navigating the world as a child with a visual impairment.

How the proceeds will be used: Proceeds from the luncheon will benefit children's programs and services including early intervention services, summer camp programs, and technology training for children ages 0 through high school graduation.

Low Vision Services and Devices Presentation



Dr. Scott Gartner, low vision specialist, will be presenting at the Lighthouse on Friday, January 19, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This is a free event. Dr. Gartner will discuss low vision, low vision exams, and head mounted low vision devices. Some of the devices that Dr. Gartner will discuss include: eSight, NuEyes, the new Jordy, and OrCam.

Please RSVP by phone or email:

561-586-5600 or email: info@lighthousepalmbeaches.org

Illuminations, a publication from the Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches, is edited by Rachael Sessler Trinkowsky, PhD and Mary Allen.

Please consider making a donation to the Lighthouse. For information, please contact us at 561-586-5600, info@lighthousepalmbeaches.org, or go to lighthousepalmbeaches.org.

In partnership with the Florida Division of Blind Services

Florida DBS Division of Blind Services

