

In-Sight

For People Affected by
Blindness and Low Vision

Proudly serving Berks County since 1929

SUMMER | 2018

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**SAVE
THE
DATE**

**THU
SEPT
27**

Dine *in the* Dark

You are cordially invited to the most enlightening dinner event of 2018. This one-of-a-kind evening promises powerful messages from clients, caregivers, and community leaders personally touched by visual impairment and we'd love YOU to be there with us.

Whether from personal experience, a family member, friend, or acquaintance, practically everyone is touched by the reality of blindness or low vision. Realizing the ongoing need for blind and low vision awareness within our community, Vision Resource Center of Berks County along with the Kutztown University Visual Impairment Program proudly present Dine in the Dark taking place on Thursday, September 27th, 2018 at the Crowne Plaza Reading. Cocktail hour will begin at 5PM with dinner being served while you are blindfolded at 6PM. Your support allows Vision Resource Center of Berks County and the Kutztown University Visual Impairment Program the continued opportunity to help blind and visually impaired children and adults in our community. Don't miss this unique night!

For tickets or more information about Dine in the Dark, please call 610-375-8407 or visit www.vrcberks.org.

AT THE
**Crowne
Plaza**
READING



President's Message

For as long as Winter seemed to be this year, Spring came and went in a blink and we're already heading into the hazy crazy days of Summer! By the time this newsletter is published we'll have just wrapped up one week of activities and day trips with our adult clients, and Kids Camp will be just around the corner!

It's been a very busy year so far. We hope you found our annual Vision and Hearing Expo to be a worthwhile venture and planning has already begun for our annual Dine in the Dark coming this fall. Last year we moved to the Crowne Plaza and we couldn't have been more pleased with the results! We'll be there again this year on Thursday, September 27th and we really hope you'll plan to be there with us for this enlightening event!

Enjoy your Summer, and we'll see you again in the Fall!!

Until next time...

Lori Schermerhorn
President/CEO
VRC of Berks County

JULY

Tuesday, July 3: Insight on BCTV at 10:00AM

Monday, July 9 – Thursday, July 12: Annual Kid's Camp

Wednesday, July 18: Lunch Bunch at 11:30AM at Mimmo's Restaurant and Pizzeria, located at 290 Morgantown Road, Reading 19611

Wednesday, July 25: Sight Loss Support Group with Ann Heiser and Carolyn Krick from 1:00-3:00PM at VRC, located at 2020 Hampden Blvd. Reading 19604

Wednesday, July 25: Caregiver's Support Group from 2:00-3:00PM at VRC, located at 2020 Hampden Blvd. Reading 19604

AUGUST

Wednesday, August 1: Social and Recreational Activity – Buffet lunch and performance of "Music in Time" at Timbers in Mt. Gretna

Tuesday, August 7: Insight on BCTV at 10:00AM

Wednesday, August 15: Lunch Bunch at 11:30AM at Crossroads Family Restaurant, located at 4643 Pottsville Pike, Reading 19605

Wednesday, August 22: Sight Loss Support Group with Mark Levensgood from 1:00-3:00PM at VRC, located at 2020 Hampden Blvd. Reading 19604

Wednesday, August 22: Caregiver's Support Group from 2:00-3:00PM at VRC, located at 2020 Hampden Blvd. Reading 19604

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday, September 4: Insight on BCTV at 10:00AM

Wednesday, September 19: Lunch Bunch at 11:30AM at Deluxe Restaurant, located at 2295 Lancaster Pike, Shillington 19607

Wednesday, September 26: Lunch-Learn at 11:30AM with Vali Heist from The Clutter Crew, presenting on organization, to be held at VRC, located at 2020 Hampden Blvd. Reading 19604

Wednesday, September 26: Sight Loss Support Group with Mark Levensgood from 1:00-3:00PM at VRC, located at 2020 Hampden Blvd. Reading 19604

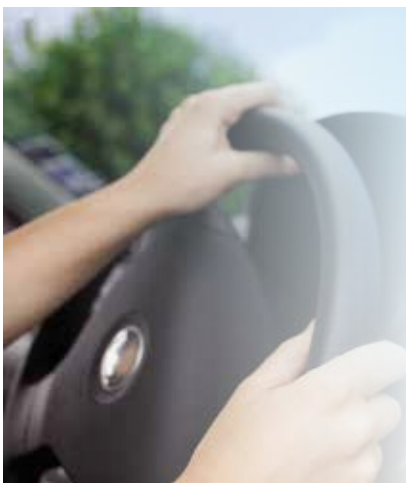
Wednesday, September 26: Caregiver's Support Group from 2:00-3:00PM at VRC, located at 2020 Hampden Blvd. Reading 19604

***Please direct all registrations, transportation requests, and questions pertaining to Lunch Bunch, Lunch-Learn, and Sight Loss Support Group to Mark Levensgood at 610-375-8407 ext. 120.**

***Please direct all registrations and questions pertaining to the August 1 Social and Recreational Activity at Timbers in Mt. Gretna to Joyce Morgan at 610-375-8407 ext. 125.**

***Please do not register for events more than one month in advance**

***Please feel free to consult the VRC activity line at 610-375-8407 ext. 123 to hear an audio recording of that month's activities and registration instructions**



"One Wednesday" Program

It only takes One Wednesday a month to provide a ride for one of our clients.

It only takes one Wednesday a month to provide a ride for one of our clients, many of whom are homebound. VRC clients want to get out and get active!

To do that we depend on drivers to provide transportation to our Wednesday activities, whether they are local social activities, lunches, or support group meetings at 2020 Hampden Boulevard.

Our drivers are special people who not only give rides to clients, but also become friends of both our clients and our staff. Drivers are welcome to get active along with clients and enjoy the social aspects of volunteering.

Do you have a free Wednesday now and then? If so, call us at 610-375-8407, ext. 110, to sign up and help us to help our clients!

Our Mission

Our mission is to strive to prevent blindness and visual impairment, and to advocate and provide quality education, support services, and rehabilitation to enrich the lives of blind and visually impaired persons and their caregivers.

Contact us at 610-375-8407

Lori Schermerhorn .ext. 112
President and CEO

Carolyn Krickext. 110
Vice President of Operations

Rosann Straussext. 118
Director of Workshop Services

Ann Heiserext. 114
Caseworker for Vision Screenings

Mark Levengood ...ext. 120
Counselor

Alicia Santiagoext. 122
Social Worker

Joyce Morganext. 125
Activities/Transportation Coordinator

VRC Services Center Hours

Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday and Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Chairperson, Board of Directors
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TECH Authority

SAY When Liquid Level Indicator

Everyone is frustrated when a cup or glass is bumped, spilling the beverage it contained everywhere. Even worse is when that beverage spills even before having the opportunity to enjoy it as a result of overflowing the cup when pouring. This issue is not uncommon for the sighted community, and especially frustrating for someone with a visual impairment. Honestly, when pouring for myself, I simply hang my pointer finger over the rim of the glass, knowing that when the liquid touches my finger to stop pouring. However, this method proves undesirable when pouring hot coffee or a beverage of any temperature for someone else. In these latter situations I turn to my Say When Liquid Level Indicator.

The Say When Liquid Level Indicator, so named because often when pouring a beverage for a friend, the pourer will state, "Say when" to communicate when their friend would like them to stop pouring, is small and easy to use. This device is simply a plastic case about two inches long, containing a 9 volt battery. Two metal sensors come out the back and hang down the front like prongs, allowing the user to hang the device on the rim of their cup. When their beverage touches these prong-like sensors, the device will beep, rather loudly and almost mimicking a fire alarm, indicating that it is time to stop pouring so as to not overflow the cup. The Say When Liquid Level Indicator will continue to beep until removed from the cup. Ultimately, this gadget allows for safely pouring hot beverages and drinks for others without spilling, while avoiding sticking your finger in the beverage, either burning it with the hot liquid or contaminating another's drink. I would recommend if at all possible waiting to use this device until everyone in your home is awake so as to not scare anyone who is sleeping with the beep that might be mistaken for a fire alarm.



Personally, I acquired my Say When Liquid Level Indicator in my Christmas stocking when I was young, meaning either Santa's Workshop is an equal opportunity gift supplier thinking of those with various impairments, or they have access to the Maxi Aids website at www.maxiaids.com where you can go to purchase this helpful device.

We are Always Looking for New Opportunities!

LET US WORK FOR YOU!

The VRC workshop is looking for new businesses in the Berks County area to partner with us. We would love for you to come and see how the VRC Workshop can help your business to meet deadlines effectively and efficiently! The VRC Workshop employs individuals who are blind, visually impaired, or challenged. They take pride in providing a quality finished product.

**Our current contracts include:
Mailing and Collating • Packaging • Light Assembly • Inspection and Sorting**

E-mail Rosann Strauss at rstrauss@vrberks.org or 610.375.8407, x 118
to schedule a tour of our facility and meet with our staff and hear why some of the leading manufacturers in the county use our workshop services.

2018 Officers and Board of Directors:

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Sheila Scola
Alcon



**Thank you
to District 14P
Lions Clubs**

VRCBC Insight Advertising Policy
All ads submitted to VRCBC Insight for publication will be reviewed by staff for suitability. If there is a question concerning the content of any proposed advertisement, a staff member will contact the advertiser to see if any adjustments can be made. VRCBC Insight reserves the right to refuse any advertisement deemed inappropriate for VRCBC Insight. The publication of any advertisement in VRCBC Insight does not imply endorsement of that product, service or company/organization supplying their product/service by VRCBC Insight. Contact Carolyn Krick for advertising information at ckrick@vrcberks.org VRCBC In-Sight is published quarterly and is funded by advertising revenues and other donations. You will receive your next VRCBC Insight in October 2018.

Become a Vision Resource Center Supporter!

Yes, I would like to support the programs and services of VRCBC in prevention of blindness.

Enclosed please find my tax deductible gift: \$100 \$75 \$50 \$25 Other \$ _____

Designate your gift:

Unrestricted Support -

Use Where Needed

Children's Vision Screening

Care Givers Support Group

Sight Loss Support Group

Building Fund

Workshop Services

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

In Memory/Honor of (please circle one): Please acknowledge my gift to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I would like my gift to remain anonymous I am interested in learning more about Planned Giving VRCBC is already in my will

Thank you for your support! Make checks payable and mail to:

Vision Resource Center of Berks County, 2020 Hampden Blvd., Reading, PA 19604

or donate on-line at www.vrcberks.org

The official registration and financial information of Vision Resource Center of Berks County a 501©3 may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free (800)732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Services provided by Vision Resource Center of Berks County

Vision Screenings The Prevention of Blindness program targets the children of Berks County. This is a free screening service that is provided to children between 3-5 years of age. This service is provided at day care centers, preschools, nursery schools, Head Start Centers, and kindergarten registrations. These screenings are designed to detect eye issues at an early age because the earlier the detection, the earlier treatment can begin. Adult vision screenings are provided at various health fairs and community events throughout the year. These screenings are designed to assess an adult's vision changes.

Sight Loss Support Group This group meets monthly to provide support and problem solving for clients. This meeting is open to individuals who are blind or are visually impaired and their family members, friends, and caregivers. This meeting is designed to discuss the latest technology and medical breakthroughs that may be of interest to the attendees.

Caregivers Sight Loss Support Group This group meets bi-monthly to help other caregivers be a support for their visually impaired family member. Caregivers need the support of others that have experienced the difficulties with complete or partial vision loss and the changes that occur in everyone's life.

Counseling Is available for individuals who are struggling with the adjustment of a visual impairment or blindness. Counselor and client will work together to reach goals that are obtainable. The meetings will be adapted for each client's needs and desires.

Lunch Bunch This group meets monthly at various restaurants throughout Berks County as a means of socialization. This group is open to those with visual impairments or who are blind and their family members, friends, and caregivers.

Assistive Devices A variety of assistive devices are available for individuals to purchase or lease. These items are available to assist an individual with vision issues to lead a more productive and independent life.

Spanish Speaking Sight Loss Support Group

This group meets monthly to provide support for those within Berks County who are blind or have vision loss that feel more comfortable within the Spanish speaking community. This group meets to discuss problems and possible solutions for difficulties they are having dealing with everyday life with their visual impairment.

Education Programs

Several education programs are available for different age groups of children. These programs are designed to discuss eye health and eye safety rules. Adult education programs can also be performed concerning specific eye issues or ideas for continued independence within the home with a visual impairment.

Information and Referral Services Following an individualized home visit, information and releases are obtained to discuss the best way to assist the client. If further assistance is necessary, referrals are made to the appropriate agencies to best address the client's individual needs for success with their visual impairment.

Workshop Services Employing over 50 visually impaired, blind, or challenged individuals, the workshop promotes developing skill sets unique to each person's abilities and interests. Pride in work done produces a quality product for the customer. Each employee is paid for their specific amount of work performed. All work is done specific to the customer's specifications.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 610-375-8407 or visit our website at www.vrcberks.org



VISION and HEARING Expo

AT
CROWNE PLAZA
READING

Vision and Hearing Expo 2018

A special thanks to Eye Consultants of PA and Berks ENT for being this year's co-event sponsors

Our annual Vision and Hearing Expo and third year collaborating with Berks Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, was held on Thursday, May 3rd at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Wyomissing. In addition to providing free hearing screenings to all attendees, we had several guests speakers with topics ranging from early detection of speech, language and hearing delays, to demonstrations on state of the art assistive technology for the visually impaired, including apps for smart phones and the "Jordy", a battery-operated, full-color portable system that can be worn like a pair of glasses to see near, far, and everything in between! Mike Faust from WEEU was on sight with his live remote feedback show and the vendors were all very pleased with the crowd turnout, and enjoyed the opportunity to make connections with many new prospects!

VRC would like to give a BIG thanks to our volunteer drivers who

always help in making it possible for so many of our clients to attend Expo, speak with the vendors, and attend the informative seminars!

A special thanks to Eye Consultants of PA and Berks ENT for being this year's co-event sponsors and WEEU Live Feedback sponsors! Thanks also to Dr. Dawn Hornberger, Ed Martin with Enhanced Vision, Jess Tofany, M.S. CCC-SLP, Cert. AVT LSLs Managing Member of Happy Hearts, LLC, and VRTs Erin Werner and Jeanne Stahlecker with the Bureau of Blind and Visual Services for your enlightening presentations!





Farsighted Children Struggle with Attention

Are You In Need Of A Vision Exam Or Glasses?

WE CAN HELP!

Do you:

- Have no other means to obtain essential vision care and/or glasses
- Have a household income of 250% poverty level or less and ability to supply proof of such
- Have proof that your last eye examination was at least 24 months ago for adults and 12 months ago for children or adults with diabetes

If so, please contact



This program brought to you by a grant from the



Many teachers of young children can tell you that children who have uncorrected vision problems often have a harder time paying attention than their peers. Much of the learning at that age is very visual and often takes place in group settings.

A study supported by The National Eye Institute, and published in the October 2017 issue of Optometry and Vision Science, suggests that farsightedness, or hyperopia, in preschoolers and kindergartners could put them at risk of slipping behind in school. The study included 244 children with moderate farsightedness and 248 children with normal vision. Researchers

knew from previous work that children with uncorrected farsightedness have decreased early literacy. This study found many farsighted children also had lower scores on tests of visual attention, visual perception and visual motor integration (eye-hand coordination or copying skills).

The researchers in this study are planning a follow up study to determine the effect of glasses to correct farsightedness on these deficits. They note it is important to identify these children and especially identify those having learning difficulties because of their vision.

- www.news.osu.edu



Yes! I want to be a
VOLUNTEER
for Vision Resource Center of Berks County

Please complete and return this form to:
**Vision Resource Center
of Berks County
2020 Hampden Blvd.,
Reading, PA 19604**

I AM AVAILABLE:

Monday.....AM.....PM
 Tuesday.....AM.....PM
 Wednesday.....AM.....PM
 Thursday.....AM.....PM
 Friday.....AM.....PM
 Saturday.....AM.....PM

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

VRC's First Golf Tournament A Hole in One!



Vision Resource Center of Berks County held its first Golf Tournament on June 6th at Willow Hollow Golf Course in Leesport. We were fortunate enough to luck out with the weather, and had nearly 70 golfers in attendance! Congratulations to the following Skill Prize winners:

- *Longest Drive Men:* **Dennis Hess**
- *Longest Drive Women:* **Sheila Contento**
- *Circle of Gold:* **Ted Walden and Bill Doorely**
- *Closest to the Pin Winners:* **Tab Wenrich, Charles Arner, Craig Mengel, Brian Gerner**
- *Putting Contest:* **Will Luca**
- *First Flight Foursome - 15 Under Par:* **David Hause, Charles Arner, Bill Semko and Richard Bashore**
- *First Flight Foursome - 5 Under Par:* **Pete Wszalek, Scott Wheeler, Tom Visgarda and Dennis Duym**

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT SPONSORS:

- **Carim Eye & Retina**
- **Freedom Toyota**
- **Schatz Electric**
- **West Lawn Quoting Association**

ADDITIONAL THANKS TO THE IN-KIND SPONSORS:

- **Berks Fire Water Restorations, Inc.**
- **Berks Packing Company, Inc.**
- **Clover Farms**
- **High Printing & Graphics, Inc.**
- **Reading Royals**
- **South Mountain YMCA Camps**
- **Sweet Street Desserts**
- **Unique Pretzel Bakery, Inc.**

And lastly a BIG thank you to our Board and Committee members who helped to make our first golf outing a big success!





In-Sight

For People Affected by Blindness and Low Vision

July Eye Injury Prevention Month



- Preventing injuries to eyes in the workplace is primarily this month's focus.
- It is estimated that out of 2,000 eye injuries each day, about 1,000 occur in the workplace.
- According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, almost 70% of eye injuries on the job are caused by either falling or flying objects, or sparks hitting a worker's eye.
- Tips for Safety:
- Wear appropriate eye protection for the job you do.
- Make sure that eye protection is fitted correctly in order to be effective.
- Continue to have regular eye exams to retain healthy vision.

For more information:
www.consumerhealthdigest.com/health-awareness/eye-injury-prevention-month.html

August Children's Eye Health and Safety Month



- August is Children's Eye Health and Safety Month—a great signal for you to get your child's eyes checked before school starts. Most children have healthy eyes. But there are conditions that can threaten good vision. Because you can't always "look" into your child's eyes to tell if they have eye health problems, set up some time today for an eye exam:
- Your child's eyes should be examined during regular pediatric appointments and vision testing should be conducted around age three.
- Parents should be aware of signs that may indicate their child has vision problems, including: Wandering or crossed eyes, A family history of childhood vision problems.

For more information:
www.consumerhealthdigest.com/health-awareness/childrens-eye-health-and-safety-awareness-month.html

September National Guide Dog Month



- This month of awareness was inspired by Dick Van Patten who was "impressed by the intelligence and training of guide dogs."
- After learning that the cost to raise and train a guide dog is over \$40,000 and takes more than two years, Van Patten was committed to raising money and awareness.
- National Guide Dog Month was initially set in May, but was changed due to conflicts with other national fundraising drives.
- Beneficiaries of fundraising during this awareness month include Leader Dogs for the Blind and The Seeing Eye, Inc. Fundraising is collected and distributed by Petco Foundation, Inc., a non-profit corporation..

For more information:
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Guide_Dog_Month