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RETINA
SOUTH AFRICA

Out of Sight

September 2025

Organisation News

Dear Retina South Africa Members and Supporters,

I am writing to you from Warsaw, where I have recently relocated. The vibrant, sunny weather here serves as a fitting backdrop for the optimism and progress featured in this month's Out-of-Sight newsletter.

In this edition, we explore significant advancements in automated vehicles and their potential to enhance independence for individuals with visual impairments. We are also proud to introduce the Umsizi reader, a transformative tool enabling our members to access texts in all of South Africa's official languages.

Retina South Africa continues to lead in advocating for those with rare retinal conditions, and we extend our deepest gratitude to the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative for their generous grant supporting our

outreach program in the Western Cape this September. Details of this initiative are included in the newsletter.

We are also preparing for the Double Century event in November. We invite you to meet the Retina South Africa team participating and encourage your contributions to this meaningful cause. Additionally, please find information about our Zanzibar raffle and the Ride Joburg charity event, both of which promise to be exciting opportunities for engagement.

Thank you for your continued support in advancing our mission.

Yours Sincerely,
Mariza Jurgens
The Editor

**WORLD RETINA WEEK (21 TO 28
SEPTEMBER) & EYE CARE AWARENESS
MONTH (21 SEPTEMBER - 18 OCTOBER)**

Love Your Eyes - Test Your Eyes

Many people affected by retinal vision loss avoid seeing an eye care professional on a regular basis. As many retinal conditions are untreatable, people may ignore the complications that can arise for all of us.

Having a retinal condition does not protect you from developing cataracts, high pressure within the eye (Glaucoma), or macular oedema (swelling in the macular



area). These complications are often treatable in the early stages and if left untreated could diminish your already limited vision.

Vision Works is offering a HUGE discount to members of Retina South Africa- a comprehensive vision test for only R250 instead of R495. This offer excludes the cost of refractive lenses or frames.

They are also offering a FREE comprehensive eye test for children aged 6 to 12 yrs old.

The Vision Works Optometrists logo is on the left, and the Retina South Africa logo is on the right. Below the logos, the text 'a Cure in Sight for Blindness' is centered. In the center, the price 'R250' is written in large, bold, yellow letters. Below the price, it says '*Ts & Cs apply'. At the bottom, in smaller text, it says 'Mention Retina SA when booking your eye test at any of the 40+ Vision Works Optometrists stores nationwide'.

A graphic for a 'COMPREHENSIVE EYE TEST VOUCHER'. The text 'COMPREHENSIVE EYE TEST' is in white on a teal background. Below it, 'VOUCHER' is in large, outlined letters. Underneath, the word 'PLUS' is in yellow. At the bottom, it says 'Enjoy 20% OFF Frames, Lenses and Sunglasses when you purchase in-store after your eye test.'

#LOVEYOUREYES™ #TESTYOUREYES

Terms and Conditions:

1. This voucher is valid for a single use only and may not be copied, reused, or transferred.
2. Valid for appointments scheduled between 18 September and 31 October 2025.
3. This voucher is non-refundable and cannot be exchanged for cash or alternative services.
4. Enjoy 20% off frames and lenses (offer not applicable to Discovery Health members).

Hearing loss may often be associated with vision loss and added to vision loss makes life even more difficult. Hearing Works SA is offering all Retina SA members a complimentary hearing screening from their Hearing Works practices nationwide.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Umsizi Reader: A Game-Changer for Accessible Reading in South Africa

Imagine diving into your favorite book, a work memo, or even a restaurant menu, all in your home language, no matter your visual ability. Thanks to the Umsizi Reader app, designed by South African innovator, and Retina member with Stargardt Disease, Ferdie Danzfuss, this is now a reality for visually impaired South Africans.

This AI-powered app turns written content into audio across all 11 official languages—whether it's Zulu, Afrikaans, Xhosa, or English—making books, documents, websites, and even quick tasks via WhatsApp more accessible than ever before.

[READ MORE](#)

Autonomous Cars: A Beacon of Hope for Independent Mobility in South Africa

As blind persons living in South Africa, the idea of Autonomous Vehicles (AVs) fills us with an overwhelming sense of hope and excitement. For far too long, we've navigated a world where simple tasks like getting to work or visiting friends feel like insurmountable challenges. But AVs—self-driving cars powered by sensors, AI, and machine learning—promise to change that. They represent not just a technological breakthrough, but a pathway to true independence, dignity, and participation in society. Imagine waking up and deciding

on a whim to head to the market or a job interview without begging for a ride or wrestling with unreliable public transport. For the approximately 1 million South Africans who are blind or severely visually impaired, AVs could unlock a future where we move freely, pursue our dreams, and live life on our own terms.

READ MORE

MEETING IN WESTERN CAPE

Dear Retina Member in the Western Cape

You are invited to attend a meeting for Retina SA members which will be hosted by the Retina team in Cape Town this September.

Date: Saturday, 13th September 2025

Time: 10:00 - 13:00

Venue: The Francis Ames Room, Barnard Fuller Building, UCT Faculty of Health Sciences, Anzio Rd, Observatory, Cape Town, 7935 (Google Maps Link: <http://bit.ly/4mrgCyM>)

Whether you would like to learn more about the latest cutting-edge developments in research, treatments and clinical trials relating to retinal conditions, or try out some amazing assistive devices and technologies, or connect with other members who are going through a similar journey as yourself and chat about support, para-sport and other opportunities to collaborate, this meeting is for you!

Don't Miss Out! Join us and grab this opportunity to:

- Register as a member or update your details
- Learn more about retinal conditions and research

- Enter exciting raffle draws, including one where you could win an all-inclusive trip to Zanzibar
- Learn more about exciting assistive devices and services in Cape Town

RSVP by the 8th of September 2025, to do so:

Email us at headoffice@retinasa.org.za

Call our offices on 011 450 1181 or Share Call 0860 59 59 59 (SA Only), or WhatsApp us on 082 074 7116

Refreshments will be served. Further details will be shared upon RSVP.

We look forward to seeing you there!

GET INVOLVED - MAKE A DIFFERENCE



SAVE OUR SIGHT & WIN!

Your membership doesn't just keep Retina South Africa strong—it also gives you the chance to **win R500 every month!**

Here's how it works:

Pay your annual membership fee of **R240** and you'll automatically receive a ticket into our monthly **Save Our Sight** draw.

[PAY MEMBERSHIP FEE](#)

Refer a Friend & Boost Your Impact

When you refer a family member or friend to make a donation of **R250 or more**, they'll be entered into our **Save Our Sight** monthly draw—just like you!

All it takes is a quick click on the [Donate Now](#) button on our website and a completed contribution. It's simple, impactful and gives them a chance to win **R500** while helping us fight retinal blindness.

Lets grow our community, celebrate generosity and keep the momentum going.

Congratulations to our August winner **Pierre Fourie**.

Together, we can Save Our Sight—one ticket at a time.

Introducing the Next Chapter in Para Sport Development at Retina SA

SA's First Mixed Para Cycling Team to Ride the 2025 Double Century

As part of our growing **Para Sport Development Programme**, Retina South Africa is proud to announce a powerful milestone: For the **first time in the event's history**, a **mixed para cycling team** - made up of athletes with physical and visual impairments - has been entered into the 204.5 km Old Mutual Wealth Double Century, taking place in Swellendam on 22 November 2025.

The team of 12 riders will be led by Team Captain Oswald Kydd, with Retina SA's Lindsay Engelbrecht driving the project as Project Lead. This team represents more than athletic ability - it's a bold

statement about inclusion, access, and the power of para sport in South Africa.



LEARN MORE

Ride Joburg 2025 with Retina SA!

This is your chance to be part of something bigger than the race itself - ride for hope, awareness, and impact. Team members enjoy exclusive benefits like a Retina SA cycling jersey & socks, fundraising support, and being part of a passionate community making a real difference.



Secure your spot on Team Retina SA with a R500 sign-up donation (included in your R2,500 fundraising goal) and enjoy the support of a passionate community fighting retinal blindness.

**Final date to join:
24 September 2025**

SIGN UP TODAY

Your Chance to Escape to Zanzibar!

Stand a chance to win a **7-NIGHT FULL BOARD LUXURY ZANZIBAR GETAWAY** for two, including flights – worth R75,000!



Stay at Michamvi Sunset Bay Resort – a private oasis on Zanzibar's serene southeast coast.

♥ When you buy a ticket for just R100, you give **hope** – hope for sight, hope for tomorrow.

BUY YOUR TICKET

Great News – Our Landline and Share Call Numbers Are Back!

We are pleased to let our members know that after some changes a few months ago, we have successfully reinstated both our original landline number and our Share Call number.

This means you can once again reach us on:

- **Landline: +27(0)114501181**
- **Share Call: 0860595959 (local SA calls only)**
- **WhatsApp: 082 074 7116**

We know how important it is for our members and supporters to have reliable ways of getting in touch, and we are delighted to make communication with us easier again.

Thank you for your patience during the transition. We look forward to hearing from you!



ADVERTISEMENT

Beyond the Drop: Nutritional Therapy for Dry Eye Disease

In today's high-tech, high-stress world, Dry Eye Disease (DED) is no longer an occasional nuisance, it is a daily clinical reality. With digital eye strain, environmental exposure, meibomian gland dysfunction, and systemic inflammatory triggers on the rise, optometrists are facing a surge of patients for whom artificial tears are not enough.

A New Approach: Support from Within

Nurture Vision Dry Eye: a uniquely formulated nutritional



supplement proudly developed and manufactured in South Africa, to support the root causes of dry eye, rather than just masking the symptoms.

This once to twice daily capsule delivers targeted botanical and micronutrient support for the tear film, meibomian glands, and ocular surface, offering a complementary approach to in-practice therapies like lubricants, warm compresses, and punctal plugs.

What is Inside the Capsule?

Each serving contains a scientifically selected blend of ingredients to combat inflammation, improve tear quality, and nourish ocular tissues:

Ingredient

Function

Euphrasia (Eyebright)

Traditionally used for ocular inflammation

Bilberry Extract (Vaccinium myrtillus)

Enhances microvascular integrity and reduces oxidative stress

Sunflower Lecithin

Supports meibomian gland lipid output

Vitamins A, C, D, E, K

Promote epithelial healing and immune support

Zinc, Selenium, Copper

Crucial for antioxidant defence and tissue repair

B-Vitamins

Support nerve signalling and metabolic function in ocular tissues

The result? A supplement that goes beyond lubrication — one that targets the systemic inflammatory and nutritional deficiencies associated with chronic dry eye.

Who Should Be on Nurture Dry Eye?

- Screen-heavy patients with digital eye strain
- Contact lens wearers reporting dryness and irritation
- Menopausal women or patients with hormonal dry eye
- Autoimmune or Sjögren's Syndrome patients
- Patients using antihistamines, antidepressants, or diuretics

Available Now:

For more info on their full product range, whole sale pricing and retail pricing please reach out to them on:

enquiries@nurturevision.co.za

You can also visit nurturevision.co.za for more information.

UPCOMING FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Events Calendar

13 September 2025 - Insight Helps: University of Cape Town

15 September 2025 - Insight Works: UCT Faculty of Health Sciences - Observatory - Cape Town

22 October 2025 - Padel for Sight, Play for A Purpose - Modderfontein, Johannesburg

26 October 2025 - Ride Joburg, Ride For A Purpose - Gauteng
22 November 2025 - Double Century Tour - Swellendam

Retina SA Disclaimer

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