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OUT OF SIGHT

OCTOBER 2026



Dear Members and Friends,

October has arrived, and with it the most beautiful month on the South African calendar. Spring has just sprung: the jacarandas are thinking about it, the gardens are waking up, and the light has that soft, hopeful quality that makes you want to be outside.

This edition of Out of Sight leans into that feeling.

Our main article looks at sensory gardens and the quiet power of a space designed for more than sight. Fragrance, texture, sound, and taste can turn an ordinary garden into a place everyone can enjoy. The piece is full of practical ideas for making a garden accessible to people with visual impairment, whether you are planning a community space or simply rethinking a corner of your own yard. It is the right read for this season.

We also turn to the upcoming local government elections. Voting is one of the most direct ways to shape the services and spaces we rely on, and special votes exist so that people who cannot get to a polling station on election day are not left out. This article explains how special votes work and how to use them,

so that nothing stands between you and your ballot.

On the fundraising front, the calendar is filling up, and every one of these events helps us keep funding research, support, and advocacy.

The Dis-Chem Ride for Sight is opening its books. Early booking and registration opens on 9 October. If you have been waiting for the signal to dust off the bike, this is it. It remains one of the warmest, most inclusive races on the calendar, organised by people who know exactly why the cause matters.

The Zanzibar raffle is selling tickets fast and furiously, and it is still open. One lucky winner and their partner stand a chance to spend a lovely week together on the island. Every ticket is a small holiday dream and a direct contribution to our work.

Looking a little further ahead, the Ride Joburg is coming up in November. We are hoping to field at least 50 cyclists taking part in support of Retina South Africa. If you ride, or if you know someone who does, please help us get to that number. A strong team on the road raises both funds and visibility.

Finally, a practical ask of our members. Please make sure your MyDifference details are updated and that Retina South Africa is still selected as your cause. Woolworths' MyDifference programme has replaced the old MySchool card, and support does not carry over automatically. There is also a new way to give: you can now donate to Retina South Africa through Shoprite Money Market accounts. Everyday shopping and a simple transfer can both keep this work moving.

There is a lot of news in these pages, and a lot of ways to take part. Thank you, as always, for reading, for riding, for buying a ticket, and for standing with people living with retinal conditions.

Enjoy the edition, and enjoy the spring.

Warm regards

Mariza Jurgens

The Editor

A Garden You Can Feel



Sensory Gardens for people who are blind or partially sighted

A sensory garden is not a flower bed that happens to smell nice.

It is a patch of outdoor ground planned so that scent, texture, sound and taste do the work that colour usually does. You are meant to brush the leaves, crush a herb, listen for water, and find your way by the edge of the path.

Most gardens are laid out for looking. That leaves a person with sight loss standing beside the view while someone else describes it. A sensory garden changes the invitation: come in and use the place yourself.

Why plant one if someone in the family is blind?

Because the garden stops being a picture other people look at, and becomes a room the whole household can share.

For the person who is blind or partially sighted, a small, well-planned patch offers landmarks they can find again: the rosemary at the corner of the path, the fountain that gives a bearing, the velvet of lamb's ear at hand height. Independence outdoors is often less about a big landscape than about knowing what is within reach and where the path goes.

For family members who can see, the same plants are a way to spend time together without turning every outing into a guided tour. You can pick chives for supper, compare two kinds of bark, or sit where the lavender throws its scent, and nobody has to narrate the view. Children, partners and visiting relatives get something to do with their hands. The garden becomes a shared habit, not a favour.

You do not need a large property. One raised trough beside a chair — rosemary, lavender, chives and lamb's ear — with a firm path from the back door, is already a sensory garden.

Ready to try it? On our blog, we share how to set out a path you can follow, the South African plants that work hardest for touch and scent, and three public gardens you can visit, including the Braille trails at Kirstenbosch and Worcester.

Read the full article [HERE](#)

Local Government Elections - 4 November 2026

They can come to your home for your vote

If you are blind or partially sighted, you already know what election day can ask of a person. A voting station is often a school hall you have never walked through. There is a queue you cannot see the start of. There is a building a white cane will not invent for you, and a journey many of us cannot make on our own because we do not drive and we cannot safely find our way there.

You do not have to lose your vote because of that.

The Electoral Commission has something called a special vote. In plain language, it means this: if you cannot get to the voting station, you can ask the IEC to come to you. Officials bring the ballot to the place where you live. You vote at home, or in the care home where you stay. That is the whole idea.

This article is only about that home visit. Nothing else.

Why you qualify

You qualify if you are already registered to vote, and if you cannot physically get to your voting station because of your sight. The law talks about people who cannot present themselves at a station because of their physical condition.

Blindness and partial sight sit inside that. If you cannot drive, and you cannot reach the station safely on your own, that is enough reason to ask them to come to you.

You will need a green barcoded ID book, a smart ID card, or a valid Temporary Identity Certificate from Home Affairs. If you are not sure you are still on the voters' roll, phone the IEC on 0800 11 8000 and ask them to check. You can also WhatsApp them on 060 088 0000.

What you have to do and by when

Applications close at 5pm on Monday, 12 October 2026. Don't wait. You can apply by phone on 0800 11 8000 or at registertovote.elections.org.za.

On our blog, we explain how to apply step by step, when the officials will visit, who may sit with you while you vote, and how to ask for the Braille ballot template.

Read the full blog post [HERE](#)

Living Well with Sight Loss- Seats still open

Our free eight-session Zoom course, Living Well with Sight Loss, continues through Eye Care Awareness Month. Each

Tuesday evening stands on its own, so you can join the whole series or only the sessions that are useful to you.

Feedback has been warm. After the opening session, Living Without Fear, one person called it mind-blowing. Another wrote that they were absolutely overwhelmed with gratitude. Last week's session, Know Your Eyes, Protect Your Eyes, was described as absolutely brilliant — retinal conditions brought close, and made understandable, for everyone in the room.

There is huge interest in these evenings. Some sessions have been oversubscribed, but places are still available on others. If there is a session you would still like to attend, please email Head Office to ask about availability and book your seat: headoffice@retinasa.org.za (put the session name in the subject line).

Still to come (Tuesdays, 18:00, on Zoom):

- 6 October — Moving Beyond Sight: exploring para sport, and how to get involved
- 13 October — Moving with Confidence: canes, guide dogs and mobility training — what is available and how to access it
- 20 October — The World in Your Pocket: assistive technology, AI and tools you can use today
- 27 October — Employment and Empowerment: workplace accommodations after a new or changing visual diagnosis
- 3 November — Seeing Differently, Living Fully: AMD and diabetic eye disease, movement, and living well with changing sight
- 10 November — Reading with Low or No Vision
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Attendance is free. Anyone who registers and attends more than five sessions receives a certificate of attendance.

Full session details and registration links:

<https://retinasa.org.za/living-well-with-sight-loss-join-our-free-eight-session-zoom-course/>

Email: headoffice@retinasa.org.za

If you missed our first two Workshops they are available in the links below:

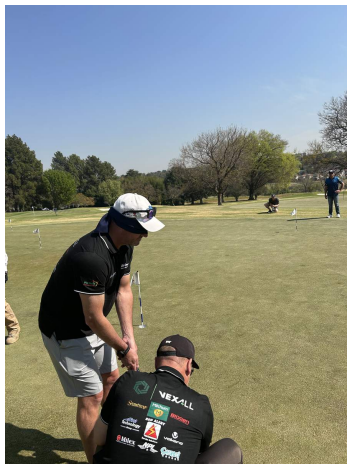
1. Living without Fear available [HERE](#)
 2. Know Your Eyes, Protect Your Eyes available [HERE](#)
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Dis-Chem Foundation Swing for Sight

What an incredible day we had at Dis-Chem Foundation Swing for Sight! We brought together 234 golfers, 80 padel players, roughly 25 sponsors and partners, and 10 amazing volunteers, all coming together for one purpose: supporting Retina South Africa and people living with vision loss.

From the golf and padel to our blind putting challenge, which gave guests a small glimpse into what navigating the world without sight can feel like, it was a day filled with fun, connection and meaningful moments.





The dinner and prize giving were the perfect way to end an incredible event, and together, the event raised just over R750,000!



A huge thank you to every sponsor, partner, player, volunteer and everyone who helped make Dis-Chem Foundation Swing for Sight such a success. Your support truly makes a difference.

See you next year!!!

Your Ticket to Paradise: Win 7 nights in Zanzibar



a Cure in Sight for Blindness
NPO 003-184 | PBO 93001585 | B-BBEE LEVEL 1

Win a **DREAM HOLIDAY** in *Zanzibar*

7-night stay for two at the stunning
Michamvi Sunset Bay Resort,
including return flights.



RETURN
FLIGHTS
INCLUDED



7 NIGHTS
LUXURY
ACCOMMODATION



DAILY
BREAKFAST &
DINNER



PARADISE
AWAITS

STAND A CHANCE
TO WIN THIS
LUXURY GETAWAY!

TICKET PRICE
R100



**BUY YOUR TICKET
AND HELP CHANGE LIVES**

Every ticket supports people
living with vision loss.



Proudly sponsored by

Michamvi
Sunset Bay

Imagine winning a seven-night getaway for two to beautiful Zanzibar! With the Retina South Africa Zanzibar Holiday, you could be enjoying a stay at the stunning Michamvi Sunset Bay Resort, with return flights, breakfast and a three-course dinner included.

Tickets are just R100, giving you the chance to win an incredible holiday valued at around R75,000, while also supporting Retina South Africa and our work with people and children living with vision loss.

So why not take a chance, support a great cause and give yourself something incredible to look forward to?

Get your ticket today, and you could be the one packing your bags for Zanzibar!



Raffle: Zanzibar Luxury Getaway

R100.00

Buy

Ride Joburg - 2026



Make a difference while taking on Johannesburg's biggest cycling event!

Ride Joburg is almost here! On 22 November, Team Retina South Africa will be taking on the incredible 97-kilometre challenge at Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit.

But this is about more than just cycling. Every kilometre ridden and every rand raised helps Retina South Africa continue supporting people and children living with vision loss.

We're calling on cyclists, supporters, friends and families to get behind Team Retina SA, take on the challenge and help us reach our rider goal.

So get involved, spread the word and ride with us as we work together to create change. Because every rider has the power to make a difference.

Join the Ride!

Date: 22 November 2026

Team Code: RET97

Fundraising Minimum: R2,500, which includes the R500 sign-up donation

Join our charity team by: **21 October 2026**

Benefits of Being A Part of Team Retina SA

- ✓ Dedicated team start
- ✓ Official Retina SA cycling shirt
- ✓ Exclusive Team Retina SA cycling socks
- ✓ Rider welcome gift bag
- ✓ Race pack collection on your behalf

✓ Exclusive access to our VIP post-race hospitality

SIGN UP HERE

Dis-Chem Ride for Sight 2027

Ready to ride for a purpose? Retina South Africa is giving you the chance to win an entry to the 38th Dis-Chem Ride for Sight! Taking place on **21 February 2027** at **Sun Carnival City**, Dis-Chem Ride for Sight brings cyclists together for an incredible day on the road while supporting an important cause.

Whether you're a regular cyclist or looking for your next challenge, this is your opportunity to get involved, get on your bike and Ride for Sight.

Keep an eye out for the competition details, enter for your chance to win, and get ready to ride for a purpose!

**Shop at Woolworths and help Retina SA,
at no extra cost to you**



What if your weekly groceries could help fund research and create awareness about inherited retinal conditions. With Woolworths MyDifference they can.

MyDifference is Woolworths' rewards programme, and it has replaced the old MySchool card. When you choose Retina South Africa as your cause, Woolworths gives back to us every time you shop. It costs you nothing extra. You shop as you normally would

What your shopping supports

- Genetic research into inherited retinal conditions
- Counselling and education for families
- Speaking up for accessibility and fair healthcare
- Support for people living with retinal vision loss

How to sign up in five easy steps

1. Download the Woolworths app.
2. Sign in, or create a Woolworths account.
3. Go to MyDifference and activate your virtual card.
4. Search for Retina South Africa and choose us as your cause.
5. Shop as usual and scan your virtual card at checkout.

Used to support us with MySchool? Thank you!

The MySchool card is no longer used at the till, so please open the Woolworths app and check that Retina South Africa is still your chosen cause.

Prefer a physical card instead of the app? You can ask Woolworths for one.

Every swipe adds up. Choose Retina South Africa today, and make your shopping make a difference.

Find out more at <https://retinasa.org.za/support-us/get-involved> or call us on 0860 59 59 59.

**Save Our Sight: Join us for R250 a year,
and you could win R500 every month**



Be like our previous winners of the Save Our Sight Campaign. Win R500 per month.

Every day in South Africa, people are told they have an inherited retinal condition. For many, it's the start of a long and uncertain road. No one should walk that road alone, and that is why we started the **Save Our Sight Campaign**.

Save Our Sight is Retina South Africa's national campaign to raise awareness, support people living with vision loss, and fund research into life-changing treatments.

What your support makes possible

- Research into inherited retinal conditions, and the search for new treatments
- Support for families as they learn to live with vision loss
- Peer monitoring, education and other essential services
- Breaking the stigma around blindness and low vision

How to Join:

- **Already a Retina SA member?** Your annual membership includes you in the campaign. Pay your membership fee [HERE](#)
- **Not a member yet or want to join or get your family and friends to join.** Join the campaign for R250 a year [HERE](#)

A little thank you from us

Every Save Our Sight supporter is entered into our **monthly draw to win R500**. You help fund a cure, and you could get something back.

A small amount, given by many people, adds up to real change: more research, more support, and more hope for families

across the country

Join Save Our Sight today

Questions? Call 0860 59 59 59 or email
headoffice@retinasa.org.za

*This project is registered with the National Lotteries Board,
Scheme No 00187-22.*

A new transparent way to support Retina South Africa

We are excited to share a new way for our supporters to give, one that lets you see exactly how your donation is used.

Retina South Africa has partnered with iZinga Assist and the Shoprite Money Market Account, giving you a direct, transparent path to fund our work.

How it works

1. Find our profile. Search for Retina South Africa on the iZinga Donor Portal.
2. Review our profile. Check our objectives, financial health overview and iZinga Assist star rating before you give.
3. Choose a project. Instead of donating to a general fund, select the specific Retina South Africa project or cause you want to support.
4. Give securely. Complete your donation through the iZinga portal. Your funds go directly into Retina South Africa's own dedicated Shoprite Money Market Account, not a shared pool.

5. See the impact. No further action is needed. You will automatically receive updates as we spend the funds, for example when the account is swiped or a digital voucher linked to your chosen project is used.

Why this matters

This system means less waiting and more clarity. You will know your donation reached us, and see when and how it was used, without needing to chase an update.

Questions or need help?

For problems with the iZinga platform itself, such as login issues, payment failures or finding your way around the portal, please contact iZinga Assist support directly. For questions about our projects, or how your donation will be used, you are welcome to contact giving@retinasa.org.za. Please note that our staff cannot see your iZinga login or payment details, and cannot make a payment on your behalf.

We cannot wait for you to be part of this next chapter in how we do good, together.

ADVERTISEMENT



**Nurture Vision Dry
Eye Supplement -
Soothe Your Dry**

Eyes Naturally from within



What makes Nurture Vision Dry Eye so effective?

- Potent antioxidants and anti-inflammatories
- Soothing botanical ingredients
- Naturally stabilizes tear film
- Relief from the inside out

What makes Nurture Vision Eye Health so effective

Formulated to address the root causes of dryness, this supplement blends evidence based herbal extracts, essential vitamins, antioxidants and minerals to stabilise the tear film and protect the ocular surface. Unlike drops, it works from within for longer-lasting relief.

Ingredient Benefits

Herbal extracts, essential vitamins, antioxidants and minerals

- Support tear film stability
- Mucin production and eye surface health

Plant Extracts

- Antioxidants to protect and nourish eye tissues

- Anti-inflammatory for eye comfort

Functional Benefits

- Promotes balanced tear production
- Soothes irritation and dryness
- Supports comfort in dry or air-conditioned environments
- Complements your eye drop routine

Why Choose Dry Eye?

- **Reduces Inflammation** - Helps reduce inflammation linked to tear film instability
- **Soothes** - Soothes internal causes of chronic dryness
- **Supports**-Supports eyes in dry, air-conditioned, or dusty environments
- **Complements**- Works from within, complementing topical eye drops

Who is Dry Eye for?

- **Professionals** - Keep your eyes comfortable through extended workdays
- **Contact Lens Wearers** - Relieve dryness and discomfort from lens wear
- **Gamers** - Shield your eyes from the elements
- **Seniors** - Complements your eye drop routine

If your eyes feel dry, gritty, tired, or overworked, this supplement works internally to help stabilise and nourish your tear film for lasting comfort.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Events Calendar

22 November 2026 - Ride Joburg

21 February 2027 - Dis-Chem Ride for Sight

Retina SA Disclaimer

Information disseminated by Retina South Africa is for information purposes only. Readers must discuss any intervention with their Eye Care Practitioner. Information in this Out of Sight Newsletter does not imply that Retina South Africa endorses any particular therapy, intervention or medication. Retina South Africa assumes no responsibility for the use made of any information provided in this newsletter.

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