

Livonia store helps those with low vision

BY RENEE SKOGLUND
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If you're looking for pity because of low vision, don't come into Nancy Simmons' store. This can-do owner of Low Vision Solutions on Seven Mile Road in Livonia lives by the motto, "Whore's there's a will, there's a way." Indeed, she's living proof that someone with low vision can lead a highly productive life. Developing retinitis pigmentosa at age 10 and incurring a decreasing field of vision since has not stopped her from going to college, becoming a

social worker, and, for the last 13 years, working as a business-woman selling high-tech and low-tech aids for people with low vision and blindness.

There's definitely a market for such products, she said, "just because you're legally blind doesn't mean you can't still have a lot of useable sight."

Nine out of 10 of Simmons customers suffer from some degree of visual degeneration, from difficulty seeing while driving to struggling with 8x or 4x magnifier to read a prescription bottle. Simmons stocks numerous enhanced vision systems, including the "Jordy," which she says

requires training by the user and is not for everybody.

"More people are more apt to use a more simple device."

However, the Jordy has its advantages. "The nice thing about the Jordy is it's one of the few devices that can be used for distance viewing or mounted on a stand to read your papers. The distance viewing is what makes it use extensive line of video magnifiers - with monitors measuring nine to 12 inches - includes the Optelec ClearView, which allows for reverse contrast of text (white text against a

black background provides sharper contrast), and the Clarity AutoFocus, which allows users to read, write, view pictures, read medicine bottles, and work with three-dimensional objects by enlarging images on a television.

Helping you to see

Most people who were at first hesitant to use a video magnifier quickly adapt. "A month goes by and they don't give the machine back if their life depended on it," said Simmons.

Her stock of low-tech aids is extensive: Television glasses that enhance the contrast; large-

print playing cards and calendars; "talking" thermometers; watches and clocks; magnifying mirrors and hand-held magnifying devices; full-spectrum true-color lamps; and numerous kitchen aids, including big oven mitts, measuring and pouring devices, and double spatulas that securing hold food.

Simmons also recommends purchasing the book "Macular Degeneration: The Complete Guide to Saving and Maximizing Your Sight" by Dr. Lyles G. Mogg of the Henry Ford Health System. Her store stocks several copies. (Dr. Mogg, a specialist in macular degeneration, can be

reached at (313) 824-2401.)

Simmons, who is available for public speaking on low vision, has two words of advice for those facing loss of sight: "Speak up!" Accept your condition, make your needs known and learn about all the available high-tech and low-tech vision aids.

"Even a felt-tip pen can make a difference. If people don't take advantage, they're missing so much," she said.

Low Vision Solutions is located at 27520 W. Seven Mile Road, just west of Inlander on the north side. The phone number is (248) 777-1100.

MEDICAL DATEBOOK

Items for Medical Datebook are welcome from all hospitals, physicians, companies and residents active in the Observer-area medical community. Items should be sent to: Medical Datebook, c/o The Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. e-mail: rskoglund@oc.homecomm.net or faxed to (734) 591-7279.

SUN, JAN. 28

WOMEN'S HEALTH SEMINAR
Providence Hospital and Medical Centers will sponsor a Women's Health Seminar 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Novi United Methodist Church, 41871 West Ton Mile Road (just west of Meadowbrook), Novi. Topics include osteoporosis, peri-

menopause, menopause, women and heart disease, breast cancer prevention and detection. Proo. Call (248) 949-2852.

THRU MARCH 26

FIBROMYALGIA CONFERENCE
A three-session Fibromyalgia Conference will be held at Arthur's Place, 47659 Halyard Drive, Metro West Technology Park near Beck Road and M-14, Plymouth Township. Dr. Martin Tamler will present current research and treatments for fibromyalgia and discuss self-management techniques. Other topics include sleep, natural healing and nutrition. Registration required. Cost is \$10. Call

Ronnie at (734) 254-0500 or (248) 288-2210.

TUES, JAN. 30

AVOID INFECTIONS
Henry Ford Medical Center-Earlville will sponsor "Viral & Bacterial Infections: Avoid Them with Healthy Habits," a free lecture 11 a.m. to noon in the lower level of the center, 19401 Hubbard Drive, at Evergreen in Dearborn. Call (313) 982-8384.

SAT, FEB. 3

PEDIATRIC CPR
St. Mary Hospital in Livonia will offer an American Heart Association "Pediatric Basic Life Support CPR" class 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the hospital's auditorium, located near the Five Mile entrance. Learn how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for the child under age 8 and the infant in a cardiac emergency, manage the obstructed airway, and prevent injuries. Advance registration required. Call (734) 655-8940.

THURS, FEB. 1

NUTRITION
Registered dietitian Susan Hill from Henry Ford Health System will present a lecture on nutrition 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the lower

level of the medical center, 19401 Hubbard Drive, at Evergreen in Dearborn. She will discuss how micro-nutrients like vitamins and minerals may help prevent cancer, heart disease and premature aging. Call (313) 982-8384.

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Education, 20155 Middlebelt Rd. Livonia MI 48152 by Feb. 1. Call (248) 473-8933.

MON, FEB. 12

THYROID MEETING
Dr. Kelly Mandagere, endocrinologist from St. Joseph Hospital in Ann Arbor, will discuss how she treats thyroid disease in her practice during this month's Thyroid Support Group Meeting, which begins 8:30 p.m. at the Plymouth Public Library. Contact Tracy Green for more information (734) 453-7946 or mits@medisonet.net

WED, FEB. 14

SENIOR HEALTH
St. Mary Mercy Hospital in Livonia will present "Happy Hearts: Nurturing Relationships in Your Life" 1-3 p.m. in the hospital's Auditorium. To register, call (734) 655-8940. The hospital is located at 36475 Five Mile.

Class helps you use your mind to reduce pain

If you have pain from arthritis, fibromyalgia, diabetes, surgery and accidents, Clarenceville Schools Continuing Education has a class for you. Biochemist Sandy Baumann will lead a two-session course on using your mind to reduce pain 6:30-8:30 p.m. Tuesdays, Feb. 6 and Feb.

13. In the first session, you will learn about foods and supplements that reduce pain in the body and also practice techniques to diminish muscle tension and stress and decrease the magnitude and intensity of pain. The second session will teach

you the role of pleasurable activities in lowering pain and depression, ways to discover the roots of pain and strategies to release emotional hurt manifesting as physical pain.

The class, open to men and women of all ages, will be held at Clarenceville Schools for a fee of

\$25 per person. To register, mail check (payable to Clarenceville Schools) with your name, address, and phone number to Clarenceville Continuing Education, 20155 Middlebelt Rd, Livonia MI 48152 by Feb. 1. For more information or late registration, call (248) 473-8933.

DEPRESSION PATIENTS

Research Focus Group in the Detroit Area

If you have been diagnosed with Depression, and have tried at least two different antidepressants, we may be able to invite you to participate in a marketing research focus group about a new treatment for it. All information will be strictly confidential. No last names are needed. Those who participate in the study will be paid \$75 for their time (approximately 90, minutes.) Call 800-559-5954 and ask for Diane between 9:00 AM-5:00 PM weekdays (otherwise leave a message and we can call you back-discreetly) to learn more.

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OPEN HOUSE

KENSINGTON ACADEMY invites you to join us SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2001 and learn more about our commitment to academic excellence. With small class sizes, a computer/technology center, comprehensive music, art and drama programs; competitive athletics and Spanish audio lab, Kensington Academy promotes a lifelong love of learning.

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James A. Goldstein, M.D. Michael I. Dangovan, D.O. Martin F. McCough, M.D.

are pleased to announce their new general cardiology associates

Stephen T. Smith, M.D., F.A.C.C., F.C.C.P.
Dr. Smith is a general cardiologist with over 20 years of experience in the Detroit Metro area. He graduated from Michigan State University and completed training at Henry Ford Hospital. He has most recently practiced and held numerous administrative positions at Henry Ford Hospital.

Jenny Wu, M.D.
Dr. Wu is a graduate of the University of Miami School of Medicine and completed her internship and residency at the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor. She then trained at the Cleveland Clinic for her cardiology fellowship.

Beaumont Heart Center Clinic
3601 W. 13 Mile Road Royal Oak, Michigan (248) 551-4163

William Beaumont Hospital
44199 Dequindre Suite 108 Troy, Michigan (248) 879-5860
1950 E. Wixom Suite 102 Troy, Michigan (248) 740-3580