

ENSIGHT

Skills Center, Inc.

for visual rehabilitation



Jan./Feb. 2010

**Happy New Year, and
Thank You!**

The staff at Ensignt would like to wish everyone a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2010. We'd also like to thank everyone who responded so generously to our appeals for financial help during the holiday season. Your donations were greatly appreciated.

Ensignt is still facing significant financial challenges in 2010. Our non-profit organization must still rely on grants for the majority (about 60%) of our funding, and our donor foundations are trying to recover from a downturn in their own investments. We're hoping that as the economy improves, those foundations will come through for us again, so that we may continue to support the low-vision community in Colorado. So, we're making this simple plea: if you've donated before, please continue, and if you haven't yet, please consider doing so. Thanks.

Reminder About Office Hours Changes

As we mentioned before, we've had to make temporary reductions in office operating hours at all three of our locations. So, here's a reminder:

Fort Collins - Tuesday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Greeley - Tuesday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Denver - Wednesdays, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. We hope to expand Denver's hours to three days a week in the near future.

If you have any questions about office hours, please give us a call.

**Ensignt Skills Center
3307 S. College Ave, #108
Fort Collins, CO 80525
970-407-9999
Curtis Strong Center
918 13th Street, Suite 4
Greeley, CO 80631
970-353-9417**

Recent Vision Loss Statistics

Many people feel alone and isolated while dealing with their low vision issues. But these recently updated statistics (courtesy of Eyecare Business Magazine) show that there are literally millions of people in the low-vision community, and that organizations like EnSight are going to be very, very busy in the coming years.

More than 310 million people around the world are visually impaired. Of the 45 million people who are blind, almost two-thirds are women.

More than 8 out of 10 people who are visually impaired around the world, are age 50 or older.

More than 60 million Americans are considered to be at high risk for serious vision loss.

Some 9 million American "baby boomers" report vision trouble, even with contact lenses or glasses.

Approximately 13 million Americans have age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

Among Americans of European descent, AMD is the number-one cause of blindness.

The number of Americans suffering from diabetic retinopathy will skyrocket from 5.5 million in 2005 to 16 million in 2050.

Fewer than half of the estimated 4 million Americans who have glaucoma are aware that they have it.

When the Lighthouse National Survey was conducted in 1995, it was found that 14.5 million Americans age 45 and older indicated difficulty with at least one of these tasks: recognizing someone across a room, paying bills, identifying different denominations of bills and coins, reading newsprint or headlines, and functioning outside the house or local neighborhood. That number is expected to increase to more than 19 million people age 45 and older by 2030.

If Money's Tight, Remember, Ensignt Has Used CCTV's!

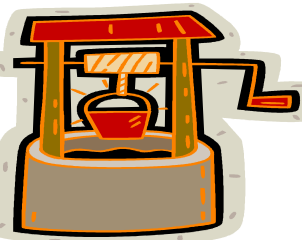
One of Ensignt's more popular magnification aids is the desktop video magnification system, or what we call a CCTV. Those who have them use them constantly, but the new ones can be a little pricey (about \$2,500). As an alternative, Ensignt has a consignment program for used CCTV's. We usually get several used machines each month, and we make sure they're in good working condition before they go on sale. We work with the seller to establish an asking price, but that price is always negotiable with someone who might be interested in buying the item. We currently have CCTV's as low as \$400. The inventory changes each month, so stop by any of our facilities and check out what's available.

The New Talking Book Machines Are Here!

The Colorado Talking Book Library (CTBL) has begun distributing the new digital machines to its users. CTBL is transitioning over veterans first, then centenarians, and then individual patrons, starting with those who read the most. You can expect a phone call from CTBL when your name comes to the top of the list. The new machines are about half the size of the old ones, and the talking books are now on one cassette-sized cartridge, instead of multiple cassettes. Ensignt's Fort Collins office has one of the new machines, if you'd like to come by and check it out. Library users will be allowed to keep their current machines for as long as they want, in order to listen to existing collection tapes. For more information, contact CTBL at 1-800-685-2136.

Our Wish List

We need several items to help run our office but have limited funds. Please consider helping us with these items from our current wish list. Thank you!



- * Batteries (especially the "C" and "AAA" sizes)
- * Kleenex tissues, paper towels, toilet tissue
- * Copy paper
- * Postage stamps and envelopes (business-size)

Ensign Skills Center
3307 S. College Ave
Suite 108
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Non-Profit Organization
U. S. Postage Paid
Fort Collins, CO
Permit # 174

Ensign -- Empowering Independent Living

Support Groups for January and February 2010

Greeley - January 25th (Monday) 10-11 a.m. Curtis Strong Center. Richard Peterson from Ski for Light will speak on winter outdoor recreation opportunities for seniors with low vision.

Fort Collins - January 28th (Thursday) 10-11:30 a.m. Ensign Skills Center. The topic will be "Do You Know?" This will be an update on community resources available to seniors with low vision.

Greeley - February 22nd (Monday) 10-11 a.m. Curtis Strong Center. The topic is still a mystery, but Nancy Wood says it will be a good one.

Fort Collins - February 25th (Thursday) 10-11:30 a.m. Ensign Skills Center. The topic will be "Stressors and Vision."