



Insight

Begin Again

Daniel Ortiz, 19, was almost finished before he got started.

He is legally blind, and can see just well enough to walk around unassisted. But he has difficulty reading text on a page, and has trouble seeing outdoors due to extreme sensitivity to light.

He dropped out during his senior year of high school because he wasn't keeping up, but didn't want his low vision to set him apart from his classmates. Frustration grew, and he saw no good path forward.

Daniel doesn't blame the school, he never asked for the help that is available. "I didn't advocate for

my vision," he says, an insight he didn't have at the time.

He got a nudge forward from his father, who told him he needs to get a job.

The first step is getting a GED (General Education Development) certificate to overcome his lack of a diploma.

Then there is the matter of no previous job skills or experience. A Teacher of the Visually Impaired at Lakewood Ranch High School pointed him to Lighthouse of Manasota.

Lighthouse works with people in similar situations, whether young or old, adapting to vision loss or low vision. Daniel enrolled in

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Daniel Ortiz: *"There are so many things that help you, that you wouldn't realize."*



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Art in the Dark

Lighthouse of Manasota will present its annual fundraising gala, Art in the Dark, Saturday, April 13th at Michael's On East. Supporters will enjoy an evening of French-inspired gourmet dining, dancing, and silent and live auctions of fabulous items. The McCune Family Foundation is generously matching \$10,000 in the paddle raise that evening.

We are partnering with The Ringling to explore an 18th Century French painting using senses other than sight.

The painting, "Louise Élisabeth, Madame la Princesse de Conti, as Venus" by Noël Nicolas Coypel (1731, oil on canvas) was a bequest of John Ringling, 1936. This remarkable woman lived from 1693 to 1775, navigating the intermarriages and intrigues of the French monarchy.

Event chairs Dr. Jody and Angela Abrams are planning a memorable evening, and Les McCurdy will emcee.

Tickets and sponsorships are still available. For information, call Elizabeth Krupnick at 941-359-1404 ext. 123, or email elizabeth.krupnick@lighthouseofmanasota.org

Looking Forward

A new year brings new beginnings!

This is the year we will reveal the new name and look of the Lighthouse. You may recall we started contemplating this needed change more than 3 years ago. In that time we have conducted nearly 40 interviews and held brainstorming sessions to gather feedback and opinions from clients, Board members, staff, donors, business and community leaders, and everyone in between, and we are finally ready to go!

Our new look will be unveiled at this year's Art in the Dark gala on April 13. There are many more exciting changes coming to the Lighthouse in 2019, so stay tuned!



-Lisa J. Howard, CFRE CEO, Lighthouse of Manasota



The mission of Lighthouse of Manasota is to educate and empower those affected by vision loss so they may enjoy happy, healthy and independent lives.

Our vision is to transform our community so those with vision loss have the opportunity to participate, contribute and rise to their fullest potential.

Our Board of Directors

Angela Abrams *Certified Ophthalmic Technician*

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Michelle Tarullo *Senior Employee Relations Consultant,
Florida Blue*

Wilhelmine Wiese-Rometsch, M.D. *Director, Internal
Medicine Residency Program, Sarasota Memorial Hospital*

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the Job Readiness Program, which teaches the visually impaired what is needed to find and retain a job.



Reading with a magnifier

It is clear how big a turnaround a year with Lighthouse has made.

"There are so many things that help you, that you wouldn't realize," he says. "Accepting that I have a disability and having confidence in different situations."

Being around others with vision impairments is helpful. Daniel went with the Teens group for a summer weekend getaway which included outdoor group

activities with Pathfinder Outdoor Education. Trying new things, and learning teamwork.

"I learned I didn't have to worry about being around others."

Daniel's next goal is computer courses at Manatee Technical College, moving toward a career in Information Technology. What looked impossible a year ago, now seems likely, after a return of self-confidence and brightened attitude.



Strictly Lighthouse

Lighthouse of Manasota doesn't have a ballroom, but a classroom with wood floors will do nicely as the Young Adults Program learn the steps of ballroom dancing. Teens, instructors, staff and volunteers all took a spin.



Children's Program Met the Horses at InStride

The Lighthouse Children's Program made a field trip to InStride Therapy in Nokomis, and learned close-up about all aspects of horses, a pony for petting, a full-sized horse, a discussion of breeds and grooming tools. Thank you, InStride Therapy, Inc.!



Art Center Sarasota

The Lighthouse Adjustment to Vision Loss group visited Art Center Sarasota. They were able to examine the paintings and sculptures at close range, with information from a guide.



There are many ways you can be involved as a volunteer for Lighthouse of Manasota:

- Work with children or adults • Field trips • Health fairs
- Arts & Crafts • Outreach presentation • Administrative support
- Special events • Driver for a person with a visual impairment
- Contribute in your area of expertise

Contact: Nicole Mobley, Volunteer Coordinator

(941) 359-1404

nicole.mobley@lighthouseofmanasota.org

Did you know? Some Lighthouse activities are just for fun. No classroom, no instruction, not even directly related to eyesight. While these are of benefit to our vision impaired community, partners and family members are welcome. See more events listed below, then come and join us.

You can talk the talk. Do you walk the walk?



Every Wednesday morning a small group gathers in the lobby, and leaves at 9:30 for a walk led by Oryan Battis through the quiet neighborhood around our office. Often they visit Sarasota Bay, a few blocks to our west.

The group includes White Cane navigators, guide dog companions, volunteers, staff members and sighted partners.

All share the opportunity to enjoy some low-impact exercise in a beautiful setting.

Afterwards, return to the Lighthouse for coffee and conversation, with no rush to hurry off.

This is Walk and Talk.



Sitting can be exercise, too.



Park yourself in a chair for a session of careful stretching, bending and guided breathing. **Chair Yoga** is where exercise meets relaxation. Sessions are held at Lighthouse on the third Friday of every month, from 10 to 11 a.m.

If once a month doesn't sound like much, the idea is to repeat some of the stretching and bending on your own. You have chairs at home, don't you?

Events at Lighthouse of Manasota

Scheduled events are subject to change without notice. Courses in Adjustment to Vision Loss, Assistive Technology and Orientation and Mobility are ongoing. For information on events call **(941) 359-1404**

ART CRAFTING - Bi-monthly at Lighthouse - Call for details

BOOK CLUB - First Friday of the month, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Main Lighthouse

CHAIR YOGA - Third Friday, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Main Lighthouse

MAGNIFYING SESSION - SARASOTA - Second and Fourth Thursday. Peepers Store.
Call Irene for appointment.

MAGNIFYING SESSION - VENICE - Every Tuesday. Venice location. Call Irene for appointment.

SUPPORT GROUP - ADULT 55+ - First and Third Friday, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Main Lighthouse

SUPPORT GROUP - GRUPO ESPAÑOL - Call for information (941) 359-1404

SUPPORT GROUP - RED CANE CLUB - HIGHLANDS COUNTY - Third Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

TECH CLUB SARASOTA - Second Friday of the month, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. Computer Lab

TECH CLUB CHARLOTTE - Second Wednesday of the month, 2:30 to 4 p.m. Cultural Center of Charlotte County

TECH CLUB HIGHLANDS - First Thursday of the month, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Highlands Community Church, Sebring

TIDEWELL GRIEF COUNSELING - First Thursday. Call Irene for appointment.

WALK & TALK - Every Wednesday, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Main Lighthouse



Luke Stolarczyk, Braille Challenger

Luke won 2nd prize in the Apprentice group at the Braille Challenge January 25 in Tampa. This was his first competition! The day-long event consisted of 3 parts - spelling, reading comprehension and proofreading (finding the Braille errors in text). The contest was a regional division of the National Braille Challenge.

Luke is 8½ and is in our Children's Program. This experience has motivated him to study Braille and increase his skills for next year.



Welcome Angeline

The most recent addition to our staff is Angeline Koplau. Angeline is a Vision Rehabilitation Instructor, and works with Early Intervention children. She has an AS degree of Occupational Therapy Assistant from State College of Florida and is a Phi Theta Kappa honoree. Angeline is from Venice, and attended Venice High.

She met Nicole Mobley at an OTA open house, and followed up with Lighthouse after passing her board exams.



Tyler Wickas

We enjoyed having Tyler Wickas here for two weeks in January as an intern. Tyler is a 3rd year medical student at the FSU College of Medicine Sarasota Campus. He is from Cocoa Beach, and earned his bachelor's degree in Biomedical Science at USF. He is interested in Ophthalmology, and spent time with as many Lighthouse departments and instructors as possible, plus a day shadowing Dr. Jody Abrams.

Tyler is shown here with Instructor Maddy Spencer, learning to listen to traffic at a US 41 crosswalk, part of Orientation and Mobility training.

Charitable Giving Options:

Leave a gift that will sustain the Lighthouse of Manasota well beyond your lifetime. No minimum is required, regardless of the method selected by you and your advisors. Choose from charitable bequests, lead trusts and remainder trusts, add us as a beneficiary on your life insurance or retirement plans (IRA accounts), or donate some appreciated stock or a piece of real estate, vehicle or boat and receive the tax deduction. For more information contact the Development Department at (941) 359-1404 ext. 123.

“Lighthouse has helped people close to me, and I want to give back.”

Cathi Bell volunteers at Lighthouse of Manasota at the reception desk. She also supports Lighthouse through our annual fundraiser, Art in the Dark.



“I heard of Lighthouse through an aunt who was blind. She told me how nice they were when they came and helped arrange her home for safety. I didn't know what else they did, or that there were other Lighthouses, including one here.”

A 90-year-old friend talked about the help Lighthouse has given her to cope with her vision loss, on both practical and emotional levels. Then an ophthalmologist friend invited Cathi to Art in the Dark, where she met some of the people involved, and saw a short video on what we do. “It finally clicked. I was blown away by the scope and depth of services offered.”





Lighthouse of Manasota

Shining new light on living with vision loss

7318 N. Tamiami Trail

Sarasota, FL 34243



Lighthouse of Manasota

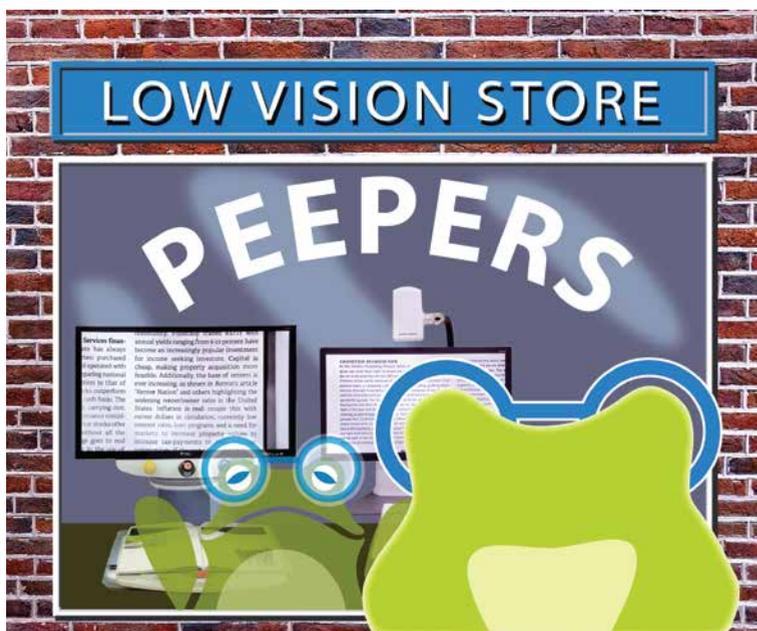
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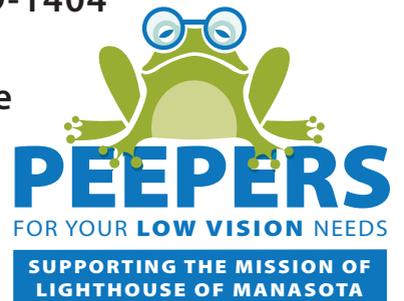
Follow us on Twitter @NewLightOnSight



The PEEPERS Low Vision Store has a brand new gallery online. We do not offer online buying, but you can browse our wide range of products: www.lighthouseofmanasota.org/peepers-store

For information on any item
call 941-359-1404

The PEEPERS Store
is open Monday
through Friday
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Located at Lighthouse of Manasota
7318 N. Tamiami Trail • Sarasota

See What's In Store at PEEPERS

Magnifiers • Audio Clocks and Watches • Kitchen Gadgets • Writing Aids