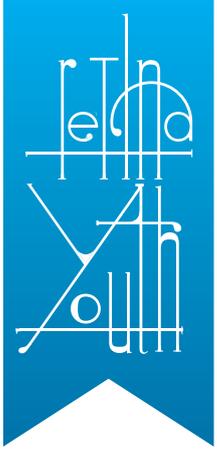


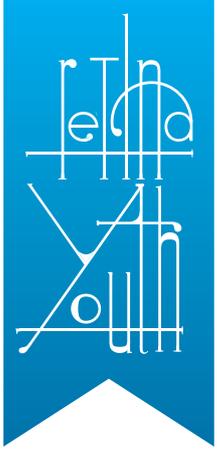
reina  
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# A FOR US

Welcome to another issue of 'A place for us'. Boy oh boy things are looking crazy over there in NZ! Every time I pull up the "stuff" app on my phone and check out the goings down, its always bad news. Take for example this headline "Severe weekend weather across NZ". LOL, I'm in Portland Oregon, we're sitting around 25 degrees, light cloud, sipping a protein shake, tapping away on the laptop on a deck chair. OK ok enough bragging! So Wild...I've labeled this issue Wild, due to a newish movie featuring Reese Witherspoon, based on a book about a lady "Sheryl Strayed" who decides to hike the famous Pacific Crest Trail or the PCT as us more closely tied homies would call it. The trail runs 4280kms from Mexico though the USA to Canada. This lady has no long distance hiking experience, is pretty much a rookie but does the trail anyways.... Cool story, so how does this relate? Well it doesn't really, other than the fact that my wife and I are about to embark on the Oregon portion of this trail. Should take us around a month to complete. And meh, lets face it, its fun to get a little wild from time to time. So this issue we're going to get wild. Everything is wild, from wild fashion and tech to lil char getting wild in the kitchen, Molly's still going wild over in the UK so we're touching base with her again. Mr. Bell is going wild over Facebook, jacking up a sweet as KOH BOY dinner in Wellington. We even take a look at the latest eye news from around the globe, IDK if they are going wild, actually I kind of hope they're not... That wouldn't be so cool. Actually back tracking to the fashion and tech, I have written a cool little piece about how you can incorporate the apple watch into your fashion. And as my dad would say, its not only cool its practicool, with some awesome accessibility features for the blind. So make sure you don't miss out on reading that. And even though the watch isn't yet available in NZ, the anticipated release isn't too far away. People are going wild for the watch over here in the states. SO STAY CALM.



# A PLACE TO INSPIRE

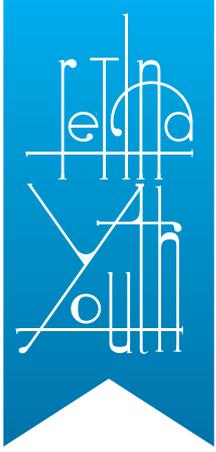
Hi everyone, I'm a newbie to Retina Youth so here's a introduction of myself...

My name is Amanda and I have Usher Syndrome (type 1), which I was born with. It is profound Deafness and retinitis pigmentosa. I'm coming up 27 years of age and my vision has been pretty stable at 20 degrees straight ahead, my night-time blindness is not great but I've long ago lost interest in nightclubbing so am not too bothered!

I grew up in Gisborne, I used to have hearing aids before I got cochlear implants which are absolutely fantastic. I communicate both through sign language and spoken English though the latter is my first and main language. I now live in Wellington after having moved down for uni which was nearly nine years ago - time really flies!

I work full time as an Architectural Technician, doing 40 hour weeks which can be tough, some days I get headaches from sitting at the computer all day but mostly it's not too bad. The work varies quite a lot, one day I'll be working on residential re-builds for Christchurch and other days I'll be working brand new commercial builds. I love helping put a project together to make a building work, and then see it come to live.

I live with my partner, Grant, who is also profoundly Deaf. He acts as my eyes when I need him to, and we've been trying to learn a bit of tactile signing so I can communicate to him when it's dark and I can't hear. It's slow going but I feel happier knowing there is another way of communication if all else fails!



# A PLACE TO EXPLORE

This is our second issue of “a place to explore” and by golly gosh, things out and about are getting wild. Myself, Molly and pretty much any blind/sight impaired kiwis outside there iwis (new Zealanders traveling abroad) wanting to share their travel experience can use this space to inspire others. So let’s kick things off with the latest from Molly

So since the last newsletter I've been very busy being the best tourist ever!!! I've been on the London eye for the second time, I've gone to Madame Tussaud's and posed with famous wax figures, I've been through the London aquarium which, by the way, I would not recommend at all. It's very very dark and always full of children. There were many toes trodden on that day! I've seen S Club 7 live which was amazing (my young teenage self was very thankful) and I went to the capital summer time ball and saw One Direction, Olly Murs, Rita Ora, Kelly Clarkson and many other massive names all live. I won't be forgetting that any time soon. I've most recently been for a weekend in Cambridge where I was punted down the river in the sun by a beautiful Englishman and I even went to the air show at Duxford! I've also done a fair bit of castle seeing with Kensington palace and Hampton Court being top favourites although I'm sure Buckingham palace will be amazing too (when I finally book tickets to go inside!). I thought though, that I might tell you a little bit about what happened to me at Hampton court, you might be able to relate to it more than other people in my life. So the story all begins with a decision to make the most epic panorama photo of all time. The way it works is to start the photo then move the camera so the person in the photo is out of view. When that happens the person taking the photo stops moving the camera and the person in the photo runs behind the person taking the photo to the next part of the photo. The person taking the photo then moves the camera capturing you in the same photo again (does that make sense?) This can be done so you are in the photo 4 or so times! It's great fun!! However with all that frantic running it obviously leaves room for tripping falling and making a complete fool of yourself. But me being me didn't really think that far ahead and decided to jump right in and give it a go! And it paid off. I got this amazing photo with me in 4 times. So we decided to up the awesome and do me and a friend together. The first time was fine but as we went running for the second time I suddenly realized I wasn't going forward anymore and my face was moving closer and closer to the ground. It all went into slow motion but I couldn't change any of it and before I even had time to put my hands out I was hitting the ground chin first (because that's how any cool person falls). The result was a much grazed chin with bits of rock and stone inside the wound, a very embarrassed Molly and a chipped tooth. I lay on the ground crying and unable to speak NOT my finest moment that's for sure!! However the beauty of friendship shines through. They picked

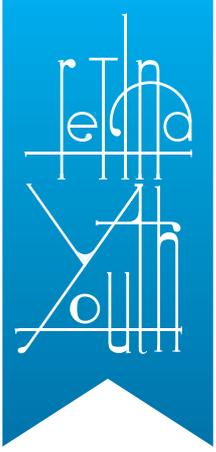
me up, found a bathroom to clean me up and helped me to get on a train back home. I don't regret my photo at all but then again I probably wouldn't do it again. It's interesting how my awesome eyesight continues to creep into my life to remind me that my vision isn't perfect. Generally I forget I can't see very well and I live in a constant state of denial so although it does suck tripping and falling it also reminds me to take my time and think about where I'm looking when I am out walking (or running). The wine glass is always half full ;) Molly Randall



Hey ladies and gentleman, so since the start of writing the intro to this newsletter till now (approx. 5 days) my wife and I have walked 140km through some of the most beautiful terrain Oregon has to offer. It has been amazing!!! We started our embark dropped into the middle of nowhere with nothing but ourselves... okay exaggerating a little, we had all the pack essentials anyone could ever need, including a few luxuries such as a self-inflating mattress, freeze dry meals, solar panel, hiking trail iPhone apps and brand new pair of Merrell Stretch shoes which you will later find out are poos. With my outdoor skills at a whooping "rookie status", we glanced at our compass and set off... in the wrong direction. Yes our first mistake was not learning how to use a map. Even sadder it was an iPhone app that is pretty much fool hardy. So we walked our first 5km in the wrong direction, the next 5km making up for that mistake, and by the time we got back to where we had started we decided it was too late to proceed so set up camp just to the side of the trail. My dreams that night were of expert-highly trained super skilled hikers who we would walk along the trail with, exchanging stories of bravery and how much our beards had grown. I was awoken early by a weak bladder and got up to relieve the unwanted pressure. And just as I did, I saw my first trail buddy coming along the trail. EKKKK abort mission. It was too late though, he had seen me. With a concerned grin and an awkward wave from the passerby I had ruined my first chance to meet a real PCT hiker by essentially flashing him. So not a good start. However we started to pick up our pace a little, reaching our goal of 25km a day. The hiking was through beautiful forests, alongside crater lakes with crystal clear water and bottoms nowhere to be seen. Alongside mountains and over rivers. Come day 2 I realized I had overlooked a crucial part of the trip. I assumed that my \$3 Walmart socks would suffice. I also placed a lot of trust in my new shoes having the word "stretch" in their shelf title. And by the end of the second day my feet were MESSSED UP. Blisters, bruises and rashes, all things you don't want to know about when doing long distance hiking, but something I became closely acquainted with. Each pain a defining pain in itself. The blisters popping and slopping in between toes, on the bottom of your heels and lurking in every crevice of your feet. Bruises aching the bottom and sides of your feet. And rashes forming on the back of your heels. Hell on earth I can assure you. But luckily for my wife I am a hard fella and didn't moan too much... All the pains aside. We had such a blast, we camped out by a lake on the 3rd night, washed away all the stink of hiking and star gazed all night. And when I say we, I mean

Charlotte. I can't really see the stars these days, but its still nice to know there hanging around up there and that it brings my wife joy looking at them. On our last day of hiking we took an alternative route just off the PCT called Eagle Creek. It was an amazing rain forest type scenery, following a beautiful river with amazing water falls along the trail. At one point we were walking alongside a cliff with a 100m drop to sudden death. With only a dodgy rope to hold (most likely put there by a trail volunteer) we shuffled around the cliff face to a beautiful waterfall with a cave going behind it. Such an amazing piece of trail. By the end of that day we reached a car park just off the i30 which hugged the Colorado River, only 3km down that road is the famous Bridge of the Gods, where Sheryl Strayed from the book/film 'Wild' finished her hike some 20 years ago. We could have hiked there, but by this stage I am limping something chronic and instead decided to choose the other mode of transport PCT hikers sometimes opt for and charlotte stuck out her thumb and rustled us up a ride down the road to hike across the famous bridge. For the next few days we shall rest, eat, sleep repeat. Then down to Ashland for another round. Hopefully more prepared with better footwear. PEACE





# A PLACE TO MEET

It's time to take off your ugly pants, and oversized sweaters. Put on a beanie and battle the cold. Because we have a few places you guys can get together for a local meet up over the coming month and into the future. First off the bat we have the annual Wellington meet up. Joel has been placed commander and chief to get this night happening, so be sure to get along for a Cambodian Extragovian. So the dets are as follows:

Where you ask? Siem Reap, 99 Dixon Street, Wellington, NZ

When might it be? Friday 28th of August at 7pm

Who? Anyone! But if your reading this and you can get along, you should :D

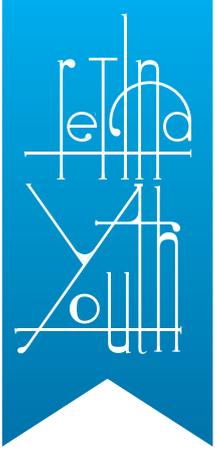


For the younger kids (Grandparents and parents take note here please) with vision impairments, the Blind Foundation have their 'Winter Experience Camp'. For those unfamiliar it a unique winter camp where you will get the chance to be part of a small group to expericne the snow, have a go at new activities and make friends. The camp takes place through Thursday the 17th of September – Sunday 20th of September 2015 at MiCamp Lake Taupo. There is a cost of \$150, but this includes transport, accommodation, meals and activities. For more information and an application you can contact Deb Nash on 09 2816503 or 0278082248. Alternatively flick her an email, [dnash@blindfoundation.org.nz](mailto:dnash@blindfoundation.org.nz)



Deafblind International Youth Network is planning an event at Euro Disney in Paris next year, in May 2016. It will be an opportunity for young Deafblind people to make friends and participate in work-shops. It will be held over three days.

They are currently calling for interest so If you have dual vision and hearing impairment, and is between the ages of 14-24 and you're interested, then e-mail Simon [atsimon.allison@sense.org.uk](mailto:atsimon.allison@sense.org.uk)



# A TO LOOK THE PART

Ok so if you were hoping for a piece on the latest styles then you're out of luck. This issue of looking the part we are getting our tech savvy on. In the not too distant future New Zealand fashion will meet apple. And apple will rock their world. Apple is already present in the fashion world, for those not familiar, last year in August Apple purchased BeatsByDre and lined Dr. Dre's pocket with a whopping 3 billion dollars. Enough to put Dr. Evil's plans to destroy the world into action 3 times over! So apple are no mugs to the fashion industry, and this year brought out the apple watch. Essentially an item to free you from your phone. The watch is not only a tech lover's dream, it's fully accessible to the blind and sight impaired and it looks the part. So let's get the style out of the way, then we can look at some of the sweet features helping out the blind. The watch comes in 3 options "apple watch" "apple watch sport" and "apple watch feature". The difference is the cost, the sport models start at around \$349 USD (sorry no NZD pricing is out yet) and increase based on the size of the base and the kind of strap. The apple watch starts at \$549 USD, the only thing differing this watch from the sport is the Sapphire Crystal Screen, which is highly scratch resistant. And once again the price goes up based on the size screen you wish to purchase and the strap. Now the Essential range is probably too cool for our school, because prices start at \$10,000 USD and are for people who own Lamborghinis, well pretty much. There super cool, come in gold bases and diamond encrusted straps. So dig into your pockets and depending on your schrap there's a watch for your style. Nevertheless all the watches do the same thing, I'm not going to ramble over the normal features, you can check them out here: <http://www.apple.com/shop/watch> What we will take a look at are a few of the cool accessibility features the watch has to offer. A little bit to get through, but we will go over the main features that will rock your world.

VoiceOver is fully integrated into the Apple Watch OS, and all of the built-in apps are completely accessible. (David Woodbridge, member of the AppleVis Editorial Team, previewed the Apple Watch and noted, "this is not just text to speech on the watch, it's VoiceOver.")

To enable VoiceOver during the set-up process, simply triple-click the Digital Crown. Alternatively, you can ask Siri to enable VoiceOver, or you can enable it in the Watch app on your iPhone.

Once VoiceOver is enabled, below are some of the gestures you can use to interact with the Apple Watch:

Navigate by Item: One-finger flick left or right

Activate an item: One-finger double tap

Go Back to the Previous Screen: Two-finger flick left

Explore the Screen by Touch: Move one finger around the screen

Adjust Volume: Two-finger double tap and hold, then drag up or down

Adjust Options within an App: One-finger flick up or down

Deep Press (brings up clock faces or additional app controls): One-finger tap and hold

Access Notifications and Glances: (at the Clock screen) two finger flick down Notifications, two finger flick up Glances

As with iOS, third-party app accessibility will depend on individual app developers.

Zoom is a built-in magnifier (which magnifies up to 15 times the native size) that works across the Watch OS. To use Zoom, use the Digital Crown to navigate across the screen by rows, or simply use two fingers to move around the screen. Zoom can be enabled on the watch itself, in the Watch iPhone app, or by using the Accessibility Shortcut.

When Dynamic Type is enabled, text in many apps such as Mail, Messages, and Settings is enlarged – thereby making it easier to read. Alternatively, one can also enable Bold Text to make the text heavier across all built-in apps.

Apple Watch includes a Grayscale feature; when enabled, the home screen, various apps, and more are shown in different shades of gray.

Reduce Motion limits the amount of movement of user interface elements. For example, the movement of icons on the Home screen will be simpler and more directly associated with your navigation gestures.

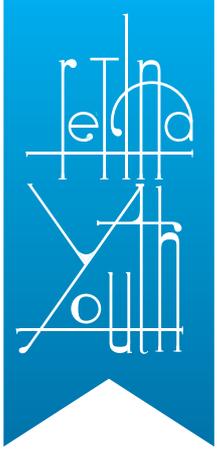
Apple Watch can show an on/off switch to make it easier for you to see whether a setting is enabled or disabled.

When using Bluetooth headphones, Apple Watch supports Mono Audio for those who have hearing impairments. Additionally, Apple Watch allows one to adjust the left/right stereo balance of audio.

The Taptic Engine is a linear actuator inside Apple Watch that produces haptic feedback. When a notification comes in, Apple Watch will gently tap you on the wrist; Prominent Haptic is also available to pre-announce some alerts.

Hopefully these features were enough to tickle your fancy. Hopefully the apple watch will be available in New Zealand over the next couple of months. For more information and to view the sources I pulled head over to <http://www.applevis.com/blog/apple-watch-assistive-technolo->





# LIL CHARS GOOD STUFF

Hey reader's its charlotte here, checking in for another issue of lil char's good stuff. With everything going wild this issue I take a look at a crazy 'wild' ingredient to warm you up over a cold winter. A little harder to get in NZ in its raw form, but we take a look at Bilberries -a study published in *Advances in Gerontology* in 2005 found that rats with macular degeneration and early senile cataracts suffered no impairment to their lens and retina when given 20 mg of bilberry extract per kilo of body weight. Those rats in the control group, however, suffered degeneration. Bilberry extract is widely available on the net, and many New Zealand health stores have access to the ingredient. As a supplement on its own I can't see it doing any harm adding bilberry to your diet. If you can get your hand on some bilberries I would suggest you try this recipe, otherwise you can swap it up with blueberries :P yum, my favorite. Another favourite of mine, lamb chops. As NZ lamb is expensive here, I haven't had the chance to get my hands on any for a while so would love to hear how this one turns out for you. And me, I can only dream how it tastes right now. Simple yet elegant.



Stuff you will need.

- 2 lamb chops (shoulder, loin, whatever you prefer/can find)
- salt
- ground pepper
- 1 shallot
- 1/4 cup port/red wine
- 1/2 cup fresh blueberries
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon butter

What you need to do with that stuff.

Begin by prepping for the sauce: mince up the garlic and shallot finely and set these aside. Then, season the lamb with salt and pepper on all sides.

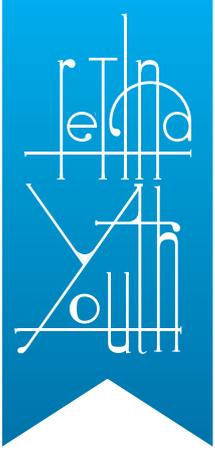
Now, in a hot pan with a bit of both oil and butter, brown the lamb for about a minute or two on all sides. Then transfer this to a 400°F oven (I put the meat on a rack, but if you want to keep it in your pan, do whatever works for you) for about 6-10 minutes (it depends on the thickness of the meat—err on the side of more rare since overcooked lamb is sad lamb). Then, remove from the oven and let this rest for about 5 minutes.

While the lamb is in the oven, get to work on the sauce! Since I freed up my pan and had the lamb on a rack, I was free to use all of those oils and juices from browning before. So in the hot oil that remains, sauté the shallot for 5-8 minutes, add in the garlic for another minute, and then deglaze the pan with the wine. Finally, add in the blueberries, balsamic, and star anise. Let this simmer for 2-5 minutes.

At this point, we need to wild the sauce up a bit since otherwise, it just looks like a mess. So remove the star anise, puree the contents of the pan as best you can (food processor, blender, whatever), and then strain the puree so that all that remains is a silky smooth, dark, wild looking sauce. The consistency should be pretty thick, but if you'd like to reduce it further, just simmer it a bit more until you're ready to serve.

With everything done, simply plate the lamb with a dab of sauce and have at it! I served this with a side of mashed potatoes. Enjoy!





# A PLACE FOR GOOD NEWS

So things have been a bit quiet on the bionic eyes / camera glasses front lately. So I apologise for this news. The news is usually a bit cooler when it involves robots and not so much science. But alas, if you can stomach a small entry level article on the scientific breakthrough these days then here's a little google cut and paste for you on the latest research they have found on a cure for retinitis pigmentosa.

New collaborative research between scientists in the UK and the USA has found that gene therapy can give life-long protection to the light-sensitive photoreceptor cells responsible for colour vision in a mouse model of retinitis pigmentosa.

The results, published in the journal *Molecular Therapy*, showed that the preserved cells were able to drive visually-guided behaviour, even in later stages of the condition and despite becoming less sensitive to light.

Led by Professor Robert MacLaren at the University of Oxford's Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology and funded in the UK primarily by Fight for Sight, the researchers believed the findings were significant because they opened up a new line of research to prevent nerve cell death in retinitis pigmentosa and age-related macular degeneration. They may also have a wider application to neurodegenerative disorders such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

Dr Dolores Conroy, director of research at Fight for Sight, said: 'As with any new line of research there is still a long way to go before any treatment could reach the clinic, but it is certainly possible to look ahead and see that there will be a day when we can prevent sight loss with complex genetic involvement.'

Posted by Simon Jones on 22 July 2015 in Clinical News & Features

