

Optical Prism

THE MAGAZINE FOR EYECARE PROFESSIONALS

An Interview with
Mary Walsh:
Actress shares her battle with AMD

The Boomer Issue:
Health advice,
tips and technology

**Race for a
blind-free world**

Silmo 2012 Preview

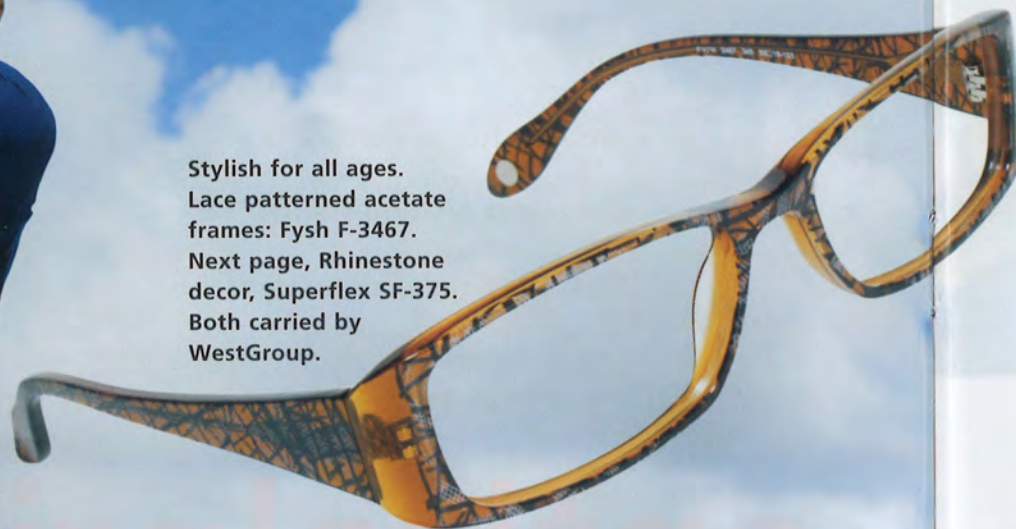


Eyewear for the active boomer

by Matt Harris



Stylish for all ages.
Lace patterned acetate
frames: Fysh F-3467.
Next page, Rhinestone
decor, Superflex SF-375.
Both carried by
WestGroup.



The idea that golf is the only thing keeping boomers active these days is definitely on the way out.

The fact is, there are plenty of boomers in today's society that are taking part in a wide range of activities to keep healthy—anything from tennis and hiking to water sports and yes, golf as well.

Those who require eyewear have a plethora of options when making their selection, but they need to keep a few basics in mind when they are looking for something new.

Rick Leroux, the director of marketing and communications for the lens division of Centennial Optical Limited in Toronto, says there are several reasons for boomers to consider getting new glasses or eyewear—a change in prescription being at the top of that list.

“This is a normal occurrence as we age,” he said. “There are also reasons to own more than one pair of eyewear—it’s a good idea to have different styles for work, evening wear, sports and other activities. Aside from the fashion and functional aspects of their frames, most people will also require different types of lenses for different activities.” Leroux talked about people who spend lots of time working in an office with computers, or about those who have hobbies like sewing or woodworking and how the lenses will differ depending on the person’s needs.

“Computer lenses will provide wider, clear fields of near and intermediate vision, and will ease vision and physical problems

associated with ‘computer vision syndrome,’” he said. “Everyone should have a pair of polarized sunglasses for driving, water sports and other outdoor activities. Some people may want a dedicated pair of reading glasses, while others find a pair of progressives more convenient.”

Beverly Suliteanu, the vice-president of product development for West Groupe, said boomers are looking for something modern and with fun styling with ‘an abundance of colour that is also comfortable to wear’ when choosing their next pair of eyewear, adding that it’s important to choose a complementary style for one’s face shape.

“The frame shape should contrast your face shape, and the frame size should be in scale with your face size,” she said. “Eyewear should reflect your best feature, therefore don’t be afraid of colour.”

Suliteanu gave the products of Fysh UK as an example of something both fun and funky that boomers gravitate to.

“Each colour represents individuality and an attitude, mimicking the boomers character of freedom of expression,” she said. “With the abundance of colour and funky temple designs, consumers have a vast selection to choose from. All Fysh models have the depth to accommodate multi-focal lenses, which is essential for this market.”

Leroux noted many boomers crave the convenience of having multi-function glasses, while some



still want ones for specific tasks. “Many wearers will enjoy the convenience of photochromic lenses as everyday wear, and different lens materials and treatment options will fit different lifestyles and activity requirements

of wearers,” he said. “The past 20 years have seen a lot of changes in the evolution of progressive addition lenses. The demand for ‘no-line’ bifocals exploded in the 1990’s as baby boomers entered their 40’s and started experiencing presbyopia. This led to kind of an ‘arms race’ in progressive designs by lens manufacturers—in the past decade, the industry has been revolutionized with the advance of customized lenses and free-form manufacturing. The Canadian market for progressive lenses is now split about fifty-fifty between customized and traditional progressive lenses.”

Though boomers are becoming increasingly more active, it is easy to quickly discover which lens is right for consumers.

A helpful tip for eyewear professionals is a simple survey—ask customers what they do and what they need their glasses for. By getting to know the patient more, their needs can be serviced better. ●