

# The Spectacle



A publication of the

***Lions Sight Program***

at the

**University of Minnesota**

**Minnesota Lions Eye Bank**

**Lions Children's Eye Clinic**

**Lions-funded Research**

**The MAC**



*Spring 2009*

## **Minneapolis Home to 2009 Lions International Convention** **Exciting eye bank events planned**

**T**he 92nd annual Lions International Convention is coming to Minneapolis, July 6-10, 2009. An estimated 20,000 people from more than 150 countries will attend. Eye bank staffers are excited about the opportunities presented by the convention and have big plans in the offing!



### **Volunteers Needed**

A request on behalf of the hardworking host committee: please consider volunteering a small amount of your time to show fellow Lions what a wonderful place Minnesota is to visit and

to live. Minnesota nice is not just a myth, so let's make this convention one that people will not soon forget. Please visit <http://www.2009lionsconvention.org/> or call Host Committee Chair Lion Jack Hines at 763-428-2434 to find out how you can help.

**International Convention** continued on page 2

## Eye bank gets international attention

Convention preparations had an exciting start when Minnesota Lions Eye Bank executive director, Jackie Malling, was asked to appear on Lion Magazine's February cover. Posing as the beloved Minneapolis Mary Richards, turning the world on with her smile, Jackie stood on Nicollet Mall and tossed her Lions hat in the air just as Mary Tyler Moore did nearly 40 years ago.

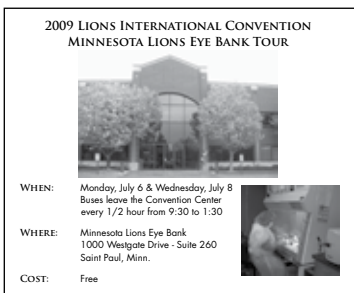


## Tours offered to convention attendees

Minnesota Lions Eye Bank is inviting Lions and their guests to come see how a world class eye bank operates. On an eye bank tour, visitors can find out:

- How we recover donor eye tissue.
- How we evaluate corneas for transplant suitability.
- What equipment we use to prepare corneas for transplant.
- How corneas are distributed to recipients.
- How eye donors advance research and education efforts.

Tours are being offered Monday, July 6, and Wednesday, July 8, from 10:00 until 2:00. Complimentary buses will leave the convention center every half hour. To register, visit [www.MnLionsEyeBank.org](http://www.MnLionsEyeBank.org)



or e-mail Lion Jennifer at [mader005@umn.edu](mailto:mader005@umn.edu) with your date and time request.

## Free health screenings

Several groups will provide health screenings to Lions during the convention. Services will be offered Monday, July 6, from 10:00 to 4:00, and Tuesday, July 7, from 1:00 to 4:00.

**Vision:** The Minneapolis Ambassadors Lions Club and the Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology are

teaming up to offer vision acuity testing, glaucoma screening, and retina scans to convention goers. Glaucoma has been called the silent thief of vision because permanent damage to sight often occurs before any symptoms arise. Timely detection and treatment depend on a glaucoma exam. More than one third of persons aged 70 or older have some form of macular degeneration. How healthy are your retinas? Find out at the convention.

**Diabetes:** Members of the Saint Paul Diabetes Lions Club, Lions of district 5M7, and the Mercy and Unity Hospitals Wellness Program are providing diabetes screenings. The World Health Organization estimates that 246 million people worldwide have diabetes, and the disease is being called a global epidemic. Diabetes-related sight complications are common and, if untreated, can lead to blindness. Have yourself checked.

**Hearing:** The Lions 5M Hearing Foundation will offer hearing screenings to convention attendees. Have you attended one too many rock concerts? Do you ask people to repeat things all too often? 278 million people around the globe have moderate to profound hearing loss. Have your hearing tested and find out what your options are.

## Eye bankers present in exhibit hall

A group of eye banks are presenting a talk entitled "Perfect Partners for Sight Restoration: Lions and Eye Banks." Minnesota Lions Eye Bank, Midwest Eye-Banks, Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin, and Iowa Lions Eye Bank are joining forces to educate and entertain convention guests on Monday, July 6, at 2:00. Topics include the history of eye banking, advances in eye banking, history and examples of Lions support of eye banks, and the importance of Lions involvement in donor registry recruitment. Hope to see you at the exhibit hall stage!

## Symposium offered for eye bank professionals

Many eye bankers from all over the country are coming to Minneapolis for the convention, so our eye bank is sponsoring a symposium that examines how eye banks can work with other organizations in their communities to ensure that eye donation wishes are fulfilled. The symposium, scheduled for Wednesday, July 8, is geared towards professionals who are in some way involved in the donation process.

# Lions All-Star Baseball Tournament Needs Your Support

The 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Minnesota Lions All-Star Baseball Tournament is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, June 19-20, 2009. Sponsored by the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank and the Minnesota Baseball Coaches Association, the tournament will be held at the Chaska Municipal Stadium. (Note: this beautiful ball park is currently in danger of demolition from the proposed Highway 41 Minnesota River crossing connecting new Highway 212 and Highway 169.)

This Lions All-Star Tournament brings together 80 of the best players in the state for a four team round-robin contest. The two-day competition is loaded with spectacular amateur baseball, good family fun, and (well, more often than not) beautiful weather. All net proceeds go toward pediatric research at the University of Minnesota's Lions Children's Eye Clinic.

You can support the tournament by:

- ☞ Reaching out to any baseball player in your community who has been chosen for the tournament. A joint photo op in the local paper is great publicity for Lions and athletes alike.
- ☞ Buying ads for the tournament program. Ads are the single greatest source of tournament revenue, and each player must sell one full page of ads.
- ☞ Volunteering to work at the games. Volunteers are needed to park cars and to sell programs, t-shirts, and tickets.
- ☞ Sponsoring a local sports team by giving them tickets to attend the games or by giving tickets to the family or teammates of a tournament player.
- ☞ Attending the games. High attendance is a huge source of gratification for players and their families. It is an honor to be chosen for this tournament, and the roar of the crowd makes the day even more special. Moreover, when you attend this statewide tournament as a Lion, you generate awareness of Lionism. **Tickets are only \$3.00 per round if purchased in advance, so organize a club outing and come to the game!**



## Schedule

### Friday, June 20, 2008

#### First Round

- 4:30 p.m. South vs. Metro East (9 innings)
- 7:30 p.m. North vs. Metro West (9 innings)

### Saturday, June 21, 2008

#### Second Round

- 10:00 a.m. Metro West vs. South (7 innings)
- 12:30 p.m. Metro East vs. North (7 innings)

#### Third Round

- 4:30 p.m. Metro South vs. North (7 innings)
- 7:30 p.m. Metro East vs. West (7 innings)

Send advance tickets orders or donations to:

**Minnesota Lions All-Star Baseball**  
**c/o PDG Lion Bob Wharton**  
**7462 Spring Lake Road**  
**Mounds View, MN 55112**

*Tournament donations from charitable gambling funds must be made out to the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank with "All-Star Baseball" in the memo line.*



Minnesota Lions Eye Bank accomplishes its mission with the help of both staff members and generous volunteers. From the work of the eye bank. If you are interested in volunteering, especially on an ongoing basis, please contact Lion Jodi Altemus.

## Girl Scouts Make the World a Better Place Starting with the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank

In early April, Minnesota Lions Eye Bank had the good luck to be one of Girl Scout Troop 50295's service projects. Six scouts and their leader visited the eye bank to help with the spring Donor and Family Recognition Service preparations and some other eye bank projects.



Members of Troop 50295 at work.

The Minnesota Lions Eye Bank is proud to mentor these young ladies and benefit from their community outreach. Thank you, scouts!



Scout volunteers Rachel, Bejou (back), Miranda, Julia, Clare, and Nicole.

**In Girl Scouts, girls discover the fun, friendship, and power of girls together. Through a myriad of enriching experiences, such as extraordinary field trips, sports skill-building clinics, community service projects, cultural exchanges, and environmental stewardships, girls grow courageous and strong.**

*Girl Scouts of USA Web Site*

## South West Lioness Club Serves

Each year, the South West Lioness Club spends a day making sure that the Helen Keller and memorial and honor boards in the Lions Children's Eye Clinic waiting room are looking nice for Lions tour guests and others. Club members clean the award boards, put up the magnetic Helen Keller award winner plates, and screw in the new brass plates for the memorial and honor donations



South West Lioness Club members Denice Riley (president), Suzy Barthel, Cindy Erickson (back), Joni Arvidson, Jan Steinbrenner, and MaryAnn Corbett.

board. The club sends six or seven members each spring, and it takes them about three hours of camaraderie to get the job done. Said Lioness Joni Arvidson, "our club feels privileged to be part of the preparation for the eye bank tours."

The South West Lioness Club's 18 members have a philosophy: enjoy working together for the good of others. The principle club project is a Santa Store that gives children a chance to buy presents for their parents and extended family. No gifts are over \$3.00, and only children are allowed in the store. Club members help the children choose gifts and write out gift tags.



# n Volunteers

recovering donor eyes to transporting eye tissue to helping out in the office, many volunteers contribute to the sight-saving hofen, community services liaison, at 612-624-0446 (toll-free 1-866-887-4448) or at magnu007@umn.edu.

## Behind the Scenes of Lions Tours

### A note from tour coordinator Lion Grecia

Hello, Lions! I am Lion Grecia Glass, and I help coordinate the Lions Tours of the Departments of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology at the University of Minnesota. The tours are a project of the Minneapolis Ambassadors Lions Club, but many people in addition to our club members are instrumental in their success. Here is a little information on just some of those who make our tours happen.

### Host clubs are heroes

Each tour, the Ambassadors Lions are privileged to partner with another Lions club, and these Lions serve as tour hosts. The host club arrives at 7:30 a.m. to set up tables and chairs in the registration area and ready the morning coffee and rolls for guests. They put up signs in elevators and hallways and on entrance doors. They rearrange conference rooms, waiting rooms, and exam rooms to make them suitable tour stops.

After the tours are over, the host club stays until everything is cleaned up. Signs put up must be taken down. Tables and chairs assembled must be disassembled. Rooms rearranged must be put back in



tour, and our delightful host club was the Bloomington Lions Club. Chartered in 1951, the Bloomington club has 76 members. The club's many fund-raising activities include a spaghetti dinner in the fall, a Palm Sunday pancake breakfast, and a three-day corn feed at the Virg Ellrich Soft-

ball Tournament in mid-July. The Bloomington Lions also sponsor an Out of Sight Club, a south metro area social club for the visually impaired, which meets on the second Monday of the month for dinner and entertainment. Club members provide transportation and conduct the monthly meetings September through June. More than 50 people typically attend.

The Bloomington Lions had this to say about their tour experience:

*Hosting the tour was a bonding experience that provided us with an opportunity to work together in fellowship. The tour itself informed us of the research and medical help occurring at the clinics and gave us more personal connection to people and events at the Eye Bank. Some of our members were amazed at the amount of good work that our activities support. We would recommend the experience to all clubs!*

### Guiding Lights

Ushering groups of tour participants from stop to stop requires attentive and sharp-witted guides. The schedule is planned to the minute, and we allow very little time between each of the dozen stations. Our tour guides keep order and make sure that people do not overcrowd the elevators (hard lesson).

On the 9th floor (ophthalmology) tour guides are cornea transplant recipients. Volunteering for the tours is one way they have of thanking the Lions for the work they do to save and restore sight. This tour, Macular degeneration, glaucoma, and diseases of the cornea were featured.

On the 8th floor (otolaryngology), MD5M Hearing Foundation trustees guide the guests. Spring tour highlights were the Lions Children's Hearing Center, the Lions Voice Clinic, the Otopathology Lab, and the Temporal Bone Labs.



Members of the Bloomington Lions club, gracious co-hosts for the Spring 2009 Lions Tours.

their original configurations. The host club does all this and also ensures that trash from the box lunches and departing guests is properly stowed. These Lions are invaluable to the success of the tours and to the preservation of my sanity!

March 28 was the date of our spring 2009 Lions

## Ophthalmology Department Updates

The Department of Ophthalmology and Lions Children's Eye Clinic at the University of Minnesota are doing well, reported Lion Jay Krachmer, M.D., chair of the department. "Our faculty has had a very productive year in patient care. Not only have they excelled clinically, but they have been very active with research as well." Dr. Krachmer added that the success of the Ophthalmology Department is due in no small part to the support of the Lions.

The ophthalmology team will soon welcome two new doctors: Inge De Becker and Dara Koozekanani.

Inge De Becker, M.D., received her medical degree at the Université Catholique de Louvain in Belgium and completed her residency at the Université Laval in Québec. Next came two fellowships — the first in pediatric ophthalmology at Dalhousie University (Halifax, Nova Scotia) and the second in oculo-genetics (inherited diseases of the eye) at the Wilmer Institute of Johns Hopkins in Baltimore.

"We miss Dr. Christiansen, who recently left our faculty to become the Chairman of the Department of

Ophthalmology at Boston University," said Dr. Krachmer, "but we are very pleased and fortunate to recruit Dr. Inge De Becker to our Pediatric Ophthalmology team. Dr. De Becker is a well-rounded pediatric ophthalmologist whose interest in genetic disorders will benefit the department."

Most recently an assistant professor in the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences at Dalhousie, Dr. De Becker will start at the University of Minnesota on August 17.

Dara Koozekanani, M.D., Ph.D., is a retina specialist who received his education at Ohio State University. Not only a physician and a retinal surgeon, Dr. Koozekanani also has a Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering. He comes to the University of Minnesota from the Medical College of Wisconsin where he is finishing up a retina fellowship.

Said Dr. Krachmer, "We look forward to Dr. Koozekanani having a wonderful career in all aspects of academic medicine including patient care, teaching, and research." He joins the department on August 31.

## Lions Grants Help University Doctors Help Others

This fiscal year, Minnesota Lions Eye Bank Inc. has given generously to the University of Minnesota Department of Ophthalmology. Here are some of the grants bestowed on the department.

### Pediatric Research

The Pediatric Ophthalmology Service is the grateful recipient of an annual \$20,000 gift from the Lions. This generous donation is used to further research projects, from conception to enrollment to presentations and publications about the research results. Research in pediatric ophthalmology covers a wide variety of conditions, such as amblyopia (lazy eye), glaucoma, strabismus (eye misalignment), cataract, tear duct obstruction, and albinism. The valuable information gained from this research leads to improved visual outcome and quality of life in children.

### Retinoblastoma Training

In October of 2007, Dr. Timothy Olsen left the University of Minnesota to become Department of Ophthalmology chair at Emory University in Atlanta, Ga. Similarly, this year saw Dr. Stephen Christiansen's departure to chair Boston University's Ophthalmology Department. With the loss of these two doctors, the University of Minnesota is left without a faculty member adequately skilled in the diagnosis and treatment of retinoblastoma (cancer of the retina). The deficiency has to be quickly remedied.

A \$30,000 grant is allowing Dr. Jill Anderson to

train with Dr. Christiansen in Boston and Dr. Barrett Haik at St. Jude's Hospital in Memphis. Once trained, Dr. Anderson will be able to care for infants and children suffering from cancer of the retina, a disease that can lead to blindness and even death.

### Resource Pamphlet

\$1,400 has been pledged to print and mail a pamphlet that details local and national resources for the blind and visually impaired. The University's Visual Rehabilitation Center will use the pamphlet to educate patients about advocacy organizations, schools and life skills training programs, support groups, in-home services, Braille and audio book distributors, independence aids, and other existing resources.

### Lions Cornea Research Fund

A \$50,000 renewable grant is dedicated to supporting the corneal research activities of Lion Stephen Kaufman, M.D.

One project has Dr. Kaufman partnering with the University of Minnesota's Biomedical Engineering Department to build and test a device that crosslinks the cornea's collagen. Crosslinking makes the cornea stronger and could offer a non-surgical treatment alternative for Keratoconus, a disease that causes a progressive thinning and bulging of the cornea. Since cornea collagen crosslinking strengthens the cornea, it may also help treat other diseases where the cornea thins and is in danger of perforation.

# Driven to Discover

## University of Minnesota searches for answers



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

**Driven to Discover**<sup>SM</sup>

The University of Minnesota has been uncovering the answers to some of life's most persistent questions for 158 years! Founded in the Faith that Men are Ennobled by Understanding; Dedicated to the Advancement of Learning and the Search for Truth; Devoted to the Instruction of Youth and the Welfare of the State; the University has changed countless people's lives for the better—and continues to do so every single day.

Yet not everyone is aware of the many ways their state university advances learning, searches for the

truth, and educates.

To help spread the word, the University of Minnesota developed a new method to communicate the spirit of inquiry demonstrated by their faculty, staff, and students: *Driven to Discover*. *Driven to Discover* is an initiative committed to sharing the University's many stories of discovery with the people of Minnesota.

Below are just some of the amazing stories of University discoveries that can be found at <http://discover.umn.edu/>.

### Search **Can We Make New Organs?**



Professor Doris Taylor and her research team at the University of Minnesota Center for Cardiovascular Repair have taken a huge step toward creating organs that can be made out of one's own cells. By taking a seemingly dead heart and flushing out its cells, the old organ is left as a scaffolding of possibility. The team injects the empty heart

with a new crop of living cells, which begin to react. After about a week, the heart begins to pump! These "new" organs could become transplants built from a recipient's own cells, thereby reducing the chance of rejection. The hope is that one day people will become their own donors.

### Search **How Can Frogs Help Us Build Better Hearing Aids?**



U of M assistant professor Mark Bee and his students are hunting for frogs and researching what their chirps and croaks imply. Specifically, they're interested in the so-called "cocktail party effect" — the ability of many animals, including most human beings, to pick out a specific sound or voice from acoustic clutter. Being a music enthusiast himself, Bee finds a frog chorus the best resource to study this very thing. He has discovered that female frogs have

an uncanny ability to identify the call and exact location of a male frog of their own species amidst mating calls that can number in the thousands. Bee and his students work on "acoustic signal recognition" during frog courtship. With their research, they hope to make the leap from frogs to people by designing auditory aids and implant devices for humans. We're all ears.

### Search **Will There Ever Be a Cure for Alzheimer's?**



We're getting closer, says neurology and neuroscience professor Karen Hsiao Ashe. Last year, Professor Ashe astonished the world with her discovery that mice with brain atrophy similar to Alzheimer's disease could recover the ability to remember. Using the mouse she developed to mimic the symptoms of the human disease, Ashe and her team "turned off" the gene that causes the memory loss. They were surprised to discover that memory loss not only stopped, but the mice's ability to form memory

significantly recovered. This discovery offers hope for the millions of Americans living with Alzheimer's disease. Perhaps in the future we may be able to reverse the disease in people. Most recently, Ashe's lab identified a specific protein molecule in the brain that is proven to cause memory loss, which gives researchers a target for creating drugs that would stop Alzheimer's in humans even before it begins.

### Search **What's the Next Alternative Energy Source?**



Try sewage. Dr. Daniel Bond, assistant professor of microbiology and a member of the BioTechnology Institute at the University of Minnesota, is working with his students on an alternative approach to obtaining electricity, using bacteria. Bond's laboratory is studying organisms found in places as common as Minnesota mud or sewage that are able to grow on electrodes and release energy stored in organic compounds. Even though the resulting energy produced in today's research settings is small—what

Bond describes as enough to power small calculators or communications equipment— it's the beginning of an exciting new way to use bacteria to transform materials that come from biomass (such as agricultural crops or trees) instead of fossil fuels. Not in your lifetime you say? Well consider this: years ago, only NASA used solar panels. Today, solar panels are everywhere—even as a power source for inexpensive calculators.

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## 2009 Calendar

**The Spectacle** newsletter is a publication of the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank sent to Minnesota Lions club presidents and other Lions leaders. Contact the editor with your questions and comments.

Articles are available in alternate formats and may be copied with attribution to the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank.

[www.MnLionsEyeBank.org](http://www.MnLionsEyeBank.org)  
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*Friday and Saturday, June 19 and 20*  
Lions All-Star Baseball Tournament - Chaska

*July 6 - 10*  
Lions International Convention - Minneapolis

*Saturday, July 18*  
Minnesota Lions Eye Bank Inc. Board Meeting - Saint Cloud

*August 27 - September 7*  
Minnesota State Fair - Saint Paul

*Saturday, October 3*  
Minnesota Lions Eye Bank Inc. Board Meeting - Saint Cloud

**New date!** *Saturday, October 17*  
Lions Tours of the University - Minneapolis

*Sunday, October 18*  
Donor & Family Recognition Service - Saint Paul

*Saturday, October 31*  
Thanksgiving for Vision - Brooklyn Center