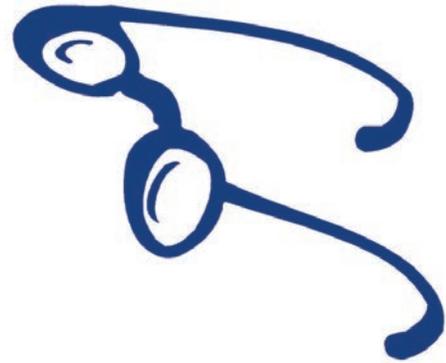


The Spectacle



A publication of the

*Minnesota Lions
Vision Foundation*

Minnesota Lions Eye Bank

Lions Children's Eye Clinic

The MAC

Used Eyeglass Recycling

Fund to Prevent Blindness
in Infants & Children



Spring 2014

Lions Eye Donors Honored

On December 15, Minnesota Lions Eye Bank was privileged to honor a special group of eye donors: Lions, Lionesses, and their family members. About 150 families and friends gathered at the University of Minnesota's McNamara Alumni Center in Minneapolis to pay tribute to these eye donors with a connection to Minnesota Lions club members.

What was, in one sense, a memorial to eye donors was also a celebration of the donors' lives and of the gifts that they gave to people they would never meet — a service worthy of the most dedicated Lion!

Lions family members shared photographs and stories of their eye donors (and cornea recipients), and these memories were crafted on placards, which were displayed at the afternoon reception.

A special tribute was paid to PDG Lion Darwin Mathwig (5M2) and Anthony "Tony" Salisbury, son of Lion Brian Salisbury (5M5), the eye bank's 2012 Betty Walen Outstanding Volunteer Award winner. Both Lion Darwin and Tony donated their eyes to the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank. Tony's donation gave a cornea transplant patient



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new hope and furthered knowledge of eye diseases through research. Darwin's donation to research helped, and continues to help, countless individuals with a gift that never dies.

Credit: Michael Kylo-Kittleson, Fraction Photography



The Salisbury family at the event with Tony's florigraph. From left to right: Daniel and Angela Poppy, Marcy Salisbury, and Lion Brian Salisbury.

Minnesota Lions Eye Bank chose Lion Darwin and Tony to represent all Minnesota Lions Eye Bank donors at a national donation awareness effort: the Donate Life America float at the Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year's day.

Each year, Donate Life America memorializes deceased eye, organ, and tissue donors on their parade float. This year's entry



Darwin's florigraph, center.

was "Light Up the World." It featured a festival of lanterns illuminating 30 riders—all organ and tissue transplant recipients—with 12 living organ donors walking alongside to demonstrate their ongoing vitality. The float's lanterns were adorned with 72 florigraphs (likenesses in seeds and flowers) of deceased donors whose legacies of life shine brightly.

Florigraphs of Lion Darwin and Tony were among those displayed on the float, and these florigraphs were on view at the reception prior to being sent to Pasadena, California, for the parade. Millions watch the Rose parade every year and are inspired by the Donate Life message.



Darwin's florigraph is displayed with (from left to right): PDG Lion Kevin Walsh, Lion Nancy Mathwig, PDG Lion Jim Arvidson, and PDG Lion Mike Appel.

Credit: Michael Kylo-Kittleson, Fraction Photography



Tony's florigraph, lower tier.

Thank you to Michael Kylo-Kittleson for providing event photography. Visit fractionphotography.com for more information.

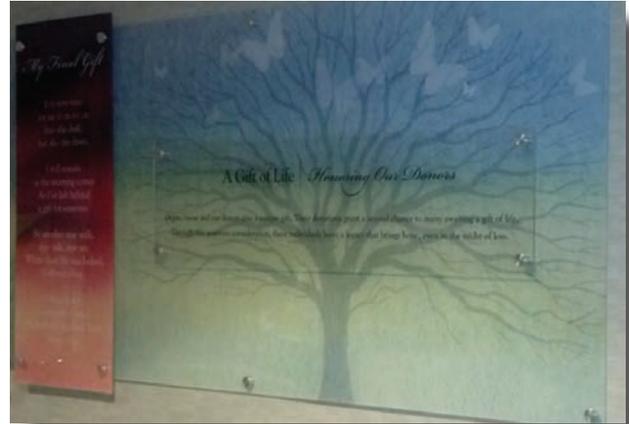
Thank you to corneal recipient David Dunn who donated two beautiful handmade wooden bowls to honor the Mathwigs and Salisburys. Dave sells his wood-turned creations in Rochester, Minnesota. Contact dfdwood@charter.net for more information.

Hospitals Recognize Eye, Organ, and Tissue Donors

Minnesota Hospitals have begun a wonderful new trend: creating visible tributes to eye, tissue, and organ donors in their facilities. In 2013, Minnesota Lions Eye Bank staff helped develop and launch three Twin Cities area hospital donor recognition walls. These walls honor donors, as well as provide education about donation to patients, hospital staff, and visitors.

Unveiled April 17, **North Memorial Medical Center's** "Wall of Heroes" was Minnesota's first. It features framed photos of donors surrounding a tree depicting hope and renewal and an anonymous verse titled "My Final Gift."

Abbott Northwestern Hospital's tribute was introduced May 17. Their "Honoring the Gift of Life" wall takes the form of a large digital screen that slowly scrolls through more than 200 donor photos and stories.



North Memorial Medical Center (Minneapolis) honors individuals who "leave a legacy that brings hope, even in the midst of loss."



Minnesota Lions Eye Bank CEO, Jackie Malling, with Minnesota artist Michael J. Sweere, creator of Hennepin County Medical Center's "Wall of Heroes." Inspiration for the mosaic came from the themes of transformation and new life, and these are represented in the artwork by a garden with insects, birds, and flowers.

On August 22, **Hennepin County Medical Center** premiered its "Wall of Heroes," a beautiful mosaic with an interactive computer kiosk that allows users to search and view profiles and photos of donors.

Hospitals are valued donation partners, since referring potential donors to donation organizations is a crucial first step in assuring that people have the opportunity to donate their organs, tissues, and eyes. Honoring donors from their facilities is commendable, and it is exciting that many hospitals around the state are now exploring donor tributes.

National Eye Donor Month - National Donate Life Month

March 2014 marks the 31st Annual National Eye Donor Month, and hard on its heels is April, National Donate Life Month—61 days to share the message of restoring sight and life through donation!



More than 100,000 Americans are currently in need of eye, tissue, or organ donations. That is the bad news. One donor has the potential to save or enhance more than 60 lives. That is the good news. Every year, more than 1,500 generous individuals from Minnesota, eastern North Dakota, or western Wisconsin improve the lives of people they will never meet by becoming donors after death.

These two months offer an excellent opportunity to honor our eye donors and to thank all of the people who help make eye donation happen: donor families, healthcare staff, funeral directors, and Lions club members. We salute you!

International Visitors Impressed with Minnesota Lions Work

Minnesota Lions Eye Bank staff helped coordinate several special tours for Lions visitors. On January 10, 2014, **International Director Lion Cindy Gregg**, a guest at 5M-6's Mid-Winter Convention, toured the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank, the Lions Children's Eye Clinic, and the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Neurosciences, as well as some Otolaryngology (hearing) areas of interest and the Center for Magnetic Resonance Research where diabetes research is being conducted. Lion Cindy took away some suggestions to offer to her foundations in Pennsylvania and said, "I could see the pride in all of the Minnesota Lions as they spoke of these wonderful projects. You have every right to feel this way."

August 21, 2013, brought a visit from **Lion Michelle Anderson**, the educational program specialist with Lions Quest (a youth development and skills building Lions Clubs International Foundation project). Michelle was visiting from Oak Brook, Ill., to observe Quest teacher training in Norwood Young America, Minn., but took the opportunity to learn how Minnesota Lions support sight and hearing endeavors at the University of Minnesota.

36 youth from 20 countries visited the eye bank on July 25, 2013, to learn about the gift of sight through eye donation. These young men and women were part of the Lions Youth Exchange program and were spending a month in Minnesota learning about American (and Minnesotan) culture, as well as the work of Lions clubs in their host areas and throughout the Multiple.



Eye bank guests observed technician Peter Bedard prepare eye tissue for distribution to a surgery center.



Visitors to the University of Minnesota learned how Lions-purchased equipment helps doctors diagnose and treat abnormalities in the retina of the eye.

Eye Banks Answer Helen Keller's Call

In her 1925 speech to the Lions, Helen Keller made several very precise requests. If you are unsure if Minnesota Lions are answering Helen Keller's challenge, look no further than your Minnesota Lions Eye Bank.

Miss Keller asked Lions to:

- *Constitute yourselves Knights of the Blind in this crusade against darkness.*

Thanks to eye donors who give the generous and invaluable gift of sight, the **Minnesota Lions Eye Bank lightens the darkness every day.**

- *Make the lives of the blind more worthwhile by increasing their economic value and giving them the joy of normal activity.*

This is exactly what corneal transplants do for recipients every day. **Minnesota Lions Eye Bank made possible more than 1,000 transplants in 2013.**

- *Hasten the day when there shall be no preventable blindness.*

Research is the key to ending blindness as we know it. Eye tissue donated for research and education helps scientists and surgeons learn more about eye diseases and develop new medications and surgical techniques. **Minnesota Lions Eye Bank dedicated more than 1,800 eyes or corneas to research and education in 2013.**

Study Shows Monetary Benefit of Corneal Transplants

The Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA) recently completed a cost-benefit study on corneal transplants. The study compared the medical cost of a transplant procedure to the direct and indirect lifetime costs of the alternative—living with blindness or severe vision loss. Here is what was revealed: corneal transplants performed in the United States this year will result in nearly **\$6 billion** in total net benefits over the lifetime of the recipients!

A corneal transplant is a

surgical procedure, and, therefore, costs patients or their insurance providers money. But that transplant enables those individuals to avoid many *direct* expenditures that come with vision loss, such as higher routine medical costs and higher long-term care costs. A transplant can also reduce or eliminate the *indirect* costs of potential lost productivity to both the patients and their family caregivers.

From the EBAA study, we are able to measure the economic impact of the Minnesota Lions

Eye Bank and find that the corneas provided for transplant *in just one year* by our eye bank will result in an estimated lifetime value of more than \$94 million for cornea transplant recipients.

Corneal transplants give recipients independence, the ability to provide for themselves and their families, and the chance to be contributing members of society. Without question, the lifetime benefit of a corneal transplant is overwhelmingly greater than the cost of the surgery.

Minnesota Lions Eye Bank Birthday

Does anyone know when the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank was officially “born”? The answer is June 9, 1960, which is when Minnesota Lions unanimously adopted the Minnesota Eye Bank Resolution at their convention.

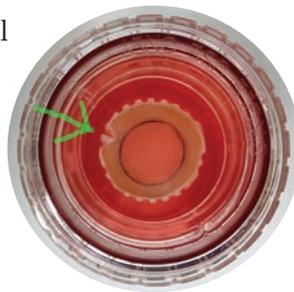
The Resolution called for a 10-man (women could not yet be Lions club members) Lions board of trustees, appointed by Lions District Governors. The first official meeting of this board was held on August 8, 1960, at the University of Minnesota. Lion George Dugan from Austin was chair.

This June, Minnesota Lions Eye Bank will be 54, and we have never looked or felt better!

MLEB Technicians Learn New Corneal Preparation Method

Descemet’s Membrane Endothelial Keratoplasty, or DMEK, is a new surgical technique for treating endothelial corneal disease. In this procedure, the inner layer of the patient’s own cornea is stripped away and a very thin membrane of a donor cornea is inserted in its place. Surgeons served by the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank (MLEB) have begun performing DMEK surgeries, and, since it is generally more efficient and cost-effective, they have requested that our eye bank prepare (or split) the corneas for them.

MLEB technicians were well up to the challenge. A Minnesota Lions Vision Foundation grant enabled the eye bank to purchase DMEK processing equipment and partake in DMEK tissue preparation training with Lions Vision Gift in Portland, Oregon. In just a few months, the team was up



Prepared DMEK cornea includes a notch in the sclera (indicated by arrow) where graft is hinged (i.e., still attached).

and running and sent out its first DMEK cornea on July 7, 2013.

The Minnesota Lions Eye Bank has now prepared and placed 49 DMEK corneas. The success rate has been tremendous, and surgeon feedback positive.

Minnesota Lions Eye Bank began splitting corneas for surgeons in 2007 with a process called Descemet’s Stripping Automated Endothelial Keratoplasty (DSAEK). DMEK corneas are even thinner than DSAEK, and provide better vision and faster recovery for transplant patients.

The Minnesota Lions Eye Bank is deeply grateful to their board of directors and the Minnesota Lions for making it possible to respond quickly to the needs of surgeons and patients and stay in the forefront of corneal tissue preparation.

Lions Have Stories to Share-Help Us Find Them!

Are you a Lion or Lioness club member and do you have someone in your family (father, sister, niece, grandparent, etc.) who was an eye donor? If so, we would like to thank you for helping make the gift of sight possible, whether it be through donation for transplant or donation for research. We would also like to share your donor's story. Are you a Lion or Lioness club member who is a corneal recipient? If so, please tell us! We would like to share your story, too.

We are gathering Lions-related donor and recipient stories to use during National Eye Donor Month (March), National Donate Life Month (April), Lions Eye Bank Week (December 1 - December 7), at Thanksgiving for Vision, and throughout the year.

We don't always know who has a Lions connection, so we need your help to identify Lions-related donors and recipients. Please share this request with your club members and extended family.

Submit your Lions story information or send questions to:

Lion Jodi Altenhofen, Community Services Liaison
Minnesota Lions Eye Bank
1000 Westgate Drive, Suite 260
Saint Paul, MN 55114
612-624-0446
magnu007@umn.edu

Below are three stories that Lions families have shared with us over the past few months. We have received many more and will publish such accounts in each issue of Spectacle.



Kailee Vigen



Corneal Recipient

*Granddaughter of
Goodridge Lion
Larry Vigen*



KAILEE was not yet two when a Christmas tree needle pierced her right eye. Her cornea became scarred and cloudy, severely limiting what she could see. Her best option for restored vision was a cornea transplant. Kailee received that cornea transplant thanks to a 15-year-old boy's donation. Now a vibrant teenager, Kailee loves to sing and dance.



Lion John Steiner



Eye Donor

*Minneapolis
Southwest Lions
Club Member*



JOHN was known for his incredible talent as an accordion player, and he would sacrifice many days to play gigs for any type of celebration and at any venue. He was also known for being a true “MacGyver.” If you needed help, he would be there, and he would find a way to fix it! John’s family knew of his love for the Lions, as he served as his club’s president and was active in many Lions activities. He would be very proud to know that his donation went on to help restore the sight of others.



Lion Mavis Sailstad



Eye Donor

*Duluth Lions
Club Member*



Lion Mavis and husband, PDG Lion Tom

HALF OF a dedicated Lions couple, Mavis enjoyed quilting, reading, spending time at the cabin and camping, and activities with her grandson. She and her husband, Tom, managed to visit 49 of the 50 states and all of the Canadian provinces over their 47-year marriage! Mavis very much wanted to be an eye donor after her death, and her generous gift has given corneal transplants to two people in need.

**Minnesota Lions Eye Bank
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Minnesota Lions Vision Foundation helps improve vision by providing fiscal oversight and operating funds for the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank, by raising funds for University of Minnesota Department of Ophthalmology priorities, by educating the public about eye donation, and by supporting other vision-related projects.

The Spectacle newsletter is a publication of the Minnesota Lions Vision Foundation 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 Vision Foundation.

www.MnLionsVisionFoundation.org
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Calendar

2014

Saturday, April 5

Minnesota Lions Vision Foundation Board Meeting – St. Cloud

Saturday, April 6

Donor and Family Recognition Program – Saint Paul

Saturday, April 12

Lions Tours of the University – Minneapolis

April 25-27

Multiple District 5M Lions Convention – Morton

July 4-6

Lions International Convention – Toronto

July 18-19

Minnesota Lions Vision Foundation Board Training and Meeting
Twin Cities

Saturday, October 25

Thanksgiving for Vision – Brooklyn Center