



EYE CATCHER

Winter/Spring 2024 Volume 54 No. 2



District News

The latest goings-on across the state
Page 2

Event Gallery

MLERF Visits and Events in Pictures
Page 11

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 6	Polar Plunge Lake Pearl	May 23	Full Board Meeting
April 18	Boston Medical Visitation	June 21-25	International Convention Melbourne, Australia
April 19-21	MD33 State Convention Seacrest Hotel, Falmouth	June 27	Full Board Meeting
April 25	Full Board Meeting - Zoom	August 3	MLERF Awards Banquet Southbridge Conf Center
May 15	Joslin Visitation		

Happy Spring my fellow Lions,

First and foremost, I want to thank all of you for your commitment to the mission of MLERF and for your hard work and participation this year.

This year has presented many challenges to me, and without your “*all-in*” support, this year would be as wonderful as it has been.

Since last spring (2023) we have completely revamped our operating structure, making it clear that all Directors are to be **active** members, participating in meetings or otherwise supporting MLERF in an active and progressive manner. We then put together strong internal committees with highly qualified committee chairs and committee members who were interested in “rolling up their sleeves” and helping to make a difference, with a directive to restructure the Grant donations we award to our six research institutional partners.

Our team got together to discuss ways to make our meetings more productive and informative, and we reorganized the agenda to include reports from all of our active committees so that the member are aware of current and future projects and how they can get involved.

Currently we are talking about making changes in the areas of:

- Grant recommendations – including Presidential Grant scope.

- Club coordination and planned club visitations aimed at communicating the MLERF story – we haven’t done this for years.

- Consistent monthly communications from our Public Relations team.

- Production of the Directory and Eyecatcher editions that are due

- A re-evaluation of the MLERF Awards program as it relates to giving more meaningful awards to our supporters and our Clubs.

- A new Director nominations process that ensures we are getting feedback from District Governors, accepting nominations from the floor and, full board voting on choices for new Directors in a timely schedule

- Utilizing our officers and Long-Range Planning Committee to annually review our organizational structure, Policy Manual, and By-laws to ensure that all MLERF documentation contains the same information and echoes the vision and mission of our organization.

These are all remarkable and productive changes that guarantee we will remain consistent with today’s typical modern business practices.

All Lions are always welcome to join any of our full board meetings (see the front page for our calendar of events. If you’d like to join us, please email me and I will add you to the email invites jriemer@tisaglobal.com



Board of Directors

Corporate Officers/Executive Committee

PCC John Riemer
PDG Beverly Dillion
PDG Patricia Kalicki
VACANT
PRC Robert Grover
PDG Dr. James Roth
PCC Jean Wilder

33A President
33S 1st Vice President
33K 2nd Vice President
33S 3rd Vice President
33A Secretary
33K Treasurer
33Y Immediate Past President

Assistant Treasurer

(Non-Voting)
PDG, PP Jeanne Farrow, 33N

Directors

District Governors

DG Jeffrey Turner, 33Y
DG Curt Jameson 33A
DG Elizabeth Pettis, 33N
DG Ivette Mesmar, 33K
DG Deborah Horner, 33S

1st Vice District Governors

1VDG Thom Swift, 33Y
1VDG Denise Andrews, PDG 33A
1VDG Mark Alexander, 33N
1VDG Diana Faust, 33K
1VDG Michael Middleton, 33S

2nd Vice District Governors

(Non-Voting)
2VDG Vacant, 33Y
2VDG Vacant, 33A
2VDG Katie Sirois, CST,
33N 2VDG Anthony Baliola, 33K
2VDG Steve Garran, 33S

Directors - 2024

James Allen, 33Y
William Johnson 33A
Michael Gmitter, 33N
Richard MacPherson, 33K PDG
Kathy Salem, 33S

Directors - 2025

Vacant, 33Y
PCST Lionel Carbonneau, 33A
PCST Brenda MacPherson, 33N
PDG Dr. Deb Wayne, 33K
PCST Lorraine Thompson, 33S

Directors - 2026

PZC Maryann Bankman, 33Y
Barry Alman, 33A
PCST Jeralyn O'Connor, 33N
PDG Debbie Hayes 33K
PCST Patricia Salvas, 33S

Directors - 2027

Vacant, 33Y
Vacant, 33A
Alice Gaudet 33N
PCS Tim Munn 33K
Steve Garren, 33S

Parliamentarians

PID, PP Charles Kostro
PDG, PP Wayne Smith, Chairperson

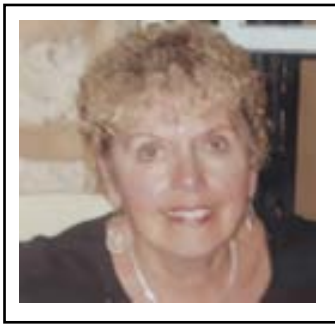
Eye Catcher Reporters

PDG Debbie Hayes, 33K
Editor/Publisher

PCC, IPP Jean Wilder, 33Y
2VDG2 Denise Andrews, 33A
PDG Marcel Plouffe, 33N
PDG Debbie Hayes, 33K
PDG Wayne Smith, 33S

News From the Districts

District 33Y



**Maryanne Bankman,
PZC**

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Happy Spring. I hope your eyes have been catching some great sights of blooming crocuses, daffodils, and tulips to follow. May the renewed energy that Spring provides help your Lions club to have successful upcoming projects and fundraisers.

The Lions of Western Massachusetts had a successful Midwinter Convention at the Sheraton Hotel in Springfield. The three-day event welcomed over a hundred Lions and friends. There was good representation with MLERF directors. The Friday evening costume dance party was a fun event. Our eyes caught sights of haunting decor, frightening table decorations and an assortment of costumes: some creepy, some cute and very clever. A collection of great old songs from the past provided a wonderful dancing opportunity. And then there were the funny games to play. Many thanks to PDG Dennis Fountain, IPP Jean Wilder and helpers for this enjoyable event.

A highlight of Saturday's Business meeting was a very informative presentation by Mohamed Ashraf Elmasary MD PhD, from the Beeham Eye Institute and Joslin Diabetes Center. Dr. Elmasary provided us with amazing information about the Silverstone Imaging System that MLERF funds purchased. This machine provides ultra-wide angle retinal imaging with 3D capabilities. This allows for quicker results and for less stress on the patient. The test is non-invasive and detects abnormalities within the eyes that are brought on by Diabetes. His recent research is making use of AI to improve the accuracy of detecting abnormal blood cells in the retina that lead to debilitating vision loss (NVE). It was exciting to hear how MLERF funding has enabled him to do his research and be able to acquire larger grants for continued re-

search in the future. And that is the beauty of what our MLERF grants do for our researchers. Our initial funding helps them to produce good research findings that other grant providers will continue to support. Dr. Elmasary expressed great appreciation for our grants.

One of the things I enjoy most as an MLERF director is the opportunity to meet with the researchers to hear about and be shown just what they have done with our research funding. MLERF would never be able to provide this support without your help. Thank you so much for your individual efforts and your club's efforts in helping MLERF to be successful. Your hard work is greatly appreciated and is so critical to our success.

At the Saturday evening dinner meeting MLERF President John Riemer presented MLERF awards to David Shields of the Charlamont Lions and Jim Allen of the Putnam Lions. President John also shared his personal experience with using our MLERF Second Opinion Protocol. Wow, talk about our service being used close to home!

The Western Mass Lions Advisory meeting was held at the Summit View Restaurant in Holyoke on March 18th. Many thanks to the Southampton Lions for hosting this wonderful meeting. There were 71 attendees representing 16 clubs. This included 23 Southampton Lion members, 46 other Lions and 2 guests.

MLERF IPP Jean Wilder reported on MLERF and the Blinq machine. Donations made to MLERF that evening included: Southampton Lions \$1500, West Springfield \$7000 and a personal donation of \$100 from Lion Gary Lewis from the Pittsfield Lions. Deerfield Lions will be sending in \$250 and the Northampton Lions will be giving \$7000.

Thank you so much for these generous donations to MLERF.

DG Jeff Turner introduced the two guests: Eddie O'Toole, President, Berkshire Amistad and Governor Vasquez of Intibuca, Honduras. President O'Toole provided us with amazing information about this 501(c)3

continued on page 7

News From the Districts

District 33A



1VDG, Denise Andrews

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Lions of the Awesome District,

Happy Spring!! It's that time of the year when everything seems to come back to life. The days are longer; the temperature is a bit warmer; and we are starting to see some green. It really doesn't matter what season it is, because we all seem to keep busy. As Lions, we always keep busy. We live by our motto of "We Serve" and "need" never takes a vacation.

Winter is when we hold our Mid-Winter Conference and I want to give everyone a heart-felt "thank you" for your generosity at this year's Conference. District 33A clubs donated an amazing \$20,575 to Mass. Lions Eye Research Fund (MLERF) and more will come during the spring and summer. Way to go, Lions!! Give yourselves a big round of applause!!

Let me tell you what happens with your donations to MLERF. Each year,

hospitals and research institutions apply for grants from MLERF. The Directors of MLERF award monies for cutting edge research projects to these institutions.

Your Board of Directors goes through a meticulous process to select the grant recipients. MLERF is always hoping that its grant monies will become the seed money for those projects that will get the attention of the National Institution of Health (NIH) which has access to the big dollars of the federal government.

During the year, the hospitals and grant recipients host visitations to their institutions so that we can see, first hand, what is being done with our funds. This year, our Leo Advisor, Peter Cardoza, has organized a special trip on March 27 and our Leos will be visiting Boston

Children's Hospital, along with MLERF Board members. There will be lab tours, explanations in layman's terms, and a follow-up dinner so they can get a can get a better feel for what our donations are doing.

All four of our District 33A directors – Bill Johnson, Barry Alman, Lionel Carbonneau and Bob Grover have been busy visiting clubs and sharing the MLERF message. They all find their visitations rewarding and share up-to-date information on the good work that MLERF funding is doing in the institutions that we support.

If you want more information on MLERF or if you want a speaker for one of your meetings, please reach out to one of your Directors or anyone on the MLERF team. They will be more than happy to come and speak to you and/or your club.

One of our Directors, Lionel Carbonneau, wanted me to share the following story of his recent visit to the Boylston Lions Club. "On February 22, 2024 I made a presentation to the Boylston Lions. This club consistently provides strong donations to MLERF which have been very much appreciated. I was very warmly welcomed by their Lions, and I quickly signed up for their 50/50 raffle.

I made my presentation early on at the meeting. During my talk I reviewed how their donations are used to fund scientific research at the Boston hospitals. I also showed them how their in-memory donations would eventually be used to fund purchases of important medical equipment through our MLERF Presidential Grant Program. Last year MLERF helped to purchase a 3-dimensional viewing microscope that would greatly improve surgeries for eye diseases.

At the end of the night, they drew the 50/50 raffle and low and behold, I was the

winner... I told him that I could not take the winnings of \$80 and they should donate it back to the club. They pointed out that that was against the rules.

After a pause, one of their Lions suggested that I should donate the \$80 in memory of someone, so that it could be used to eventually fund future medical equipment pur-

continued on page 7

News From the Districts

District 33N News



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Thank You!

From the Woburn Host Lions Club



The Woburn Host Lions Charities Club would like to thank you in helping make the 69th Annual Halloween Parade a success! The first crucial step in making the parade is to raise the funds. The second step is to book the bands. The third step is to organize the floats. The fourth step is to organize and run the parade. The fifth step is to ask the crowd to donate money, 100% of which goes directly to Massachusetts Lions Eye Research. This year we will be able to donate over \$18,000 to Massachusetts Lions Eye Research. Thank you for your help and support!

Sincerely, King Lion Rob Toro

A Special Thank You To —

Amesbury Lions Club, Dracut Lions Club, Haverhill Lions Club, Chelmsford Lions Club, Peabody North Shore Lions, Woburn Breakfast Lions, Shoe City Lions Club, Woburn Middlesex Lions, Wyoma Lions Club, Governor Liz Pettis, CST Joni Baptiste, IVDG Mark Alexander, 2VDG Katie Sirois, Woburn Leo Club, Joyce Middle School Cubs, Boston Renegades, Boston Strong, Ashland Lions, Boston Host Lions, Marlboro Lions, North Andover Lions, and TV Co-Host Matthew Richardson.



We hope to see you next year for our 70th Annual Halloween Parade on Sunday, October 27, 2024!

WOBURNHOSTLIONS.COM

LACE UP AND...
COME RUN WITH US!



READING LIONS CLUB &
FRIENDS OF READING
RECREATION

Journey for Sight 5K Road Race & 1 Mile Walk

We hope you will join us for this year's Journey for Sight 5K Road Race and 1 Mile Walk. We have prizes for the top male, female and non-binary finishers overall, in addition to the top 3 male, female and non-binary finishers in various age categories.

For entertainment, we will have a DJ to keep the activities festive. Also, we will have plenty of refreshments including water and pizza following the race/walk.

When:
Thursday, July 18th

Start Time: 6:30 PM
Where: Memorial Park
Harrison St., Reading

For the benefit of
Massachusetts Lions
Eye Research Charities

Register NOW online
@
runsignup.com
/ReadingLionsFORR5K



or
In person on the day of
the race
5pm-6:15pm

For more information go to:
readinglionsclub.org

or contact:
tom clough @
tom_clough@verizon.net

News From the Districts

District 33K



PDG Debbie Hayes

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By: Tim Munn,
Wrentham Lions Club, Director



Massachusetts Lions MD33K held another wonderful Mid-Winter Conference February 16-18 at the Dedham Hilton with a few hundred Lions from the 47 district clubs attending.

The relaxed, fun tone of the weekend was established on Friday with a Carnival-themed dinner event; a tribute to DG Ivette Mesmar, native of Panama. Many Lions wore costumes representative of the Carnival spirit. A fantastic band played energetic music and DG Ivette brought back the “Lion Roar” contest after several years; and several contestants gave their best yell or roar to the few hundred in attendance that night.

And that energy carried over to Saturday where more than 200 Lions enjoyed events that are representative of most Lions events as the day was filled with many clubs fundraising with various raffles and other items. There were plenty of informative tables as well from Lions Clubs International, Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund (MLERF), Organ Donors, Diabetes Awareness, MA Association of the Blind and others.

The day culminated in a an emotionally-charged dinner meeting. Since District K did not have a Boston-area research doctor speak on behalf of MLERF, instead current MLERF President John Riemer (District A) gave an impassioned speech. John detailed the organizational, website and managerial changes made to MLERF during the

past year. He reminded Lions that MLERF is a statewide Lions project to raise funds that ultimately provide grants to six of the world’s leading eye research institutions. He explained that these changes provide more efficient management of the fund and more active participation by the Board of Directors with the individual clubs. He then reasoned that due to the positive relationships built over the years with these research institutions, the MLERF “2nd Opinion” project allows Lions and extended family and friends to have access to some of these institutions on a more expedited basis. John then gave some recent examples of success stories from the 2nd Opinion project and encouraged Lions to spread the word about this amazing opportunity. John thanked the district clubs for their contributions during the year and throughout their club histories.

Many people know that Lions have a reputation for working with sight-related issues and visually impaired or blind people. There are over 240 Lions Clubs throughout Massachusetts and together they operate and manage the MLERF which is dedicated to providing initial funding for cutting edge research projects and has a goal of trying to eradicate preventable blindness. This is a state-wide Lions project that requires donations from all of the individual clubs in Massachusetts in order to carry out its mission.

Since 1952, MLERF has donated more than 41 million dollars in eye research grants. MLERF research grants have been absolutely vital in allowing local research scientists to continue pioneering research and are paving the way to fight and win the battle against diabetic retinopathy and other ocular maladies.

Lion Tim Munn
MLERF Director

News From the Districts

District 33S



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We are off to a good start, as I write this in early March, for our District 33 S, raising funds for Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc (MLERF). You our members continued efforts make us proud to be Lions.

Our 33 S District Walk Your Way to Benefit Journey for Sight raised \$18,626. Clubs raising \$500 or more were Acushnet, Bridgewater, Bridgewater Academy, Easton, Fall River Carousel, Freetown, Lakeville, Plymouth, Provincetown, Rochester, Somerset, and Southeastern Paws. Fourteen additional Lions Clubs participated to make us proud to be part of this fund raiser. The Eastern Club raised the most with \$5,095. District Governor Deb Horner thanks you for making this a very successful event and for all you do for MLERF.

At our Mid - Winter Convention our Clubs presented checks totaling \$103,254 for MLERF. Broken down to \$94,479 in grants, \$1,474 Journey for Sight, \$2,150 Walk Your Way, and \$5,151 Pennies for Sight.

As of February 9 this fiscal year we have raised \$172,038. We are well on our way to exceed last years donation of \$318,237. Leading the way at present is the Acushnet Lions with \$28,255. Knowing that 100% of these donations are given in grants to benefit eye research is something to be rewarding to all of us.

We will celebrate raising this years donations at the Annual MLERF Awards and Lions Appreciation Banquet on Saturday, August 3, 2024 from noon until four, at the Wellsworth Hotel in Southbridge, Massa-

chusetts. All Lions and guests are invited to attend. Clubs donating \$5,000 or more will receive two free tickets. This is an exciting and rewarding experience. Many of our researchers will be there with displays showing their research, that Lions sponsor, and the importance we are in helping people to see.

You will be able to dine with our grant recipients and talk one on one about their research. Hear how appreciative they are when we present them with their grants.

President John Riemer visited the Provincetown Lions on November 11 to thank them for their donations totaling \$426,084 over the years with other Lion Clubs participation in a Twinning Club Meeting. On January 24 John visited the Easton Lions Club to thank them for their years of support with donations totaling over \$739,780. Another twinning meeting is scheduled on April 23 to thank the Acushnet Club with donations of \$ 692,405, twinning with Somerset with \$395,692 and Rehoboth with \$300,091. Our President has visited the Mid - Winter Conventions and many other Lion Clubs in the Commonwealth to thank you for improving the quality of life for residents in our communities and throughout the world. Massachusetts is the leading eye research and eye care center in the world because of the Massachusetts Lions with MLERF funding innovating ideas for researchers, with pilot grants, that lead to larger funding from the National Institute of Health (NIH) and other sources.

Our referral program continues to be a valuable resource for Lion members to help people get a second opinion for eye care from the institutions we support. In our District contact Director PDG Kathy Salem and she will facilitate the referral.

Your Board of Directors meet regularly with our research institutions and you are invited. All you need to do is contact a director and express your interest in attending. As an example we met on March 7 with Doctor Patricia D'Amore of Schepens Eye Research Institute.

continued page 11

News From the Districts

District 33Y continued

non-profit organization. The organization was formed in 1995 by Eddie O'Toole and his family dedicating their lives and resources to improving the quality of life for residents of Central America. They first focused on the town of Guaimaca, Honduras and expanded their efforts to support the Pittsfield Sister city of Malpasillo, Nicaragua and residents in the Honduran city of La Esperanza.

Berkshire Amistad collects and donates equipment, building materials, school supplies including desks, sports equipment, medical equipment such as beds, exam tables, dental chairs, canes, crutches, walkers, wheel chairs and eyeglasses – especially readers and sunglasses. They also take household items and clothing. They cleverly use 40- foot empty returning containers that bring bananas to New England stores to ship these supplies back to Honduras.

Governor Vasquez had recently arrived in Massachusetts to view how this Amistad project is carried out. If you know of any supplies that might available for use in Honduras please contact Eddie O'Toole at BerkshireAmistad@gmail.com

Again Many Thanks for All You Do For MLERF! I hope to see you at the State Convention.

Lion Maryann Novajosky Bankman
mtmnovajo@aol.com
413 535 8533

District 33A continued

chases for eye research through the MLERF Presidential Grant Program!!”

Many clubs in District 33A hold annual fundraisers specifically to benefit MLERF, like toll roads, a curling tournament, Hanover Theater tickets and more. Some of the upcoming fundraisers in the District are:

March 23 – Petersham Lions 19th Annual Curling Tournament

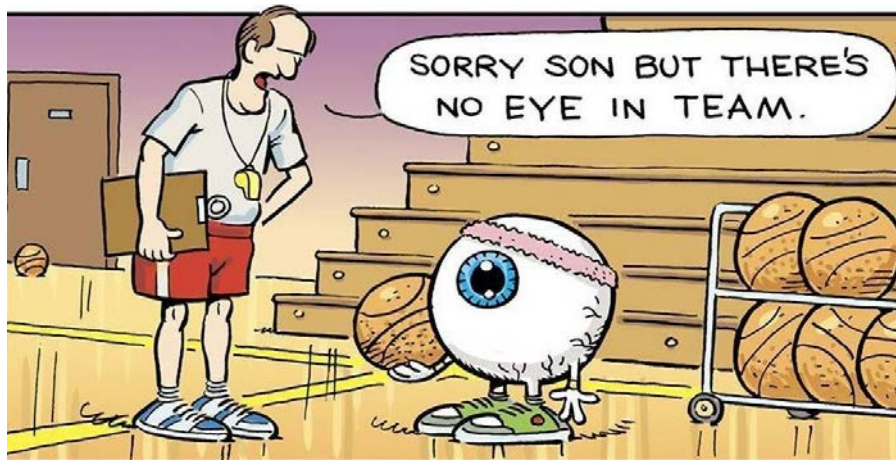
May 11 – Mendon Lions “Toll Road for Sight” – Rain date May 12

May 18 – Grafton Lions “Roar Charity Ride” Motorcycle Ride

Please check out the MLERF website for more information about MLERF and how you can help. You will love the short videos of “success stories” that your donations have helped to make happen. This site, will truly make you proud to be a Lion. Here is a link to the site: <https://www.mlerfi.com/>

Thank you to everyone for your continued support and for your generosity. Keep up the great work that you are doing, it is truly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
1st VDG Denise Andrews



News From the Districts

District 33N continued

Reading Lions Club and Friends of Reading Recreation Journey for Sight 5K Road Race Is Back Again!

Thursday, July 18, 2024

Time: 6:30 pm

Registration: 5:00-6:15 pm sharp

Memorial Park, Harrison St. Reading, MA

The Reading Lions Club and The Friends of Reading Recreation are teaming up again for this year's 5K Road Race and One Mile Walk to benefit the Mass. Lions Eye Research Fund and other local sight-related charities. MLERF finances basic eye research at world renowned institutions such as Mass. Eye and Ear right here in Boston. Over the years the Reading Lions Club has donated over \$320,000 from the proceeds of this race to MLERF, and we are excited to continue these efforts.

WE'RE BACK AGAIN! COME RUN WITH US!

Register online at: www.runsignup.com/ReadingLionsFORR5K

\$30.00 pre-registration/ \$35.00 day of race

\$20.00 pre-registration ages 17 and under / \$25.00 day of race

T-shirts for the first 250 entrants

Awards will be given out for the following categories:

- **1st Overall Male, Female, and Non-Binary**
- **Top 3 Male, Female, and Non-Binary in each of the age categories:**
 - 19 and under
 - 20-29
 - 30-39
 - 40-49
 - 50-59
 - 60-69
 - 70-79
 - 80+

Professional DJ for everyone's entertainment.

Plenty of refreshments, pizza, and water for all competitors.

1 Mile category for non-runners wanting to participate and join in the support for a great charity.

Join us for this fun evening to support a very worthwhile cause.

Running For Good!

The Reading Lions Club has proudly served the community of Reading and surrounding communities for more than 75 years. There are few feelings in life that are as great as being able to help those in need, and to do it with a fun, dedicated group of club members makes it all the more enjoyable. If you are interested in learning more about us please contact Marla Clough – mclough410@gmail.com or any other current Lions member.

News From the Districts

District 33N continued

Here are some articles posted on social media for District 33N. Keep up the good work for MLERF.

MLERF Donations

August 5, 2023

It's official! The Lions of MD33 Massachusetts raised \$866,604.30 for the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, plus \$200,000 for the Presidential grant (\$100,000 was a matching grant from Lions Club International Fund) for a Grand Total of \$1,066,604.30.

For more info on MLERF or to donate, visit <https://www.mlerfi.com/>

Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund

At the annual Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, awards banquet in Springfield on August 4, 2023, Boston University Eye Associates and Boston Medical Center were presented with a check for \$200K to purchase a new operating room microscope. Members of the MLERF Board of Directors attended a reception and dedication of the new equipment at the Moakley Building in Boston on the campus of the Boston Medical Center.

The Department of Ophthalmology has already made use of the new equipment in dozens of surgeries and rolled it out for the MLERF Board of Directors to see the equipment that they and MLERF have invested in. The new equipment is a Zeiss Artevo 800 Integrated Digital Microscope for heads-up surgery with 3-Dimensional capabilities when used with special 3-D glasses.

Massachusetts Lions (MD33 Lions) helped the Boston Medical Center purchase the equipment with a Presidential grant from the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund and Lions Clubs International Foundation. The new operating microscope carries a price tag of approximately \$350,000 and is being used by Boston University to help MLERF carry out its mission to help eradicate preventable blindness.

Almost 50 MLERF Directors, doctors, researchers, and guests attended the dedication, reception, and demonstration of the Zeiss Artevo 800.

Awards Luncheon

Congratulations to all the District 33 N Lions clubs that received awards during the Fund's 72nd Annual Grants Presentation and Awards Luncheon held at the Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel. Kudos to District 33N Lions that donated >\$194K to the MLERF in 2022-2023.

Here are the photos from the awards luncheon [CLICK HERE](#)

Saugus MA Lions

🌟 Drumroll, please! Announcing the lucky winners of the February 2024 Gift Calendar Raffle held by the Saugus, MA Lions Club, all to benefit Massachusetts Lions Eye Research! Did you score big?

Find out on their website: [CLICK HERE](#)

Woburn Middlesex Lions Club

Woburn Middlesex Lions Club had a great experience at the Schepens Eye Research Institute; dinner, presentations and a visit to the labs to see research funded by Lions donations through Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc. November 8, 2023

News From the Districts

District 33N continued

Woburn Host Lions Club

Our Woburn Host Lions Club extends gratitude to everyone who braved the rain to cheer on Halloween Parade participants! They're thrilled to announce that, despite the weather, they had a fantastic day and managed to collect an incredible \$18K for Eye Research. Your generosity is making a real difference in the fight against vision-related issues. Thank you for being a part of our journey, and we can't wait to celebrate with you next year!

69th Annual Woburn Host Lions Halloween Parade Sunday, October 29th - 1 pm Main Street

Shoe City Lions

Shoe City Lions thanks the community for their contribution at their Dining For Dollars Fundraiser held at Rolly's Tavern! Proceeds from the fundraiser benefit the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, and Shoe City Lions' charities.

Reading Lions Club

Our Lions Club Reading MA's FORR Journey for Sight 5K Road Race co-chairs, Tom Clough (R) and Joe Madden (L) are thrilled to present a check for \$17,400 to Jane Fanjoy (C) for the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.. Our Reading Lions extend their thanks to the incredible runners, walkers, supporters, and generous donors and sponsors for making this year's race a resounding success!

Through your dedication and donations, these funds will play a crucial role in supporting eye research at renowned institutions, including Massachusetts Eye and Ear. They take pride in presenting the road race each year in collaboration with the FORR - Friends of Reading Recreation and are deeply grateful for their unwavering support.

District 33S continued

Dr. D'Amore introduced Doctor Dong Feng Chen and Doctor Menglu Yang to explain their research funded by MLERF. Dr. Chen presented " From Darkness to Light"; a journey toward restoring vision by nerve regeneration. Dr Yang talked about BMP-7 (a bone morphogenetic protein) as a novel therapeutic to combat proliferative vitreoretinopathy. This research will be valuable with retinal detachment.

We all are members of our Lions Club and we know that no Club or community is exactly alike. Some are in a city or town or a combination. Some with large membership and some smaller. In Massachusetts we are fortunate to have MLERF and we all support our research. Without all of us we would not be able to accomplish improving eye sight in the past and continuing on well into the future.

Thank you for all you do,

Wayne

On the road again...

December 2023

Tufts Medical Center



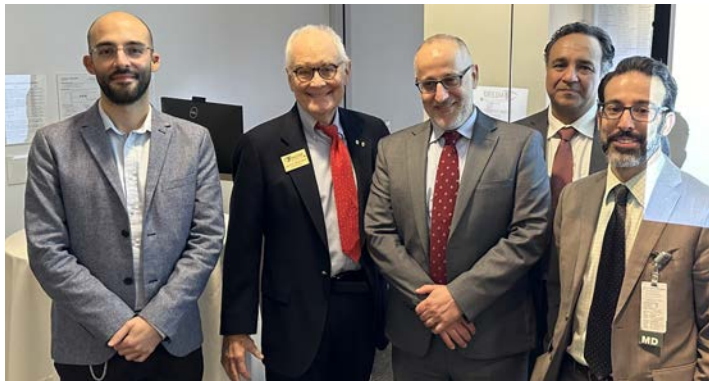
Reza Vagefi, Director



Tim Munn, 33K; Pedram Hamrah MD; PID Joyce Middleton, 33S



PDG Dr. Deb Wayne, 33K; Rafael Martinez-Carrasco Perez PHD; PDG Kathy Salem, 33S; 1VDG Michael Middleton, 33S



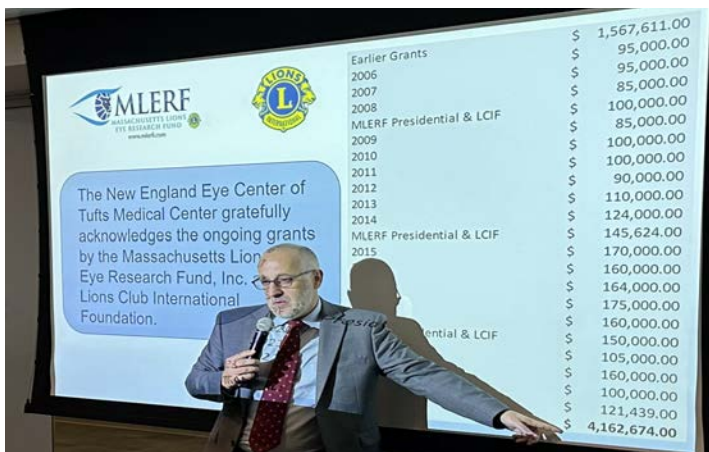
Rafael Martinez-Carrasco Perez, PHD, Instructor Tufts Medical Center

John Riemer, President of MLERF

Pablo Argueso PHD, Director of Research, Tufts Medical Center

Pedram Hamrah MD, Vice Chair of Research and Academic Programs, Tufts Medical Center

Reza Vagefi, Director, NE Eye Center and Chairman, Department of Ophthalmology, Tufts Medical Center



NOTE: Thank you very much to Barry Alman, Mariana Riemer and John Riemer for all of the photographs, descriptions and press releases.

Tufts Medical Center

On Monday, December 4, 2023, eighteen Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund (MLERF) Officers, Directors and supporters traveled to The Tufts University School of Medicine as guests of the University. For almost 20 years, The New England Eye Center of Tufts Medical Center has been a recipient of substantial grants from MLERF and Lions Club International and they invited MLERF members to their facilities to show their appreciation for all that Lions have done for them these past two decades.

Since being voted the Massachusetts Lions official statewide project in 1952, MLERF has given out over \$41 million in research grants to a variety of Eye Research Laboratories in Massachusetts. Tufts University has received grants totaling \$4,162,674.

MLERF members were offered a tour of some of the newly created Laboratory Facilities where state-of-the-art laboratory equipment is being used to develop ground-breaking ocular research that is helping to fulfill the mission of MLERF which is to eradicate preventable blindness.

After the tour, Reza Vagefi, Director, New England Eye Center and Chairman, Department of Ophthalmology, Tufts Medical Center introduced himself and led all present in a traditional Lions 5-Point Opening Ceremony.

Helen W. Boucher, MD, FACP, FIDSA, Dean and Professor of Medicine, Tufts University School of Medicine, Chief Academic Officer spoke briefly and thanked MLERF for its continued support.

Pablo Argueso PHD, Director of Research, Tufts Medical Center showed a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted MLERF research grants to Tufts University from 2007 to the present. He gratefully acknowledged the impact that these grants have had on eye research and how they help to attract some of the world's best scientists to Tufts to do their research in Boston. He also emphasized that MLERF research grants play an instrumental role in being seed money that attracts bigger dollars for future eye research.

The evening concluded with two research presentations that are currently being carried out with help from Mass. Lions Eye Research Fund dollars. The first presentation was by Dr. Pedram Hamrah on "Novel approaches to regenerate corneal nerves for treating neurotrophic keratopathy". The second presentation was made by

Rafael Martinez-Carrasco Perez PHD, Instructor, Tufts Medical Center on "Sugars-a new tool to understand ocular disease"

It was an informative evening and Tufts University did a great job in thanking MLERF for supporting their research and left members of MLERF with a better understanding of the complex work that is being carried out with the dollars that MLERF has invested in their research.

On the road again...

December 2023



MLERF Director Barry Alman of the Barre Lions Club spreading the word about the great things MLERF is doing at the Hanover Theater in Worcester, MA at the production of A Christmas Carol on Saturday Dec. 16th.



February 2024

Lions of Central Massachusetts held their 64th Annual District 33A Mid-Winter Conference at the Wellsworth Hotel in Southbridge, Mass. Almost 150 participants representing more than 2 dozen Lions Clubs from Central Massachusetts were in attendance. District 33A Governor, Curt Jameson, stressed the importance of continuing the mission of Lionism. One of the weekend's highlights was hearing guest speaker Dr. Darlene Dartt who has been working at the Schepens Research Institute for more than 40 years.

Dr. Dartt's cutting edge research on Conjunctival Goblet Cell Mucous Secretions, stimulated by Leukotrienes, has received the attention of specialists from all over the world. What she made very clear was that MLERF research grants have been absolutely vital in allowing her to do the ground work that ultimately led to her being able to apply for larger government and National Institute for Health (NIH) grants that allow her to continue her work. Her life's work has produced some amazing results that have helped numerous patients. There will be more successes in the future. A special thank you to MLERF President John Riemer for inviting Dr. Dartt to the Conference.



On the road again...

February 2024

On Saturday, February 17th, MLERF President, John Riemer was in attendance at the annual banquet. It was a wonderful event!

PDG Dr. Deb Wayne, MLERF Director, and Boston Chinatown Lion Teresa Choi, were instrumental in coordinating the travel arrangements for, and care of, a gentleman from China. The request was initiated in late January and by the first week of March, he was being assessed and a treatment plan was being put together. How about that!

Our Board's ability to make this stuff happen so quickly is extraordinary and when you combine the other 45 or so domestic cases that we move through the system with urgency...you can see that we are really having an impact on the lives of residents of our communities and beyond.

It should all make us proud to be Lions.

Also DG Ivette Mesmar and MLERF President, John Riemer presented awards for outstanding MLERF support to Dan Mitchell, Ashland Lions President and, Cissy Seeto also from the Ashland Lions, and Belmont Lion President Paul Madden (accepting on behalf of Belmont Lion Felix Firenze).



On the road again...

February 2024

The Lions of Western Massachusetts held their 65th Annual District 33Y Mid-Winter Conference at the Sheraton Hotel in Springfield, Mass. Over 100 Lions representing more than 20 Lions clubs from Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire Counties were in attendance. International Director Judge Anthony Paradiso, District Governors, Dignitaries, and Mass. Lions Eye Research Fund (MLERF) Directors from all areas of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts were also in attendance, and District 33Y Governor Jefferey Turner stressed the importance of continuing the mission of Lionism.



Guest speaker, Dr. Mohamed Ashraf Elmasry, MD, PhD from Beetham Eye Institute and Joslin Diabetes Center gave a talk on “Seeing Beyond the Surface: Color Imaging and Scan Detection of Neovascularization in Diabetic Retinopathy.” His research is attempting to use non-invasive techniques to detect anomalies within the eyes that are brought on by Diabetes. His most recent research is making use of AI to improve the accuracy of detecting abnormal blood cells in the retina that lead to debilitating vision loss (NVE). He thanked the Lions and made it very clear that Lions research grants are being used wisely and are being used to recruit those who will continue his research. He explained how the use of the Silverstone Retinal Imaging System allows for ultra-wide-angle retinal imaging with 3D capabilities and has dramatically altered the playing field. The bottom line is that he and his staff are able to image much larger areas of the eye in much less time. This allows for much quicker results and far less stress on his patients. The results of his research are very promising and he expects them to lead to the acquisition of larger grants in the near future.

MLERF research grants have been absolutely vital in allowing Dr. Elmasry to continue his pioneering research and are paving the way to fight and win the battle against Diabetic Retinopathy. MLERF grants are providing the seed money that will allow him and his associates enough success so that they can get the larger grants that will help MLERF achieve its goal of eradicating preventable blindness.

March 2024



On March 6th we had a wonderful visit with the Belmont Lions Club of District 33K.

The Belmont Lions Club has been one of MLERF’s largest supporters, having donated over \$630,000 to date.

On the left, MLERF President, John Rieme present Felix Firenze an award for his dedication to the mission of our organization.



On the road again...

March 2024



On March 20th we had a great evening with the District 33K Ashland Lions Club.

MLERF President John Riemer shared the video of Nick and the CALEC Procedure, and the gene therapy video that has given sight back to a 13 year-old boy named Jack.

President John thanked the Ashland Lions for their dedication to helping to eradicate blindness.

HAPPY 50TH ANNIVERSARY to the LIONS OF MENDON!

MLERF President John Riemer shared in 50th anniversary celebration with members of the Mendon Lions Club and many visitors and guests.



Sharing the vision and goals of MLERF with our wonderful Millbury Lions. The Millbury Lions Club has also been one of MLERF's largest supporters, having donated over \$570,000 to date. We are so very appreciative of their support.



On the road again...

March 2024



Thank you to Boston Children's Hospital for such a wonderful and educational evening. In addition to MLERF officers and directors, we were fortunate to have 27 Leos and Advisors join us for an engaging and interesting set of presentations on amazing research being done with the support from MLERF. The researchers and BCH team were impressed with the questions from our Leos and we hope that one day in the future we might see a few of the Leos giving the next generation of MLERF members and Lions, a presentation on their cutting-edge technologies.



On the road again...

April 2024



We had a great visit with the Lions of Agawam. The Agawam Club has donated almost \$600,000 to the mission of MLERF and we are grateful for their support.



**DISTRICT 33K LIONS
ANNUAL POLAR PLUNGE
SPONSORED BY THE
PLAINVILLE, NORFOLK &
WRENTHAM LIONS CLUBS**



On the road again...

April 2024



*Listen my children and you shall hear
of the midnight ride of John Riemer.
On the 9th of April in Twenty-Four,
a ride to Lexington to knock on their door...*

President John has a wonderful visit with the Lions of Lexington and thanked them for their dedication and life-time donations of more than \$600,000.



On April 8th we had a great evening with the District 33K Newburyport Lions Club.

MLERF President John Riemer thanked the Newburyport Lions for their more than \$775,000 in support and their continued dedication to the mission of MLERF.



Let's finish the 2023 -2024 Lionistic year strong!

Donate to MLERF today!

<https://www.mlerfi.com>



Ride for Sight

May 18th 2024

Help us support the **Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund (MLERF)** and their efforts, through funding grant research to transform today's ideas into tomorrow's cures. Our goal is to eliminate preventable blindness. Proceeds from this charity ride will benefit MLERF
(Registration deadline is 5/3/2024) After deadline, \$10 more per bike

Pre-registration: Riders Information

Name (Rider) _____	Name (Passenger) _____
Address _____	Address _____
Phone _____	Phone _____
Email _____	Email _____

1st Rider \$ 30.00 (incl lunch)*

Passenger: \$25.00 (incl lunch)

*Tee-shirt (\$20) & meal tickets (\$10) can be purchased the day of the event

Check-In: 9:00 a.m. Ride approx. 100 miles begins & ends at 68 Brigham Hill Rd, Grafton, MA 01519
 Kickstands Up: 10:00 a.m.

Multiple sponsorship opportunities are available to fit almost any budget. No matter how you choose to participate you will be supporting a great cause.

Sponsorship Information (deadline is 5/1/2024)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

- Platinum level \$1000
 Gold level \$750
 Silver Level \$500
 Bronze Level \$250
 Tee-Shirt Sponsor \$800
 Name on the back of tee-shirt \$150
 Gift/Prize Donor/others _____

I, _____, participant(s), hereby waive any liability and release all claims against Grafton Lions Club.

Signature (s)

Signature (s)

Please make checks payable to: Grafton Lions Charities
 Return to: Grafton Lions Club, P.O. Box 111, Grafton, MA 01519
RideForSight@graftonLionsclub.org
 On-line registration at <http://www.graftonlionsclub.org>



Sponsorship Information: (deadline is 5/1/2024)



Platinum Sponsor: \$1,000 entitles 4 Ride tickets, 4 tee-shirts, logo/name* on back of ride tee-shirt; 4 lunch tickets; name promotion on Multiple District websites; social media, name on banner and special recognition during the date of event.

Gold Sponsor: \$750 entitles 3 Ride tickets, 3 Tee-shirts, logo/name on back of ride Tee-shirt; 3 lunch tickets; name promotion on Multiple District websites; social media, name on banner and special recognition during the date of event.

Silver Sponsor: \$500 entitles 2 Ride tickets, 2 Tee-shirts, name on back of ride tee-shirts, name promotion on Multiple District websites; social media, name on banner and special recognition during the date of event.

Bronze Sponsor: \$250 entitles 1 Ride ticket, 1 Tee-shirt, name on back of ride Tee-shirt, 1 lunch ticket, name on banner and special recognition during the date of event.

*Font size varies based on the sponsorship level

Thank you for your support for a great cause...

“Transform today’s ideas into tomorrow’s cures!”

Any questions please email to RideForSight@griftonLionsClub.org