



# EYE CATCHER

Summer/Fall 2024 Volume 55 No. 1



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Welcome message from new MLERF president, Bev Dillon of the Bridgewater Lions Club

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See what the Lions of Massachusetts have been doing to support cutting-edge vision research.

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## President's Message

Dear Fellow Lions and Leos,

It is such an honor to serve as the 73<sup>rd</sup> President of Massachusetts Eye Research Fund. Your faith in my leadership to guide MLERF this coming year, and my ability to follow in the footsteps of our outstanding predecessors, means so much. I have some very big shoes to fill. John has been a force for the last 12 months despite his serious health struggles. Immediate Past President, John Riemer, led the corporation to new levels of engagement and forward progress with both the institutions and technology. Additionally, he had the vision to select outstanding committee leaders who have been instrumental in revising our Policy Manual, Operational Infrastructure Manual, and By Laws, to bring us in-line with our mission and values.

I will continue to echo IPP John's stance that all "Directors are expected to be active participants on the Board, and it is not acceptable to sit back and do nothing." MLERF members have been assigned to committees, and committee chairs have been appointed. It is imperative that all MLERF members participate in the meetings of the committees to which they have been assigned. This is the only way to ensure that our mission is successfully carried out.

This year's calendar of meetings and visitation has been set, but as always, it is subject to change. Please make sure that you watch for emails regarding schedule changes. It is important that all MLERF members attend our board meetings and visitations. The executive board brings important matters to the directors that require discussion and voting and we need you there. Equally important are our visitations to the institutions. The institutions are using our grant money to change the future for those suffering from vision impairment and disease, and by attending these visitations, we are showing our support for the researchers and their very important research. Please make every effort to attend.

The Second Medical Opinion Program is going strong. This program provides access to world-renowned experts from the six research institutions that we work with. This program is for Lions, friends, and family members



# \$ 919,492

who may be suffering with serious vision problems, and have visited their vision specialist prior and they are looking for another opinion. Each District has a representative to assist with these referrals and they are included in the committee list you received. The program allows those referred to be scheduled with a specialist-provider within a few weeks versus eight or nine months.

I am looking forward to visiting many clubs this year to thank them for all they do. I will be sharing all the exciting progress MLERF is making in its fight against preventative blindness. Without the dedication and commitment from our clubs, we wouldn't be able to do the amazing things we do. Thank you!!

One major project that I hope we can accomplish this year is to work with Long Range Planning to look at the structure of our Board of Directors and our Executive Board (officers) and recommend changes that will result in the most efficient running of our corporation. We want to make sure that the board has a solid contingency plan in place so that we can effectively and efficiently raise seed money going forward to support the researchers associated with our primary institutions: Boston Childrens' Hospital, Boston University, Joslin Diabetes Center, Massachusetts Eye & Ear, Schepens, and Tufts Medical Center.

We have raised close to one million dollars each recent year. I have a goal of 1.2 million dollars this year. We can do it!!

Thank you all again for your dedication and service.

Bev Dillon, PDG  
President





**HONORING IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT  
JOHN R. RIEMER**

**June 5, 1953 – Aug 26, 2024**

Fellow Lions and Leos,

Lion John was a humanitarian, leader and friend to all who knew him. His remarkable life was filled with extraordinary moments, simple joys and service to others.

Lion John raised in Bristol Connecticut to loving parents and siblings. Lion John was a skilled athlete and had an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. After college, Lion John spent 25 years in marketing for the retail side of banking, and this experience let him to start his own business.

As Lion John wrote in his obituary, *“We were in business for 22 years and for the most part, I loved every minute of it. The true blessing of this business was it gave me the opportunity to work full time with the love of my life, my wife Marianna - a relationship that only grew stronger during our years of marriage. Marianna was my life-long best friend, strongest supporter, and my true angel. No man could have been luckier with a life-long companion.”*

But his accomplishments in business never overshadowed the most important aspect of his life – his love for people and his dedication to service...

*“Volunteering in service projects, that helped improve the quality of life of residents in our community was always something that Marianna and I actively sought out. First and foremost, our association with Lions Clubs International and through that, our engagement with the MA Lions Eye Research Fund, the MA Lions Low Vision Network, the Central MA Sight & Hearing Fund and our local Grafton Lions Club, gave us many satisfying opportunities to act on behalf of residents and successfully*

*provide them with results that have significantly improved their quality of life... I can't help but think what better way to use your "free" time than helping other people improve their quality of lives."*

Lion John had a smile that could light up a room. He was passionate and gentle, charismatic and funny. Lion John was the kind of man who would go out of his way to help others, even when he himself was in need. He taught us that the real measure of success is not what you have in your life, but who you have in your life. He found his greatest joy in the happiness of those he loved, and his greatest accomplishment in their success.

Lion John was a mentor. He taught us about resilience in the face of adversity, about the importance of following our passions, and about the beauty of life's simple pleasures. He had a special ability to make every person feel seen, heard, and valued. He could turn an ordinary day into an extraordinary one with his infectious laughter, his insightful conversations, and his boundless generosity. Lion John was a man of integrity, whose actions spoke louder than words.

Lion John – a beacon of light, a pillar of strength, and above all, a man who loved humanity with all his heart. His spirit lives on in each of us, in the lessons he taught us, in the love he shared.

Lion John will forever be missed, but his spirit will forever live on in our hearts.

If you would like to offer a remembrance, Lion John would be honored if you would send it to Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, c/o Dr. James Roth, 49 Stewart Terrace, Belmont, MA 02478.



John & Marianna enjoying lunch with Harvard Medical School Chair of Ophthalmology, Joan Miller, MD

# Ways You Can Support MLERF

## Direct Donation

**MLERF is a 501(c)3 tax exempt corporation.** You can donate directly to MLERF by visiting our website at [www.mlerfi.com](http://www.mlerfi.com) and click on the donation link in the upper right corner, or the How to Help link at the top. A check may be made payable to Mass Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc., c/o Treas. Dr. James Roth, 43 Stewart Terrace, Belmont, MA 02478. A donation can also be made to your local Lion's club, earmarked for MLERF, and have them forward the donation to the above address. Additionally, we have memorial/honorarium envelopes if you wish to honor someone special. See your district MLERF Director or officer for an envelope.

## President's Circle Pin \$20.00

Please consider joining the President's Circle and show your pride and support of MLERF with this beautiful President's Circle lapel pin. If 2000 Lions/Leos of Massachusetts purchase this pin that would be \$40,000 raised to help fight blindness. Can we afford not to purchase this pin? This small donation will help fund our annual grant goal of \$1,000,000.00 for our research institutions, who are looking to find cures for all blindness and vision-related diseases.



## Journey for Sight - Pennies for Sight

Another great way for our Lions/Leos to help support MLERF, is to place penny canisters in their communities or in their homes. The change you get back from your daily cup of coffee or that sandwich you buy at lunch, can change the vision of someone in need. These canisters are also a great way for our communities to learn about Lions, Leos and MLERF. Ask any MLERF Director about the canister program and they will get you everything you need.



## **Facebook Special Occasion Fundraiser**

**If half of the Lions/Leos in Massachusetts host a \$100 Special Occasion Fundraiser on Facebook we could raise about \$300,000 for MLERF.** It's easy to do, just login to your Facebook page, click on the fundraising link on the left and select raise money for a non-profit. Type in MLERF in the search bar and select Massachusetts Lions Eye Research. Edit the information in the left sidebar and click create. It's that simple...tell your fellow Lions/Leos, friends, family and co-workers! When your fundraiser is over, send an email to the MLERF President and Treasurer, with your name, your district, your club and the amount raised, and your club will be given credit for the donation.

## **IGive.com**

IGive.com is an easy fundraiser, which is similar to Amazon Smile. You create an account and choose MLERF as the non-profit you want to help, and IGive will donate a percentage of your total to MLERF.

## **MLERF DONATION “QR-CODE”**

The MLERF QR code can be used on all fundraising materials to help educate others and raise funds for MLERF. Just snap a picture of this QR Code with any cell phone that is connected to the internet, and you will be directed to the MLERF website. The website will provide more information about MLERF and how to make a donation to MLERF.



# 2024 – 2025 Calendar of Events



## 2024

		<b>February 14-16</b>	<b>33A Midwinter (Country Jamboree) Wellsworth Hotel</b> 14 Mechanic Street, Southbridge, MA (508) 765-8000
<b>September 17</b>	<b>E-Board Meeting – Zoom 6:30pm</b>		
<b>September 21</b>	<b>Full Board Meeting In-Person 10am Grafton Lions Pavilion</b> 68 Brigham Hill Road, Grafton, MA	<b>February 21-23</b>	<b>33K Midwinter (Knight of the Lion-hearted) Dedham Hilton</b> 25 Allied Dr., Dedham, MA (781) 329-7900
<b>September 28</b>	<b>District 33-S Walk for Sight</b> Buzzard's Bay Park 90 Main Street, Bourne, MA 10am - 5pm		
		<b>March 12</b>	<b>Boston Children's Hospital 6:30pm In-person</b>
<b>October 22</b>	<b>E-Board Meeting – Zoom 6:30pm</b>	<b>March 18</b>	<b>E-Board Meeting – Zoom 6:30pm</b>
<b>October 24</b>	<b>Full Board Meeting In-Person 6:30pm Restaurant 45</b> 45 Milford Street, Medway, MA	<b>March 27</b>	<b>Full Board Meeting – Zoom 6:30pm</b>
		<b>March 29</b>	<b>Polar Plunge Lake Pearl Lake Pearl Ballroom</b> Wrentham, MA
<b>November 1</b>	<b>Mass Eye &amp; Ear Celebrating 200 Years</b>		
<b>November 21</b>	<b>Full Board Meeting – Zoom 6:30pm</b>	<b>April 4-6</b>	<b>MD33 State Convention SeaCrest Oceanfront Hotel</b> 350 Quaker Road, N. Falmouth, MA
<b>December 1</b>	<b>Grant Proposals Due</b>		
<b>December 5</b>	<b>Full Board Meeting – Zoom 6:30pm</b>	<b>April 10</b>	<b>Boston University 6:30pm In-person</b>
<b>Dec. 15-22</b>	<b>Lions' Day at the Hanover Theater December 22, 2024 2pm A Christmas Carol fundraiser Hanover Theater</b> 2 Southbridge Street, Worcester Barre Lions for MLERF, etc.	<b>April 22</b>	<b>E-Board – Zoom 6:30pm</b>
		<b>April 24</b>	<b>Full Board Meeting In-Person 6:30pm</b>
		<b>May 22</b>	<b>Full Board Meeting In-Person 6:30pm</b> Doubletree by Hilton, Milford, MA
		<b>June 5</b>	<b>Joslin</b>
		<b>June 26</b>	<b>Full Board Meeting In-person 6:30pm</b>
		<b>July 4-8</b>	<b>International Convention Mexico City, Mexico</b>
		<b>August 2</b>	<b>MLERF Awards Banquet</b> Doubletree by Hilton 11 Beaver Street, Milford, MA 01757 12:00pm-4:00pm
<b>2025</b>			
<b>January 17-19</b>	<b>33S Midwinter (Fun &amp; Games) DoubleTree by Hilton</b> 287 Iyannough Rd, Hyannis, MA (508) 771-1700		
<b>January 31- February 2</b>	<b>33Y Midwinter (Margaritaville) Sheraton Springfield</b> One Monarch Place, Springfield, MA (413) 781-1010		
<b>February 7-9</b>	<b>33N Midwinter (TBD) Doubletree by Hilton</b> 123 Old River Road, Andover, MA 978-975-3600		



# Board of Directors

## Corporate Officers/Executive Committee

<b>PDG Beverly Dillon</b>	<b>33S President</b>
PDG Patricia Kalicki	33K 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President
PRC Brenda McPherson	33N 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President
Vacant	33 3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice President
PRC Robert Grover	33A Secretary
PDG Dr. James Roth	33K Treasurer
PCS John Riemer*	33A Immediate Past President

### **Assistant Treasurer (Non-Voting)**

Jeanne Farrow, PDG, PP 33N

### **Directors District Governors**

Thom Swift, 33Y

Denise Andrews 33A

Mark Alexander, 33N

Diana Faust, 33K

Michael Middleton, 33S

### **1<sup>st</sup> Vice District Governor**

Mary Swift, 33Y

Vacant, 33A

Katie Sirois, PCST, 33N

Anthony Baliola, 33K

Steve Garran, 33S

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice District Governors (Non-Voting)**

Vacant, 33Y

Mark Bucchino 33A

Laura Ward, 33N

Kristine Shanahan, 33K

Jesse Armell, 33S

### **Directors - 2025**

Jim Allen, PCST 33Y

Lionel Carbonneau, PCST 33A

Beth Piosos, PhD, 33N

Irza Almonor, 33K

Lorraine Thompson, PCST 33S

### **Directors - 2026**

Maryann Bankman, PZC 33Y

Barry Alman, PZC 33A

Jeralyn O'Connor, PCST 33N

Debbie Hayes, PGD 33K

Patricia Salvas, PCST 33S

### **Directors - 2027**

Kellie Hastedt, 33Y

Maureen Wojnar, 33A

Alice Gaudet, PCST 33N

Tim Munn, PCS 33K

Kathy Salem, PDG 33S

### **Directors - 2028**

Jeffery Turner, IPDG 33Y

Marianna Riemer, PDG, 33A

Linda Erwich 33N

Dr. Deb Wayne, PDG 33K

Deb Howland, PCST 33S

### **Parliamentarians**

PID, PP Charles Kostro

PDG, PP Wayne Smith, Chairperson

### **Eye Catcher Reporters**

Debbie Hayes, PDG 33K, Editor/Publisher

Maryann Bankman, 33Y

Denise Andrews, PDG2 33A

Beth Piosos, PhD 33N

Debbie Hayes, PDG 33K

Wayne Smith, PDG 33S

# 2024 - 2025 Committees

## AWARDS - MLERF

Y James Allen, PCST  
Y Maryann Bankman, PZC  
A Marianna Riemer, PDG, (Chairperson)  
A Maureen Wojnar  
N Jeralyn O'Connor, PCST  
N Alice Gaudet, PCST  
K Debbie Hayes, PDG  
S Kathy Salem, PDG  
S Pat Salvas, PCST

## AWARDS BANQUET

A Barry Alman  
N Katie Siroios, 1VDG  
K Debbie Hayes, PDG  
S Kathy Salem, PDG, (Chairperson)  
S Pat Salvas, PCST

Hospitality Room - Paula Lehtola, Bridgewater  
Academy & Bridgewater Lions Club

## CLUB COORDINATION

Y Jeff Turner, PDG  
Y James Allen, PCST  
Y Mary Swift, 1VDG  
A Marianna Riemer, PDG  
A Barry Alman  
A Mark Bucchino 2VDG  
N Katie Siroios, 1VDG  
N Laura Ward, 2VDG  
N Beth Piocas  
K Tim Munn  
K Anthony Baliola 1VDG  
K Kristine Shanahan, 2VDG  
K Irza Almonor  
S Steve Garran, 1VDG, (Chairperson)  
S Jesse Armell, 2VDG  
S Pat Salvas, PCST  
S Deb Howland, PCST

## GRANTS

A Bill Johnson  
N Brenda MacPherson (Co-Chair)  
N Linda Erwich  
N Beth Piocos, PhD  
K Dr. James Roth, PDG, PP\*\* (Ex-officio)  
K Dr. Deborah "Deb" Wayne, PDG  
S Kathy Salem, PDG, (Co-Chair)  
S Martin Middleton, PDG  
S Deb Howland, PCST

## LONG RANGE PLANNING

Y Jean Wilder, PCC,PDG PP, (Co-Chair)  
A Lionel Carbonneau  
A Marianna Riemer, PDG  
A Bill Johnson  
N Linda Erwich  
K Tim Munn, PCS  
S Kathy Salem, PDG  
All Past Presidents

## NOMINATING

Y Jean Wilder, PCC,PDG PP, (Co-Chair)  
Y Mary Swift, 1VDG  
N Katie Siroios, 1VDG  
K Anthony Baliola 1VDG  
S Steve Garran, 1VDG

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

Y Jeff Turner, PDG  
Y Kellie Hastedt  
A Mark Bucchino  
A Barry Alman  
N Laura Ward, 2VDG  
K Debbie Hayes, PDG  
K Kristine Shanahan, 2VDG  
K Tim Munn, PCS  
K Irza Almonor  
S Jesse Armell, 2VDG  
S Lorraine Thompson, PCST

# 2024 - 2025 Committees

## TRUST & ENDOWMENT

### Officers

President Bev Dillon, PDG  
Ex Officio - Treas. Dr. James Roth, PDG, PP\*\*  
Ex Officio - Asst. Treas. Jeanne Farrow, PDG, PP\*\*

### Term Expires June 2025

A Lionel Carbonneau, PCST  
N Brenda MacPherson, PRC (Clerk)  
K Ivette Mesmar, IPDG  
S Steve Garran, 2VDG

### Term Expires June 2026

Y Jeffrey Turner  
K Tim Munn, PCS  
S Wayne Smith, PDG, PP (Chairperson)



## Seeking 2<sup>nd</sup> Medical Opinions Through our MLERF Institutional Partners

### • Targets for help

- For matters related to children  
Boston Children's Hospital
- For matters related to diabetes  
Joslin Diabetes Center
- For matters related to vision and hearing
  1. Massachusetts Eye & Ear
  2. Boston Medical Center
  3. Tufts Medical Center

### • Information required from patient

- Name, address, and mobile phone number
- Date of birth
- Insurance plan and policy number
- Description of medical issue

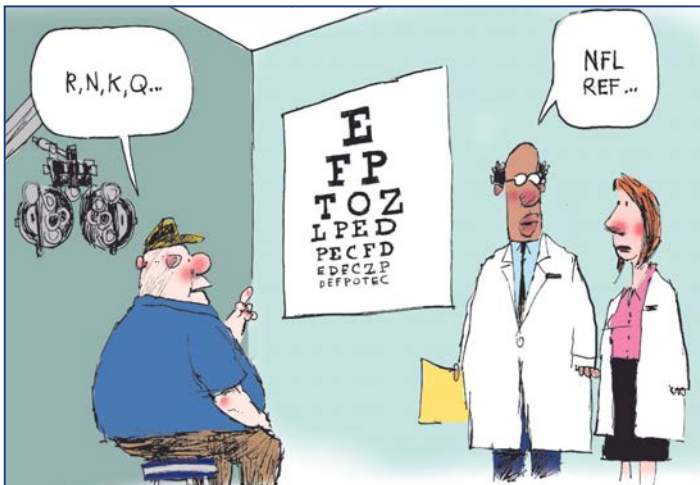
**All information should be passed on to your District rep**

### • MD33 District representatives

- District Y – PDG Jean Wilder – [jwmartinhl@yahoo.com](mailto:jwmartinhl@yahoo.com)
- District A – PDG Dick Ferrucci – [dick@wmrcradio.com](mailto:dick@wmrcradio.com)
- District N – PDG Jeanne Farrow – [lionjeanne33n@gmail.com](mailto:lionjeanne33n@gmail.com)
- District K – PDG Dr. Deborah Wayne – [doctoradeb@comcast.net](mailto:doctoradeb@comcast.net)
- District S – PDG Kathy Salem – [kathrynsalem@gmail.com](mailto:kathrynsalem@gmail.com)

### • Process to schedule appointment

- District rep will pass on patient information above to MLERF President John Riemer or Dr. Jim Roth to determine the right place to seek a 2<sup>nd</sup> opinion appointment
- They will schedule an appointment with the hospital
- Hospital will communicate the specifics (date, time place, Doctor's Name) of the appointment to the patient



# 2024 - 2025 MLERF OFFICERS

The Massachusetts Eye Research Fund, Inc. (MLERF) held its July meeting along with the installation of Directors and Officers at the Grafton Lions Club Pavilion at 10AM Saturday, July 27. MLERF was founded in 1951 by Massachusetts Lions when they became aware that almost 3,000 premature babies were losing sight every year in what was called “baby blindness”. Massachusetts Lions acted quickly and in 1952 created MLERF, which is an official statewide Lions project. Since its creation, The Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund has given out close to \$42 million in research grants to the Eye Research Laboratories of Massachusetts. Lions in the Commonwealth are very proud of the fact that every penny donated to MLERF for research since 1952 has been given back in research grants. These grants are only given for pure research and are not used for purchasing equipment of any kind.

Under the leadership of 2023-24 President John Riemer PCST, MLERF Directors took a hard look at what the fund has been doing these past few years and made necessary changes to hold Directors more accountable and to be certain that MLERF is doing what it was originally tasked to do. It was a tremendous amount of work, but the committees involved did some great work and the future of MLERF and its funding of the research institutions looks excellent moving forward. President Riemer also gave a glowing report on how successful the Second Medical Opinion program has been with its Institutional partners. In an emotional exchange, the reins were handed over to MLERF’s 59th President Bev Dillon PDG.

In a brief dignified ceremony, Past President Dick Ferrucci, installed all Directors, all Officers, and the Executive Board for 2024-25. President Bev Dillon took over the meeting and conducted the regularly scheduled meeting of the MLERF Board of Directors. New members were introduced, Committee Chairs were announced, and reports were made by a variety of members. The future of The Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund is bright. On Sunday, August 3, 2024, grants will be formally presented to the researchers and the representatives of those research institutions

at MLERF’s 72nd Annual Lions Appreciation and Awards Ball which will be held at The Wellsworth Hotel & Conference Center in Southbridge, Mass. The Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund is dedicated to fighting the battle against preventable blindness and will not rest until that goal has been reached.



## 2024-2025 MLERF Officers

Secretary, PRC Bob Grover (A)  
Exec. Dir., PDG Kathy Salem (S)  
President, PDG Bev Dillon (S)  
Treasurer, PDG Dr. Jim Roth (K)  
IPP John Riemer\* (A)  
2nd VP, Brenda MacPherson (N)  
1st VP, PDG Pat Kalicki (K)  
Asst. Tres., PDG Jeanne Farrow (N)

# 2024 - 2025 MLERF OFFICERS



PCST Pat Salvas (S), DG, Michael Middleton (S), 1VDG Steve Garren (S), Linda Erwich (N), Beth Pocos (N) & Barry Alman (A)



DG Diana Faust (K), 2VDG Mark Bucchino (A), 1VDG Kristine Shanahan (K), Tim Munn (K), 2VDG Anthony Baliola (K), Dr. Deb Wayne (K) & PDG Marianna Riemer (A)



Great tattoo on Mark Bucchino's calf



PDG Dickie Ferrucci (A)  
Installing the new officers



PID Joyce Middleton  
District S



IPP John Riemer (A), PDG, Wayne Smith (S) & Ben Ellis (S)



Mike Gmitter (N)  
Beth Pocos (N)

# News From the Districts

## District 33Y



**Maryann Bankman PZC**

34 Pleasant Street  
Holyoke MA 01040  
(H) 413 535 8533  
mtmnovajo@aol.com

Wow, it does not seem possible we are more than halfway through 2024, and 2 months into this Mass Lions Eye Research year. I hope your eyes have been able to catch some great views of summer sunrises, sunsets, and early morning misty fog rising up from ponds, rivers and lakes. Were you able to view some of the Summer Olympics in Paris? Or view the meteor shower in mid-August?

We had two representatives from District 33Y who ventured down under to Melbourne, Australia to attend the Lions International Convention. DG Thom Swift and 1st VDG Mary Swift said they had a wonderful time and it was a wonderful place with wonderful people. I've been to Australia and the sights to see there are unbelievably awesome. You just need time to adjust to the jet lag.

The convention served as a training event for them as DG and 1st VDG. Mary said the International Parade was amazing and it had good representation from the Massachusetts Lions. The Plenary sessions were inspiring and motivating. The focus was on service projects with the added benefit of acquiring new members due to visibility and wanting to be part of a service organization.

MLERF celebrated the end of its 23-24 year with its 73rd Annual Grants Presentation and Awards Program on Saturday, August 3rd at the Wellsworth Hotel in Southbridge. There were 130 attendees, 11 were from District 33Y. We celebrated with IPP John Riemer for having a great year, with MLERF raising \$1,119,492. We thank you for all your hard work and dedication for raising the grant monies to be distributed to the six research institutes: Mass Eye & Ear, Schepens, Joslin,

Boston University, Boston Childrens Hospital and Tufts. Each Grant recipient received \$130,000. Boston Children's Hospital also received the Presidential Grant for \$200,000, which includes a matching grant from LCIF to be used to purchase an OCT camera. The monies donated are held one year and donated the following summer. Our corporation uses the interest to run the business.

DG Jeffrey Turner accepted the District Governor Award for 33Y's donations for a total of \$81,785. Seven District Y awards were given to clubs for donating over \$5000. Special kudos to the Southwick Lions for their hard work and dedication to donate \$20,079, the highest donating club from 33Y. Eleven clubs from other districts in our state reached the historic donation of over hundreds of thousands of dollars for the first time. The highest honor this year went to District 33S Acushnet Lions for donating \$720,660. What an achievement! The cumulative total for lifetime donations for District 33Y is \$3,734,505.

Southwick Lions have annual Breakfasts with Santa and Easter Pancake breakfasts, food booths at the Southwick Firemans Carnival and the Wick Motor Cross national motorcycle races. The club has joint ventures with the recreational department and they have an annual Antique appraisal program. Their largest fundraiser is a very successful bottle/can recycling program. Southwick Lion Paul Connally said this started twenty years ago and has morphed into a highly successful project. He and Lion Gordon Jones each spend about 20 hours a week recycling. Eight other members help on Thursdays and Sundays, for a weekly total of more than 60 volunteer hours. Southwick does not provide town trash pick-up and recycling, so the Lions creatively took advantage of this and placed two Lion's recycling sheds at the transfer station, one at a member's home, and another in the parking area of a small mall, which is filled daily by a local Italian restaurant. Originally the Lions were creative in working deals with the local liquor stores to pay 6 cents a can, but because of Covid liquor stores stopped accepting recyclables. This in turn provided a boon to the Lions recycling. The Lions have been so successful

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# News From the Districts

## District 33A



**1VDG, Denise Andrews**

119 Milk Street  
Fitchburg, MA 01420  
978-227-8450  
dacst33a@yahoo.com

Lions of the Awesome District,

Happy Fall! It's a time of shorter days, cooler temperatures, beautiful colors, fall festivals, harvesting and more. Most important, it's a time of thanksgiving for all that we have and to show that thanks by helping those in need. As Lions, we do not need a season to help others, we do that every day - "Where There is a Need, There's a Lion".

What a great year our District had in donations! We raised a total of \$101,667 for MLERF. This is amazing and something you should all be proud of. All clubs who made donations will receive or have received an Appreciation Certificate from MLERF. At the annual Awards Banquet held in August there were five clubs who were recognized for giving \$5,000 or more. They were: Millbury (\$24,100), Milford (\$10,400), Mendon (\$7,950), Grafton (\$5,890) and Harvard (\$5,700). There were three clubs who received a Special Award for "Reaching Historical Donations of Hundreds of Thousands for the First Time". These clubs were: Shrewsbury (\$202,775), Athol (\$101,300) and Fitchburg Community (\$100,193). Congratulations one and all and thank you for your generosity and continued support, it is greatly appreciated!

At each Banquet the new President of MLERF presents a President's Award to someone that goes above and beyond for eye research. This year's President, PDG Bev Dillon, presented this Award to Immediate Past President John Riemer who has since passed away. John, despite what he was going through with his health condition, never stopped giving and doing for others. Our Zone 2 Chair Sue Ash wrote the following tribute to John and I feel it is fitting that I include it in this article. It is as follows:

"Every so often you meet someone very special. Some-

one who is the first to extend a hand when you need help; someone who extends a hand when

he knows you need help without your asking. District 33A was blessed to have had that someone in their midst: John Riemer. His accolades precede him: MLERF President; Grafton Lions President; 33A Cabinet Secretary; Sight & Hearing President; MA Lions Low Vision Co-Coordinator; \$10K MLERF Founder's Award in his name; Lion of the Year; Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow; Joseph J. Camarda award winner. The list is endless.

There are few in MD 33 who did not know him. John, we will miss you greatly! Rest in Peace our good friend!"

This being the beginning of a new year, 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.

If you would like to learn more about our Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, please invite one of our Directors to your meeting; this is one of their responsibilities. Our Directors are PCST Lionel Carbonneau, ZC Barry Alman, PDG Marianna Riemer and Lion Maureen Wojnar. Also, DG Denise Andrews, 1st VDG Andrew Keane and 2nd VDG Mark Bucchino serve as Directors. Do not hesitate to reach out to any one of them, they will be more than happy to visit and talk about MLERF.

In conclusion, I just want to say thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Eye Catcher reporter once again. It is a position that I truly enjoy. I wish you all a very successful year and ask that you continue to support MLERF this year as you have always done. Thank you so much for all that you do in service to others; it means a lot!

In service and friendship,

DG Denise Andrews

# News From the Districts

## District 33N



**Beth Picos, PhD**  
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epicos@gmail.com

Happy Fall Lions of District N!

I would first like to congratulate all of the Clubs in Massachusetts for their support of MLERFi last year. The Clubs below earned top honors in raising funds for 20203-2024.

District	Milestone Club	Amount Raised
33S	Acushnet	\$720,660
33N	Lexington	\$713,624
33N	Woburn Host	\$701,844
33K	Waltham	\$518,639
33S	Somerset	\$425,062
33N	Woburn Leos	\$314,116
33S	Seekonk	\$306,000
33S	Yarmouth Leos	\$304,462
33A	Shrewsbury	\$202,775
33K	Stoughton	\$101,616
33S	New Bedford Host	\$100,250

### Eye Research Word of the Day: Orthoptist

Orthoptists help detect, diagnose, and treat ocular conditions having to do with binocular vision (how the two eyes work together) and ocular motility (eye muscles and movement). They specialize in eye misalignment (strabismus, more on this below), lazy eye (amblyopia), double vision (diplopia), and orthoptic treatment.

MLERF funds Boston Children's Hospital research in these areas. For example, our recent funding of research on biomarkers to enable early intervention for lazy eye on children is showing a lot of promise. Why is early intervention important?

Babies and children with strabismus should be checked right away to prevent amblyopia, which results in loss of vision and depth perception, due to the misaligned eye. Amblyopia can occur even if the eye is only slightly misaligned because a developing child's brain will stop communicating with that eye, shutting it off.

Unfortunately, it isn't always easy for parents to tell if a child's eyes are misaligned, particularly in those children with a mild case of strabismus. If a child is showing any of the following signs and symptoms of strabismus, an appointment for an eye exam with an ophthalmologist need to be scheduled:

- During the first three months of life, the eyes are wandering outward all the time, or the eyes are crossed inward.
- After 3 months of age, one or both of eyes is wandering out or crossing in.
- Tilting of the head in order to effectively line up the eyes to use them together or squinting one eye, especially in bright sunlight, to block out a double image resulting from the misaligned eyes pointing in different directions
- Red eye reflection in one eye
- When a sibling has strabismus

[Reference: <https://www.childrenshospital.org/conditions/strabismus-and-amblyopia>]

MLERF not only funds research, but we also enable second opinion consultation for those in need of one.

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# News From the Districts

## District 33K



**PDG Deb Hayes**

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Millis, MA 02054  
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Email:  
debbieh1212@hushmail.com

Happy Fall!

Is there anything better than the sights and sounds, colors and smells of autumn in New England? Football games, kids trick or treating through crunching leaves, crisp mornings, warm afternoons, and evenings snuggled up in a blanket with your favorite warm beverage.

Autumn is also the time when families and friends gather together to celebrate Thanksgiving and give thanks for their blessings. And I, as a director of MLERF, would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of the **SPECIAL K** Lions, for your dedication to supporting your communities, and for your unwavering support of MLERF. Every Club and every person who donates to MLERF is contributing to changing the future for those with eye disease, blindness and vision impairment. Every cent you donate goes to funding cutting-edge research that will one day bring sight to the blind, better vision to those with eye disease, and hope for all suffering from vision impairment. Thanking for everything you do to make the future brighter for all.

As the new Lions year kicks off, I would like you to keep immediate past president of MLERF, John Reimer in your thoughts and prayers. Lion John bravely fought through an uphill battle against pancreatic cancer for more than 2 years. Lion John was not only a close friend to so many, he was the true embodiment of strength, courage, and resilience. Lion John was a Lions Lion. He was an inspiration and leader. Though his absence leaves a deep void in our hearts, his unwavering Lions spirit remains a constant source of inspiration for all.

The next several months will have all of us busy with the Holidays and ringing in the new year. Our Clubs will be in overdrive hosting breakfast get togethers with Santa,

Christmas Tree sales, meat raffles and Super Bowl squares, and all kinds of events with the hope of raising funds for all of our wonderful charities. If you or your Club are struggling to come up with fundraising ideas, here are some great ideas courtesy of PDG Doreen Martel, to help you help MLERF.

Here are some simple fundraising options you can work on that involve very little work and can still make a huge difference for your Club. Here are a few of them:

**1. Partner with a Restaurant** — there are several restaurants around the area where they will give you a “night” to raise money. For example, Papa Gino’s offers organizations 20 percent of sales. The way this works is you pick a date, pass out flyers or coupons for patrons to hand in at the time of the order and 20 percent of what they spend is given back to you in the form of a check at the end of the event. Most of these events require a 501(c)(3) number, so make sure you reach out to MLERF to get this. This is also a great way for neighboring clubs to team up and encourage participation from numerous communities — three or four clubs promoting the same event on the same day can make a real difference.

**2. Penny Cannisters Distribution** — between now and Thanksgiving consider reaching out to your local stores and shops and ask them if you can put a penny cannister on the counter to collect **Pennies for Sight**. Ask if you can leave the canister at the store until after the new year, but remember to check on them regularly. Write up a press release to let your community know why and where they can find the canisters, and maybe make it a challenge for your individual community to hit a specific dollar amount. Brag about the purpose of the canisters on Facebook, hit your “Wicked Local” pages to announce the challenge and get the word out. Remember, pennies turn into dollars and every dollar makes a difference.

**4. Get a Double Hit** — everyone wants to involve their individual community so team up with your local food pantry and see if you can combine a food drive with another fundraising event. Perhaps you can host a craft sale or bake sale to raise money for MLERF and en-

Continued on page 20

# News From the Districts

## District 33S



**PDG Wayne Smith**  
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Abington, MA 02351  
781-878-3045  
subwps@aol.com

Over one hundred years ago President Teddy Roosevelt said, "Before I care how much you know, I want to know how much you care."

For me that question was always answered by MLERF President John R. Riemer from the first day I met John at a MLERF meeting some seven years ago. His caring for humanity and eye care was always evident. After years of active participation as a director John said that it was a privilege and honor to serve as our 57th President. He encouraged active participation from all Board members and his encouragement was exceptional.

John's enthusiasm for providing access for second medical opinions from the world renowned experts, at the institutions we support, was a top priority for him. The success of this program had a lot to do with his leadership.

You could tell Marianna was the love of John's life. As he so often said. Always there to help each other and Lions appreciate their devotion.

At our 72nd Annual Lions Appreciation and Awards Banquet Saturday August 3, 2024 President John Riemer acknowledged Club contributions and recognized the researchers that received our grants. For our District 33S over \$5,000 in donations were Raynham \$5,185, Rehoboth Anawan \$5,900, South Attleboro Village \$6,731, East Bridgewater \$6,941, Lakeville \$7,500, Fairhaven \$7,725, West Bridgewater \$7,926, Mattapoissett \$9,225 and Rehoboth \$9,300. Over \$10,000 were South Attleboro \$10,557, Dighton \$14,313, Provincetown \$14,780, Seekonk \$15,000, and Bridgewater \$18,113. Over \$20,000 were Abington \$21,136, Plymouth \$22,590, Acushnet \$28,255, and Somerset \$29,100. The largest

Donation was Easton with \$36,779.

Clubs reaching historical levels of hundreds of thousands for the first time were New Bedford Host \$100,250, Somerset \$425,062, and Acushnet \$720,660.

Our total contribution for our District 33S was \$335,565. The largest contribution in our Multiple District. We could not have accomplished this without all the contributions from all of our Lions Clubs in our District.

We are off to a good start with over \$25,000 raised at 33S Walk Festival held Saturday September 28 and more donations to follow. Vice District Governor Steve Garran reported that this was a reimagined event this year with incredible music, some of the best food from two diverse food trucks that you could imagine, service projects, a speaker from the Cape and Islands Veterans Outreach Center and many great community connections.

Steve said his core committee of Lions Pat Salvas, Mandy McHugh and Meghan Garren spent countless hours planning the event and were there for 12 hours on Saturday. In addition Lions Debbie Howland, Denise Wilkins, Pat Bonneau, Pat Allard, Judy Hebert, Chris Plonka, Roland Grenier, Nathan Garran, Larry Salvas, and Jesse Armell helped immensely.

This was a true team effort, according to Steve, that produced amazing results and shows what we can accomplish when we work together. All the Lions that came, donated or participated in any fashion a profound Thank You. Put this on your calendar for next year.

President John Riemer wrote his own obituary, as a celebration of his life. In it he said, "If you would like to offer a remembrance, I would be honored if you would send it to Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, c/o Dr. James Roth, 49 Stewart Terrace, Belmont, MA 02478 or Our Lady of Hope at St. James Parish at 89 Main St. S. Grafton, MA 01560. May God bless you all and thanks for being part of my life."

Yours in Lionism,

Wayne

# District 33Y Continued

for all you do with donating your time and your work with projects and fundraising events.

I filled in for President Jean at the 33Y District Advisory meeting on September 11th and did an MLERF presentation and distributed several more awards. I will be visiting clubs soon to talk about MLERF and distribute more recognition awards and to encourage interest in being an MLERF Director. We currently have 1 Director position open. Please consider this opportunity for involvement with this amazing organization. The meeting with research groups provides a wonderful learning experience. The opportunity to meet with Lions from other clubs and districts to network and share information about club fundraisers, projects and events is gratifying. Please contact me if you might be interested or would like more information.

Keeping visibility of Lions in Massachusetts and MLERF is so important. We need all the help we can get with fundraising projects and events. Agawam Lions and West Springfield Lions were again very evident with their food booths at the Big E event in September. Northampton Lions will be holding their Annual Ski/Skate sale on Saturday, December 2nd at Smith Vocational School in Northampton. If you have MLERF fundraising activities coming up let me know and I can include information in the next Eye Catcher newsletter.

Thank You Again for All You Do!

Lion Maryann

# District 33N Continued

## Seeking 2nd Medical Opinions through our MLERF Institutional Partners

For matters related to children: Boston Children's Hospital For matters related to diabetes: Joslin Diabetes Center For matters related to vision and hearing: Massachusetts Eye & Ear, Boston Medical Center, Tufts Medical Center	Information required from patient: Name, address, and mobile phone number Date of birth Insurance plan and policy number Description of medical issue
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All information should be passed on to your District reps who will pass on patient information to MLERF President & Board, will then determine the right place to seek a 2nd opinion appointment. They will schedule an appointment with the hospital. Hospital will communicate the specifics (date, time, place, Doctor's Name) of the appointment to the patient.

# District 33K Continued

local food pantry and see if you can combine a food drive with another fundraising event. Perhaps you can host a craft sale or bake sale to raise money for MLERF and encourage attendees to bring a non-perishable item for your local food pantry, drop off coats for our annual coat drives, or encourage them to bring a new toy for Toys for Tots program. Get creative and there is no limit to the impact your efforts could have in your community.

Each of these events offers you the opportunity to expend very little effort and make a big difference in your community and with MLERF. Additionally, they help raise awareness of all the effort your Club brings to helping those in need. These events also have the potential of helping grow your membership which means you have more hands to continue doing the great work you are already doing.

Get creative and think outside the box — check and see what talents the members in your club have and find an event that is unique to your community and let's see what we can do this quarter to raise awareness of your Club as well as support Mass Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

Don't forget, if you need a speaker for your Club's meeting, or you're looking for a speaker for a fundraising event, reach out to me, or one of the other MLERF directors and we will connect you to someone who will come to your club and speak to all the ways MLERF offers assistance to those who face visual challenges and the great work the researchers are able to do with the grants we provide each year thanks to the hard work of our Lions Clubs across District 33K.

We truly are "Special K" and when we work together there is nothing we cannot do. Let's get out there and make a big splash and have some fun raising extra money, promote our clubs, and make a difference in our communities.

Wishing all of you a wonderful Holiday Season, and a very Happy & Healthy New Year. Thank you for all you do.

Yours in Lionism,  
PDG Deb



“I wish you'd have made your appointment a little sooner.”

# 73rd MLERF Awards Banquet

On Saturday, August 3, 2024, The Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc. (MLERF) held its [73rd Annual Lions Appreciation and Awards Banquet](#) at The Wellsworth Hotel and Conference Center in Southbridge, Mass. MLERF was founded in 1951 by Massachusetts Lions when they became aware that almost 3,000 premature babies were losing sight every year in what was termed “baby blindness”. A substantial grant from Lions Clubs throughout Massachusetts allowed researchers to use their laboratories and their expertise to study and to solve the problem.

Since being voted the Massachusetts Lions official statewide project in 1952, Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund (MLERF) has given out over \$42 million in research grants to the Eye Research Laboratories of Mass. MLERF is very proud that 100% of the monies donated by Lions Clubs for research since 1952 has been spent on research grants. These grants are only given for pure research and no funds are used for equipment or brick and mortar projects.

After a delightful lunch, 2023-2024 MLERF President John Riemer, along with 2024-2025 MLERF President Bev Dillon welcomed the 160 Lions, Researchers, and guests in attendance. It was a very special day for MLERF. It is the one day of the year where the Corporation (MLERF) says “thank you” to all of the Lions Clubs throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, recognizes some very important individuals, and gives checks to the researchers and the institutions that have been tasked with carrying out the mission of MLERF.

The 2024-25 MLERF Officers, along with the Directors, were introduced. The Officers and Directors are appreciative of every penny that is donated to MLERF. All Mass. Lions Clubs that donated to MLERF were called, recognized, and given Certificates of Appreciation. Plaques were given to recognize clubs that donated \$5,000 or more to MLERF. Clubs with lifetime donations in the hundreds of thousands of dollars were given special recognition.

The most emotional moment of the afternoon was the presentation by The Executive Board of Directors of a Founder’s Award for \$10,000 to MLERF in the name of Immediate Past President John Riemer. His amazingly successful year as President of MLERF was capped off by this special presentation.

Mass. Eye and Ear Infirmary, Schepens Eye Research Institute, Tufts University School of Medicine New England Eye Center, Boston University Medical School, Joslin Diabetes Center, and Boston Children’s Hospital were each presented with a check for \$130,000 for research grants that were approved by the Board of Directors of MLERF for the 2024-25 fiscal year. A very special thank you to the Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF) which helped to fund a Presidential Grant of \$200,000 to Boston Children’s Hospital. The Mission of Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc. is dedicated to funding research to preserve and restore sight for people affected by vision loss and to eliminate preventable blindness. MLERF will not rest until that mission has been fulfilled.

# 73rd MLERF Awards Banquet



## SIGHT AWARD RECIPIENT

Dr. Lloyd Paul Aiello, MD, PhD, Professor of Ophthalmology,  
Joslin Diabetes Center



Dr. Lloyd Aiello, PDG Mariana Riemer, President John Riemer and 1VP Pat Kalicki

## SPECIAL CLUB AWARDS CLUBS REACHING HISTORICAL DONATION LEVELS

### DISTRICT 33S DG DEBORAH HORNER

Acushnet	\$720,660
New Bedford Host	\$100,250
Somerset	\$425,000
Seekonk	\$306,000

### DISTRICT 33N DG ELIZABETH PETTIS

Lexington	\$713,624
Woburn Host	\$701,844
Woburn Middlesex	\$314,116

### DISTRICT 33K DG IVETTE MESMAR

Stoughton	\$101,616
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### DISTRICT 33A DG CURT JAMESON

Shrewsbury	\$202,775
Athol	\$101,300
Fitchburg Community	\$100,193

## DISTRICT GOVERNOR AWARDS

33S DG DEBORAH HORNER ..... \$335,565

33K DG IVETTE MESMAR ..... \$205,059

33N DG ELIZABETH PETTIS ..... \$195,415

33A DG CURT JAMESON ..... \$101,667

33Y DG JEFFREY TURNER ..... \$81,785



*Please give a special thank you to  
President John  
for a truly remarkable and memorable year!*



# 73rd MLERF Awards Banquet



DG Deb Horner, Dist. S



2VDG Kristine Shanahan on behalf of  
DG Ivette Mesmar, Dist. K



1VDG Mark Alexander on behalf of  
DG Liz Pettis, Dist. N



DG Jeff Turner, Dist. Y



DG Curt Jameson, Dist. A



Executive Director Bob Grover

# 73rd MLERF Awards Banquet



2024 Presidential Grant to Boston Children's Hospital



President John with PID L. Doug Sime



Easton Lions Club  
Dist. S



Plymouth Lions Club  
Dist. S



Bridgewater Lions Club  
Dist. S



West Bridgewater Lions Club  
Dist. S



# 73rd MLERF Awards Banquet



Rochester Lions Club  
Dist. S



Lynn Shoe City Lions Club  
Dist. N



Ashland Lions Club  
Dist. K



Holliston Lions Club  
Dist. K



Waltham Lions Club  
Dist. K



Medway Lions Club  
Dist. K

# 73rd MLERF Awards Banquet



Wrentham Lions Club  
Dist. K



Medfield Lions Club  
Dist. K



Framingham Lions Club  
Dist. K



BU Eye Assoc. Lions Club  
Dist. K



Northampton Lions Club  
Dist. Y



Ludlow Lions Club  
Dist. Y

# 73rd MLERF Awards Banquet



Mendon Lions Club  
Dist. A



Harvard Lions Club  
Dist. A



Grafton Lions Club  
Dist. A



Barre Lions Club  
Dist. A



Lexington Lions Club  
Dist. N



Belmont Lions Club  
Dist. N

# 73rd MLERF Awards Banquet



Pittsfield Lions Club  
Dist. Y



President Placque presented to outgoing President John Riemer by incoming President, Bev Dillon



2023 -2024 MLERF Board of Directors



# 73rd MLERF Awards Banquet



DG Jeff Turner, Dist. Y



# District Y Donations

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

### DISTRICT "Y"

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Jouney for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Adams	2,600.00				2,300.00		2,300.00	2,300.00
Agawam	5,150.00			150.00	5,000.00		5,000.00	5,150.00
Agawam Lioness	0.00						0.00	0.00
Amherst	0.00						0.00	0.00
Amherst Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Ashfield	0.00						0.00	0.00
Belchertown	3,550.00				5,200.00		5,200.00	5,200.00
Charlemont	1,536.60						0.00	0.00
Cheshire	2,625.00				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
Cummington	0.00						0.00	0.00
Dalton	2,300.00			1,500.00	2,000.00		2,000.00	3,500.00
Deerfield	250.00				250.00		250.00	250.00
East Longmeadow	9,000.00			100.00	6,000.00		6,000.00	6,100.00
Easthampton	0.00	50.00		75.00			50.00	125.00
Granby	0.00				1,500.00		1,500.00	1,500.00
Granville-Tolland	0.00						0.00	0.00
Great Barrington	144.50						0.00	0.00
Greenfield	0.00						0.00	0.00
Hadley	0.00						0.00	0.00
Hampden	4,225.00						0.00	0.00
Hatfield	2,000.00				4,000.00		4,000.00	4,000.00
Hinsdale	1,300.00				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
Holyoke	4,000.00				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
Hoosac Valley Leo	250.00						0.00	0.00
Huntington	0.00						0.00	0.00
Lee	2,912.99				2,450.00		2,450.00	2,450.00
Ludlow	1,127.00			100.00			0.00	100.00
North Adams	300.00						0.00	0.00
Northampton	7,373.00	10.00	300.00		7,000.00		7,310.00	7,310.00
Pelham	860.00	40.00			2,600.00		2,640.00	2,640.00
Pittsfield	5,415.00	739.00	20.00	50.00	5,200.00		5,959.00	6,009.00
South Hadley	0.00						0.00	0.00
South Hadley Leos	0.00						0.00	0.00
Southampton	1,500.00				1,500.00		1,500.00	1,500.00
Southwick	12,157.18				20,078.76		20,078.76	20,078.76
Springfield 16 Acres	700.00	450.00			50.00		500.00	500.00

# District Y Donations

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

### DISTRICT "Y"

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Jouney for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Westfield Centennial	0.00						0.00	0.00
West Springfield	7,000.00				7,000.00		7,000.00	7,000.00
Wilbraham	0.00						0.00	0.00
Williamsburg	1,026.00				642.00		642.00	642.00
District 33Y	10216.58		20.00			1,410.00	20.00	1,430.00
Total Donations	89,518.85	1,289.00	340.00	1,975.00	76,770.76	1,410.00	78,399.76	81,784.76

# District A Donations

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

### DISTRICT "A"

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Jouney for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Ashburnham	1,273.00				500.00		500.00	500.00
Athol	205.89	108.77		25.00	3,237.59		3,346.36	3,371.36
Auburn	0.00						0.00	0.00
Barre	1,044.00		20.00	20.00	500.00		520.00	540.00
Berlin	0.00						0.00	0.00
Blackstone Valley Leo	1,700.00		3,000.00				3,000.00	3,000.00
Bolton	400.00				1,350.00		1,350.00	1,350.00
Boylston	4,000.00				4,500.00		4,500.00	4,500.00
Brookfields	3,400.00	31.00			1,600.00		1,631.00	1,631.00
Charlton	585.18				250.00		250.00	250.00
Clinton	0.00						0.00	0.00
Dudley	0.00						0.00	0.00
Fitchburg Community	506.00			200.00			0.00	200.00
Fitchburg Monty Tech L	300.00		1,200.00				1,200.00	1,200.00

# District A Donations

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

### DISTRICT "A"

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Jouney for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Gardner	1,058.18				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
Gardner Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Grafton	4,375.00		40.00		5,850.00		5,890.00	5,890.00
Harvard	4,112.70	700.00			5,000.00		5,700.00	5,700.00
Holden	0.00						0.00	0.00
Hopedale	0.00						0.00	0.00
Hubbardston	3,006.00				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
Leicester	250.00						0.00	0.00
Leominster	188.00				100.00		100.00	100.00
Lunenburg Turkey Hill	1,000.00				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
Mendon	6,675.29		2,000.00	450.00	5,500.00		7,500.00	7,950.00
Milford	10,138.00			400.00	10,000.00		10,000.00	10,400.00
Millbury	25,000.00			100.00	24,000.00		24,000.00	24,100.00
Monson	500.00			100.00			0.00	100.00
Montachusett Reg Leos	0.00						0.00	0.00
Northboro	0.00						0.00	0.00
Orange	115.00						0.00	0.00
Oxford	700.00				700.00		700.00	700.00
Palmer	25.00						0.00	0.00
Paxton	500.00			375.00			0.00	375.00
Petersham	1,500.00				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
Phillipston	474.39				300.00		300.00	300.00
Rutland	3,430.00			500.00	1,600.00		1,600.00	2,100.00
Shrewsbury	2,000.00			700.00	3,000.00		3,000.00	3,700.00
Southbridge	150.00	68.17		50.00	500.00		568.17	618.17
Spencer	0.00						0.00	0.00
Sturbridge	1,050.00				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
Sutton	3,500.00				3,500.00		3,500.00	3,500.00
Templeton	500.00				500.00		500.00	500.00
Uxbridge	300.00				300.00		300.00	300.00
Ware	300.00				500.00		500.00	500.00
Webster	0.00						0.00	0.00
West Brookfield	0.00						0.00	0.00
Westborough	273.00				650.00		650.00	650.00
Westminster	1,000.00						0.00	0.00
Winchendon	1,010.00			100.00	1,000.00		1,000.00	1,100.00
Worcester Cty NEADS	0.00						0.00	0.00
Worcester Host	0.00						0.00	0.00
District 33A	1,005.00		2,032.36	1,115.00	1,517.91	3,876.69	3,550.27	8,541.96
Total Donations	87,549.63	907.94	8,292.36	4,135.00	84,455.50	3,876.69	93,655.80	101,667.49



# District N Donations

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

### DISTRICT "N"

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Journey for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Acton	11,250.00			11,175.00	7,000.00		7,000.00	18,175.00
Amesbury	5,470.00			50.00	6,500.00		6,500.00	6,550.00
Ayer/Shirley	0.00						0.00	0.00
Billerica	3,750.00	1,000.00		25.00	2,500.00		3,500.00	3,525.00
Billerica Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Chelmsford	300.00	226.50					226.50	226.50
Concord	10,000.00			250.00	7,500.00		7,500.00	7,750.00
Danvers	100.00	25.00	25.00	100.00	300.00		350.00	450.00
Dracut	250.00			20.00			0.00	20.00
Dracut Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Dunstable/Tyngsboro	250.00						0.00	0.00
Essex	0.00						0.00	0.00
Essex County Reg.	0.00						0.00	0.00
Haverhill	7,776.93			150.00	3,000.00		3,000.00	3,150.00
Ipswich	550.00			825.00			0.00	825.00
Lawrence	0.00				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
Lawrence Latin	1,700.00		400.00				400.00	400.00
Lexington	22,025.00	150.00	21,500.00	25.00	5,000.00		26,650.00	26,675.00
Lowell	2,955.18	100.00	200.00	150.00	2,200.00		2,500.00	2,650.00
Lynn	5,224.00		40.00				40.00	40.00
Magnolia	0.00						0.00	0.00
Melrose	0.00						0.00	0.00
Merrimac	1,200.00			1,000.00			0.00	1,000.00
Methuen	250.00						0.00	0.00
Nahant	1,006.00				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
Newburyport	25,175.00	100.00	100.00		5,000.00		5,200.00	5,200.00
North Andover	727.00			400.00			0.00	400.00
Peabody	100.00	50.00			550.00		600.00	600.00
Pepperell	13,481.00	1,045.00			15,000.00		16,045.00	16,045.00
Reading	13,100.00				17,400.00		17,400.00	17,400.00
Salem	0.00						0.00	0.00
Salisbury	0.00						0.00	0.00
Saugus	6,900.00			135.00	15,000.00		15,000.00	15,135.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	3,525.00	327.00	785.00	760.00	2,740.00		3,852.00	4,612.00
Tewksbury	500.00			850.00	1,000.00		1,000.00	1,850.00
Townsend	2,925.00		100.00	150.00	1,000.00		1,100.00	1,250.00
Wakefield	4,785.00						0.00	0.00

# District N Donations

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

### DISTRICT "N"

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Journey for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Woburn Breakfast	11,319.33	90.00		250.00	16,000.00		16,090.00	16,340.00
Woburn Host	16,157.00		40.00		17,000.00		17,040.00	17,040.00
Woburn Middlesex	11,404.35	681.99	20.00	435.00	14,100.00		14,801.99	15,236.99
Woburn Leo	1,000.00				500.00		500.00	500.00
Woburn Leo Cubs	500.00				500.00		500.00	500.00
Wyoma	8,336.15			400.00	5,000.00		5,000.00	5,400.00
District 33N	401.46			150.00		3,320.00	0.00	3,470.00
<b>Total Donations</b>	<b>194,393.40</b>	<b>3,795.49</b>	<b>23,210.00</b>	<b>17,300.00</b>	<b>147,790.00</b>	<b>3,320.00</b>	<b>174,795.49</b>	<b>195,415.49</b>

# District K Donations

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

### DISTRICT "K"

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Journey for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Arlington	0.00						0.00	0.00
Ashland	17,463.00		835.00	325.00	18,000.00		18,835.00	19,160.00
Ashland Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Bellingham	1,750.00		1,280.00				1,280.00	1,280.00
Belmont	42,624.16	29.50	40.00		32,500.00	10,100.00	32,569.50	42,669.50
Blackstone	1,248.00		20.00		1,500.00		1,520.00	1,520.00
Boston Chinatown	1,006.00		40.00		1,000.00		1,040.00	1,040.00
Boston Host	150.00		20.00				20.00	20.00
BU Eye Assoc	1,430.00				1,320.00		1,320.00	1,320.00
Cambridge	286.00		296.00		100.00		396.00	396.00
Canton	0.00		420.00				420.00	420.00
Charlestown	0.00		20.00		500.00		520.00	520.00
Foxboro	4,710.00		1,415.00				1,415.00	1,415.00
Framingham	5,155.00	484.30	180.00		6,000.00		6,664.30	6,664.30
Franklin	250.00		6,636.00				6,636.00	6,636.00

Summer/Fall 2024 34

# District K Donations

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

### DISTRICT "K"

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

Greater Ashland	220.00			2,205.00			0.00	2,205.00
Himalayan NE	0.00				100.00		100.00	100.00
Hingham	0.00						0.00	0.00
Holliston	12,052.50		260.00		12,500.00		12,760.00	12,760.00
Holliston Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Hopkinton	750.00		300.00		500.00		800.00	800.00
Hull	0.00						0.00	0.00
Hyde Park	0.00		20.00				20.00	20.00
King Philip Leos	0.00						0.00	0.00
Malden	3,854.00		1,170.00	100.00	4,000.00		5,170.00	5,270.00
Marlboro	915.00		630.00	50.00	1,850.00		2,480.00	2,530.00
Medfield	7,045.00		560.00	100.00	6,600.00		7,160.00	7,260.00
Medford	100.00				300.00		300.00	300.00
Medway	11,092.00		390.00	120.00	11,600.00		11,990.00	12,110.00
Millis	10,006.00		20.00	4,185.00	4,200.00		4,220.00	8,405.00
Natick	745.00		60.00				60.00	60.00
NE College of Optometr	0.00						0.00	0.00
Newton	0.00						0.00	0.00
Norfolk	8,470.30		10,364.00		1,000.00		11,364.00	11,364.00
Norwood	0.00						0.00	0.00
Plainville	7,600.30		8,510.00				8,510.00	8,510.00
Quincy	6,500.00		20.00		7,000.00		7,020.00	7,020.00
Randolph	5,823.00	235.58	1,170.00	200.00	5,000.00		6,405.58	6,605.58
Sharon	1,068.00		60.00		1,050.00		1,110.00	1,110.00
Sherborn	2,384.00		60.00		2,500.00		2,560.00	2,560.00
Somerville	0.00						0.00	0.00
Stoughton	1,136.00		180.00	860.00	1,600.00		1,780.00	2,640.00
Stow	500.00		20.00		500.00		520.00	520.00
Sudbury	0.00						0.00	0.00
Walpole	2,000.00				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
Waltham	5,000.00				12,500.00		12,500.00	12,500.00
Wellesley Centennial	220.00		1,035.00				1,035.00	1,035.00
Westwood	0.00						0.00	0.00
Weymouth	1,200.00		60.00		1,000.00		1,060.00	1,060.00
Wrentham	10,141.31		7,485.00		500.00		7,985.00	7,985.00
District 33K	2,010.00				429.00	4,840.00	429.00	5,269.00
<b>Total Donations</b>	<b>176,904.57</b>	<b>749.38</b>	<b>43,576.00</b>	<b>8,145.00</b>	<b>137,649.00</b>	<b>14,940.00</b>	<b>181,974.38</b>	<b>205,059.38</b>

# District S Donations

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

### DISTRICT "S"

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Jouney for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Abington	18,169.75	800.05	8,336.02	750.00	11,250.00		20,386.07	21,136.07
Acushnet	27,208.00	500.00	1,500.00	1,255.00	25,000.00		27,000.00	28,255.00
Attleboro Tri Boro Com	0.00						0.00	0.00
Barnstable Yarmouth	1,700.00				3,000.00		3,000.00	3,000.00
Barnstable High Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Bridgewater	20,100.00		2,678.90	1,220.00	14,214.35		16,893.25	18,113.25
Bridgewater Academy	3,560.67	50.00	773.00	260.00	1,826.00		2,649.00	2,909.00
Bridgewater Community	359.00		304.00	100.00			304.00	404.00
Bridge/Raynham Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Brockton	550.00		273.00		500.00		773.00	773.00
Dartmouth	0.00						0.00	0.00
Dennis/Harwich	8,320.24	1,099.15	3,216.70				4,315.85	4,315.85
Dennis Yarmouth Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Dighton	12,946.02	512.35	1,151.00	50.00	12,600.00		14,263.35	14,313.35
Dighton Rehoboth Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Duxbury	950.00	600.00	1,300.00		1,050.00		2,950.00	2,950.00
East Bridgewater	0.00	291.12	150.00		6,500.00		6,941.12	6,941.12
Easton	32,058.45	624.22	5,095.00		31,059.56		36,778.78	36,778.78
Easton Oliver Ames Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Fairhaven	6,725.00		275.00		7,450.00		7,725.00	7,725.00
Fall River	2,100.00	38.71			2,000.00		2,038.71	2,038.71
Fall River Carousel	2,398.06		847.32	1,500.00			847.32	2,347.32
Falmouth	200.00				300.00		300.00	300.00
Freetown	600.00		1,000.00				1,000.00	1,000.00
Greater Attleboro Leo	0.00		20.00				20.00	20.00
Greater Taunton Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Halifax-Pembroke	500.00						0.00	0.00
Hanover	1,900.00				2,200.00		2,200.00	2,200.00
Kingston	50.00				500.00		500.00	500.00
Lakeville	6,000.00	500.00	2,500.00		4,500.00		7,500.00	7,500.00
Lakeville OCA	2,718.93						0.00	0.00
Lower Cape Cod Light	0.00						0.00	0.00
Mattapoisett	21,075.00	1,025.00	500.00	200.00	7,500.00		9,025.00	9,225.00
Middleboro	1,000.00	17.65			1,000.00		1,017.65	1,017.65
Nauset	543.49						0.00	0.00
New Bedford Host	1,170.00		20.00	1,100.00	200.00		220.00	1,320.00

# District S Donations

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

### DISTRICT "S"

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Jouney for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
North Attleboro Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Norton	5,417.00		142.00	300.00	3,000.00		3,142.00	3,442.00
Norton Community	2,625.00	70.16	508.00	200.00	1,500.00		2,078.16	2,278.16
Paws of Comfort-CC	100.00		160.00				160.00	160.00
Paws of Comfort-SE	1,262.00	14.76	2,325.00				2,339.76	2,339.76
Plymouth	20,000.00		1,590.00		21,000.00		22,590.00	22,590.00
Provincetown	12,640.00		930.00	1,850.00	12,000.00		12,930.00	14,780.00
Raynham	6,825.00		100.00	1,585.00	3,500.00		3,600.00	5,185.00
Rehoboth	9,800.00		7,000.00	300.00	2,000.00		9,000.00	9,300.00
Rehoboth Anawan	8,050.00				5,900.00		5,900.00	5,900.00
Rochester	616.00		780.00				780.00	780.00
Rockland	2,750.00	250.00	1,000.00		1,000.00		2,250.00	2,250.00
Sandwich Bourne	2,258.00	1,031.00			1,600.00		2,631.00	2,631.00
Seekonk	15,000.00				15,000.00		15,000.00	15,000.00
Somerset	26,147.00		2,300.00	500.00	26,300.00		28,600.00	29,100.00
South Attleboro	10,343.05	2,157.87	1,698.99	500.00	6,200.00		10,056.86	10,556.86
South Attleboro Village	9,294.00	205.00	1,341.00	2,185.00	3,000.00		4,546.00	6,731.00
South Carver	0.00						0.00	0.00
Taunton	0.00						0.00	0.00
Wareham	300.00		81.52		500.00		581.52	581.52
West Bridgewater	6,771.05	85.64	930.00	1,410.00	5,500.00		6,515.64	7,925.64
West Bridgewater Leo	1,188.66	812.74					812.74	812.74
Westport	275.00	500.00		130.00	1,000.00		1,500.00	1,630.00
Whitman-Hanson Cent.	0.00						0.00	0.00
District 33S	3,673.48		838.00	100.00	10,000.00	5,570.00	10,838.00	16,508.00
<b>Total Donations</b>	<b>318,237.85</b>	<b>11,185.42</b>	<b>51,664.45</b>	<b>15,495.00</b>	<b>251,649.91</b>	<b>5,570.00</b>	<b>314,499.78</b>	<b>335,564.78</b>

**TOTAL 2023 – 2024 DONATIONS \$919,491.90**

# 2023 – 2024 FINANCIALS

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

### FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

Treasurers Report : 2023-2024

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

Balance Forward:					\$1,746,279.39
Current Income					
Contributions	Memorial	T&E	Grant	Total	
District Y	\$1,975.00	\$1,410.00	\$78,399.76	\$81,784.76	
District A	\$4,135.00	\$3,876.69	\$93,655.80	\$101,667.49	
District N	\$17,300.00	\$3,320.00	\$174,795.49	\$195,415.49	
District K	\$8,145.00	\$14,940.00	\$181,974.38	\$205,059.38	
District S	\$15,495.00	\$5,570.00	\$314,499.78	\$335,564.78	
Total Contributions	\$47,050.00	\$29,116.69	\$843,325.21		\$919,491.90
Interest					
Bank				\$15,967.90	
Annuities				\$36,719.87	
Total Interest Income					\$52,687.77
Other Income					
Miscellaneous				\$50.00	
T&E Withdrawal 2023-2024				\$73,500.00	
Total Income 01July - date					\$1,045,729.67
Committed Donations					
Grant Donations this year 2023-2024			\$843,325.21		
Grant Donations last year 2022-2023			\$802,330.16		
Presidential Grant 2022-2023 (MEE)			\$100,000.00		
Presidential Grant 2023-2024 (Childrens)			\$0.00		
T&E Donations this year			\$76,166.69		
T&E Interest Committed to Pres. Grant			\$73,500.00		
Total Committed					\$1,895,322.06
Current Expenses					
Approved Grants (Institution 2022-2023 Grants)					
BU School of Medicine			\$128,000.00		
Joslin Diabetes Center			\$128,000.00		
Mass Eye & Ear			\$128,000.00		
Schepens Eye Research Center			\$101,262.00		
New England Eye Center (Tufts)			\$121,439.00		
Childrens Hospital			\$128,000.00		
Presidential Grant 2022-2023 MEE			\$0.00		
Presidential Grant 2023-2024 Childrens			\$0.00		
T&E Donations			\$0.00		
Total Grants and T&E					\$734,701.00

# 2023 – 2024 FINANCIALS

## Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

### FINAL REPORT 2023-2024

Treasurers Report : 2023-2024

7/1/2023 ---> 6/30/2024

#### Administration expenses:

Auditor	\$18,100.00
BOD Meetings	\$0.00
Bond	\$942.00
Conferences	\$2,922.76
Directories	\$1,234.34
General Admin	\$2,343.18
Plaques and Adwards	\$2,088.89
Fees & Charges	\$180.22

#### Committee expenses

C&BL	\$0.00
Canisters & Pennies	\$0.00
Eye Catcher	\$0.00
Grants	\$0.00
Installation & Awards Night (Net)	\$8,725.06
Jouney For Sight	\$0.00
LRP	\$0.00
Memorials	\$0.00
Public Relations	\$1,441.60
Sight Awards	\$2,151.00
T&E	\$0.00
Special Project	\$0.00

Administrative & Committee Expenses	\$40,129.05
Total Expenses & Committed Donations	\$2,670,152.11

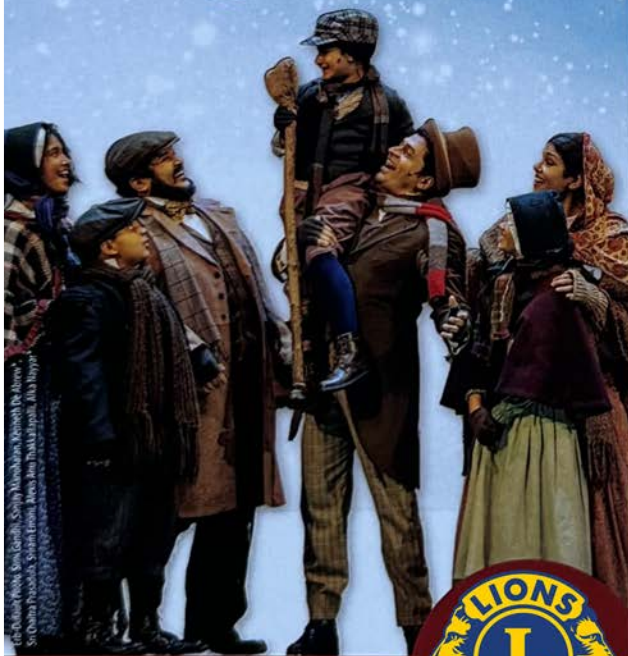
Uncommitted Funds	\$121,856.95
Ending Balance	\$2,017,179.01

Celebrate with music, magic and munificence at the Hanover Theater's production of A Christmas Carol. The production includes award winning actors, beautiful dancers and lavish costumes.

It's a festive experience you'll want to share with your family and friends and don't forget the little ones!

SHARE THE SPIRIT OF THE SEASON!

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL



SUNDAY DEC 22

2:00pm



HANOVER THEATRE  
& CONSERVATORY

2 Southbridge St • Worcester, MA



SHOW YOUR SUPPORT.  
The Barre Lions Club

invites you to buy tickets to the December  
22nd matinee at 2:00pm.

20% of all ticket sales will go to MLERF



*"God bless us  
everyone!"*

Celebrate the holiday  
season with New  
England's largest  
production of  
Charles Dickens'  
**A Christmas Carol.**

You know the story and  
love the message, but  
you'll never see another  
Christmas Carol like this!



Enjoy timeless music,  
colorful costumes and  
spectacular lighting and  
scenery in this tale of  
redemption. Get seated  
early for a **pre-show  
concert featuring the  
Mighty Wurlitzer Organ,**  
the largest theatre pipe  
organ in New England!

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Assumption  
University

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Enjoy a pre-show concert featuring the Mighty Wurlitzer Organ,  
the largest and most versatile Theater pipe organ in New England,  
led by A Christmas Carol Music Director Tim Evans.

[CLICK HERE TO PURCHASE TICKETS](#)



# 2023 - 2024

## IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

33N PDG Assoc.	DavidRose	\$50.00
Abington	Anne Boivin	\$40.00
Abington	AnthonyRicciotti	\$20.00
Abington	BernadetteL.DeRoche	\$100.00
Abington	ClaireKostro	\$40.00
Abington	Leonard Butler	\$100.00
Abington	Leonard Butler	\$50.00
Abington	Leonard Butler	\$50.00
Abington	Leonard Butler	\$100.00
Abington	Leonard Butler	\$50.00
Abington	Leonard Butler	\$50.00
Abington	Leonard Butler	\$150.00
Acton	AllisonSartini	\$250.00
Acton	ChuckKostro	\$5,000.00
Acton	ClaireKostro	\$50.00
Acton	ClaireKostro	\$500.00
Acton	ClaireKostro	\$100.00
Acton	ClaireKostro	\$25.00
Acton	ClaireKostro	\$5,000.00
Acton	Patricia Hadley	\$250.00
Acushnet	ChrisTaylor	\$235.00
Acushnet	CliffHathaway	\$800.00
Acushnet	K-9 Lion Finnegan B. O'Malley	\$100.00
Acushnet	Norman J. Lyonnais	\$20.00
Acushnet	Priscilla Petit	\$100.00
Agawam	PCC John Walsh	\$100.00
Agawam	PCC John Walsh	\$50.00
Amesbury	PaulEastman	\$50.00
Ashland	Elyse Phillippo	\$100.00
Ashland	Igidio "Izzy" Assencoa	\$100.00

# 2023 - 2024

## IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

Ashland	Sue Heguy	\$100.00
Ashland	Sue Heguy	\$25.00
Athol	Jeannette McIntosh	\$25.00
Audrey Rose	DavidRose	\$100.00
Barre	Roland LeClerc	\$20.00
Billerica	Patricia Bergin	\$25.00
Bridgewater	ClaireKostro	\$25.00
Bridgewater	DavidRose	\$25.00
Bridgewater	Jeannette McIntosh	\$25.00
Bridgewater	Jeannette McIntosh	\$25.00
Bridgewater	Nativa Hoyle	\$1,000.00
Bridgewater	Robert Wood	\$75.00
Bridgewater	Rosemary Calnan	\$20.00
Bridgewater	Susan Beaulien	\$25.00
Bridgewater Academy	AdalineLevine	\$25.00
Bridgewater Academy	AnnBrazil	\$25.00
Bridgewater Academy	AnnBrazil	\$25.00
Bridgewater Academy	Elaine Sweetman	\$25.00
Bridgewater Academy	James D.Sears	\$25.00
Bridgewater Academy	JeanWilder	\$10.00
Bridgewater Academy	L.DougSime	\$50.00
Bridgewater Academy	Susan Beaulien	\$50.00
Bridgewater Academy	Susan Beaulien	\$25.00
Bridgewater Community	JoyceMiddleton	\$100.00
Concord	Priscilla Marquis	\$250.00
Dalton	TomDapson	\$1,500.00
Danvers	Helen Bontorno	\$100.00
David Rose, Jr.	DavidRose	\$200.00
Diane Sears	DavidLevine	\$25.00
Dighton	Lois Copeland	\$50.00

# 2023 - 2024

## IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

District 33 N PDG Assoc..	BrianAbbott	\$50.00
Dracut	Kenwood Jones	\$10.00
Dracut	SunneySkoczolek	\$10.00
East Longmeadow	PDGDennisFountain	\$100.00
Easthampton	ChristinaFaye	\$25.00
Easthampton	Dianne Rezendes	\$50.00
Edward Lambert	Jeannette McIntosh	\$70.00
Evelyn DeLutis	Robert Lord	\$20.00
Fall River Carousel	Denise Sucle	\$500.00
Fall River Carousel	Elaine Holland	\$500.00
Fall River Carousel	Juliana Hialial	\$500.00
Fitchburg Community	SneBoivin143	\$200.00
George Tower	DavidRose	\$100.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$100.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$100.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$555.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$50.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$25.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$100.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$100.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$100.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$100.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$50.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$100.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$50.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$500.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$25.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$100.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$100.00
Greater Ashland	Olga Tomasz	\$50.00

# 2023 - 2024

## IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

Haverhill	DavidRose	\$25.00
Haverhill	Dorothy Hillson	\$50.00
Haverhill	Richard Marzioli	\$25.00
Haverhill	Robert Albanese	\$50.00
Ipswich	BrendaSinclair	\$25.00
Ipswich	BrendaSinclair	\$100.00
Ipswich	PDG Brian Abbott	\$700.00
John O'Day	James Morris	\$50.00
L. Doug & Vale Sime	Elaine Sweetman	\$25.00
L. Doug & Vale Sime	Margaret Flaherty	\$25.00
L. Doug & Vale Sime	Margaret Flaherty	\$25.00
L. Doug & Vale Sime	Susan Beaulien	\$25.00
Lexington	ArthurBernier	\$25.00
Linda & George Calimeris	James Morris	\$50.00
Louise Rose	DavidRose	\$50.00
Lowell	BrendaSinclair	\$50.00
Lowell	Shaun Montminy	\$100.00
Ludlow	Norman Cardinal	\$50.00
Ludlow	Pauline Ryba	\$50.00
Lupfer Family Trust	BobWilby	\$250.00
Malden	ClaireKostro	\$50.00
Malden	Sue Heguy	\$50.00
Marguery Walsh	Robert Lord	\$100.00
Marlboro	Rick Robinson	\$50.00
Mattapoissett	Evelyn Herrmann	\$50.00
Mattapoissett	Jennifer Ruzinowski	\$50.00
Mattapoissett	Kay Levine	\$100.00
MD33 PDG Association	Deceased PDG's 2022-2023	\$100.00
Medfield	Tom Sweeney	\$100.00
Medway	Anne Boivin	\$30.00
Medway	ClaireKostro	\$30.00

# 2023 - 2024

## IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

Medway	Nativa Hoyle	\$30.00
Medway	Sue Heguy	\$30.00
Mendon	Anne Boivin	\$100.00
Mendon	ClaireKostro	\$25.00
Mendon	Frederick Oliver	\$25.00
Mendon	IvetteMesmar	\$50.00
Mendon	James Brennan	\$50.00
Mendon	Jeannette McIntosh	\$25.00
Mendon	Mary Dean	\$100.00
Mendon	NancyYoungsma	\$25.00
Mendon	Pat Bucchino	\$25.00
Mendon	Robert Wilby	\$25.00
Merrimac	Roland Morin	\$1,000.00
Milford	Anne Boivin	\$100.00
Milford	Mary Dean	\$100.00
Milford	MyCatPrecious	\$100.00
Milford	OurDog	\$100.00
Millbury	Richard Leighton	\$100.00
Millis	DavidNoon	\$100.00
Millis	DavidNoon	\$25.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$100.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$150.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$2,500.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$50.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$50.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$50.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$50.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$100.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$100.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$150.00

# 2023 - 2024

## IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$100.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$385.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$200.00
Millis	Lisa Duhamel	\$25.00
Millis	Phyllis Anne Campbell	\$50.00
Monson	Charlie Jameson	\$100.00
New Bedford Host	Nativa Hoyle	\$50.00
New Bedford Host	Nativa Hoyle	\$1,000.00
New Bedford Host	Nativa Hoyle	\$25.00
New Bedford Host	Nativa Hoyle	\$25.00
North Andover	William J. Murphy, Jr.	\$100.00
North Andover	William J. Murphy, Jr.	\$100.00
North Andover	William J. Murphy, Jr.	\$100.00
North Andover	William J. Murphy, Jr.	\$25.00
North Andover	William J. Murphy, Jr.	\$25.00
North Andover	William J. Murphy, Jr.	\$25.00
North Andover	William J. Murphy, Jr.	\$25.00
Norton	Ellen Linehan	\$50.00
Norton	George Burgess	\$50.00
Norton	Hilda Reibeiro	\$50.00
Norton	Melvin Dorrance	\$100.00
Norton	Norma Martin	\$50.00
Norton Community	Hilda Reibeiro	\$100.00
Norton Community	K-9 Lion Finnegan B. O'Malley	\$50.00
Norton Community	Norma Martin	\$50.00
Paxton	Bob Wilby	\$25.00
Paxton	Bob Wilby	\$25.00
Paxton	Bob Wilby	\$25.00
Paxton	Bob Wilby	\$50.00
Paxton	Bob Wilby	\$50.00
Paxton	Bob Wilby	\$25.00

# 2023 - 2024

## IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

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Paxton	BobWilby	\$50.00
Paxton	BobWilby	\$50.00
Paxton	Robert Wilby	\$25.00
Paxton	Robert Wilby	\$50.00
Pittsfield	JeffreyTurner	\$50.00
Provincetown	Malcolm Rose	\$100.00
Provincetown	Sam Janoplis	\$500.00
Provincetown	Sam Janoplis	\$150.00
Provincetown	Sam Janoplis	\$1,000.00
Provincetown	Sam Janoplis	\$100.00
Randolph	Sheldon Angelone	\$200.00
Raynham	Frances S. Bumila	\$50.00
Raynham	Frances S. Bumila	\$500.00
Raynham	Frances S. Bumila	\$60.00
Raynham	Frances S. Bumila	\$25.00
Raynham	Gail Brookings	\$200.00
Raynham	Gail Brookings	\$50.00
Raynham	Paul Lane	\$500.00
Raynham	Wolfgang Hoffmann	\$100.00
Raynham	Yvonne Quinlan	\$100.00
Regina Bowser	DavidRose	\$50.00
Rehoboth	BernieDeRoche	\$100.00
Rehoboth	John Pires	\$100.00
Rehoboth	Mary Beth Moriarty	\$100.00
Rutland	BobWillowby	\$50.00
Rutland	JoanPohas	\$250.00
Rutland	Norma Johansson	\$100.00
Rutland	William Bailey	\$100.00
Saugus	Walter Stowell	\$35.00
Saugus	William J. Maloney	\$100.00

# 2023 - 2024

## IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

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Shoe City (Lynn)	ClaireKostro	\$25.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Dr. David Levy	\$25.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Faith Lockhart	\$95.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Faith Lockhart	\$20.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Lorrie Kmiec	\$25.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Mary Coulon	\$100.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Michael Petkevich	\$200.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Michael Petkevich	\$20.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Patricia Dennis	\$25.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Raymond Burnett	\$25.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Richard MacPherson	\$100.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Richard MacPherson	\$50.00
Shoe City (Lynn)	Richard MacPherson	\$50.00
Shrewsbury	James Morris	\$50.00
Shrewsbury	James Morris	\$150.00
Shrewsbury	Jim Morris	\$500.00
Somerset	CharlesMarceline,Jr.	\$50.00
Somerset	ClaireKostro	\$25.00
Somerset	Doug Sorem	\$50.00
Somerset	Lorraine Francoeur	\$50.00
Somerset	Nativa Hoyle	\$25.00
Somerset	William J. Murphy, Jr.	\$100.00
Somerset	William J. Murphy, Jr.	\$100.00
Somerset	William J. Murphy, Jr.	\$50.00
Somerset	William J. Murphy, Jr.	\$50.00
South Attleboro	Len Halko	\$100.00
South Attleboro	Len Halko	\$100.00
South Attleboro	Len Halko	\$100.00
South Attleboro	Len Halko	\$200.00
South Attleboro Village	BarbaraKennedy	\$40.00
South Attleboro Village	BarbaraKlang	\$400.00



# 2023 - 2024

## IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

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South Attleboro Village	BarbaraKlang	\$10.00
South Attleboro Village	BarbaraKlang	\$10.00
South Attleboro Village	BarbaraKlang	\$90.00
South Attleboro Village	BarbaraKlang	\$20.00
South Attleboro Village	BarbaraKlang	\$50.00
South Attleboro Village	Janet Kennedy	\$10.00
South Attleboro Village	Janet Kennedy	\$10.00
South Attleboro Village	Janet Kennedy	\$40.00
South Attleboro Village	Janet Kennedy	\$40.00
South Attleboro Village	Janet Kennedy	\$20.00
South Attleboro Village	John St. Lawrence	\$100.00
South Attleboro Village	Rachel Mooney	\$1,200.00
South Attleboro Village	Rachel Mooney	\$50.00
South Attleboro Village	Shirley Lucke	\$95.00
Southbridge	DavidRose	\$50.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$50.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$10.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$25.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$100.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$25.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$200.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$25.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$25.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$50.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$25.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$25.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$50.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$50.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$25.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$100.00
Stoughton	John Pires	\$50.00

# 2023 - 2024

## IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

Stoughton	John Pires	\$25.00
Tewksbury	ArmandLanglois	\$150.00
Tewksbury	DanielEmerson	\$150.00
Tewksbury	DavidRose	\$200.00
Tewksbury	DavidRose	\$150.00
Tewksbury	DavidRose	\$50.00
Tewksbury	Mary Iannuzzo	\$150.00
Townsend	Frederick May, III	\$50.00
Townsend	Ken Garken	\$50.00
Townsend	Susan Willets	\$50.00
West Bridgewater	DanielMcNeill	\$200.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$25.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$100.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$150.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$35.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$50.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$50.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$500.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$50.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$200.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$50.00
Westport	Florence Jackson	\$30.00
Westport	Florence Jackson	\$50.00
Westport	J. Daniel Pontes	\$50.00
Winchendon	Jeannette McIntosh	\$100.00
Woburn Breakfast	BarbaraAutenzio	\$50.00
Woburn Breakfast	John C. Martini	\$100.00
Woburn Breakfast	Robert Black	\$100.00
Woburn Middlesex	AnthonyRicciotti	\$25.00
Woburn Middlesex	BrianA.Winn	\$25.00
Woburn Middlesex	Earl "Skip" Greaves	\$25.00

# 2023 - 2024

## IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

Stoughton	John Pires	\$25.00
Tewksbury	ArmandLanglois	\$150.00
Tewksbury	DanielEmerson	\$150.00
Tewksbury	DavidRose	\$200.00
Tewksbury	DavidRose	\$150.00
Tewksbury	DavidRose	\$50.00
Tewksbury	Mary Iannuzzo	\$150.00
Townsend	Frederick May, III	\$50.00
Townsend	Ken Garken	\$50.00
Townsend	Susan Willets	\$50.00
West Bridgewater	DanielMcNeill	\$200.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$25.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$100.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$150.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$35.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$50.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$50.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$500.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$50.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$200.00
West Bridgewater	Robert Smith	\$50.00
Westport	Florence Jackson	\$30.00
Westport	Florence Jackson	\$50.00
Westport	J. Daniel Pontes	\$50.00
Winchendon	Jeannette McIntosh	\$100.00
Woburn Breakfast	BarbaraAutenzio	\$50.00
Woburn Breakfast	John C. Martini	\$100.00
Woburn Breakfast	Robert Black	\$100.00
Woburn Middlesex	AnthonyRicciotti	\$25.00
Woburn Middlesex	BrianA.Winn	\$25.00
Woburn Middlesex	Earl "Skip" Greaves	\$25.00

# 2023 - 2024 IN MEMORY OF/ HONOR OF DONATIONS

Woburn Middlesex	John Britt	\$25.00
Woburn Middlesex	John McGrath	\$10.00
Woburn Middlesex	John McGrath	\$25.00
Woburn Middlesex	Leanne Landry	\$300.00
Wyoma	Brian Costin	\$25.00
Wyoma	Joan Johansen	\$25.00
Wyoma	Michael Petkevich	\$150.00
Wyoma	Pat Lantych	\$25.00
Wyoma	Rita Hashem	\$50.00
Wyoma	Sally Cuffe	\$50.00
Wyoma	Tony Pecci	\$50.00
Wyoma	Ying Hart	\$25.00

PROTECT YOUR VISION FROM  
**DIABETES**



Have a **dilated eye exam** every year, and follow these steps to keep your health on **TRACK**.

**T** Take your medications as prescribed by your doctor.

**R** Reach and maintain a healthy weight.

**A** Add more physical activity to your daily routine.

**C** Control your ABC's—A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.

**K** Kick the smoking habit.

# APPROVED GRANTS FOR 2023-2024



Boston University  
School of Medicine



Schepens Eye  
Research Institute  
Massachusetts  
Eye and Ear



## JOSLIN DIABETES CENTER

Grant: \$130,000

## BOSTON UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL

Grant: \$130,000

## SCHEPENS EYE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Grant: \$130,000

## MASSACHUSETTS EYE AND EAR INFIRMARY

Grant: \$130,000

## BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Grant: \$130,000

## TUFTS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE NEW ENGLAND EYE CENTER

Grant: \$130,000

**TOTAL GRANTS TO DATE**  
(including all other institutions and grants)

**\$41,812,718**

**PRESIDENTIAL GRANT**  
Boston Children's Hospital

Grant: \$200,000

**TOTAL PRESIDENTIAL GRANTS TO DATE**

**\$4,026,094**



# OUR STORY

70+ years ago...

A \$5,000 Lions donation...

Facilitated a renaissance for eye research in Massachusetts.

In the ensuing years, \$38 million has been raised for eye research by the Lions of Massachusetts.

But back in 1950, the Great Depression was still a faint memory. Kids were watching “Howdy Doody” on 12-inch black-and-white TVs. The median family income was \$3,300 per year, and milk was still delivered to the doorstep. The average home price was \$1,940.

And babies were going blind.

During the summer of 1950, E. Daniel Johnson, then-Massachusetts District Governor of 33N, was visited by a friend who brought with him his four-year-old son, blind since birth with retrolental fibroplasia or so-called “baby blindness.”

Turns out that Johnson’s fellow Lion, Massachusetts 33K District Governor Harry Hartford, also had a friend with a blind baby—Al Hirshberg, a sports writer for the Boston Post and a Trustee of the Foundation for Eye Research.

In October 1950, these men—Johnson, Hartford and Hirshberg—along with a small group of Lions, met with Dr. Edwin B. Dunphy, Professor of Ophthalmology at Harvard Medical School and Chief of Staff at the Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary. Dr. Dunphy explained that there was a disease, discovered just 10 years previously by Dr. Theodore L. Terry at Boston’s Lying-In Hospital (known today as Brigham & Women’s Hospital), called retrolental fibroplasia (commonly known as “baby blindness”) that was affecting 4 out of 5 premature babies weighing less

than 4 pounds. With no known pathology and no financial resources to investigate the cause, 2,500 babies (just the US) were losing their sight every year.

### *What could be done?*

An informal meeting in DG Harry Hartford's hotel room at the 1951 Lions Clubs International Convention in Atlanta led into the first committee appointed by the Council of Governors in October 1951, which then led to Eye Research being voted at the State convention in 1952 as the statewide official project of the Lions of Massachusetts; The Lions of Massachusetts raised a whopping \$5,000, equivalent to \$50,000+ in today's dollars. Soon thereafter, the first Eye Research Grant was given to Dr. Theodore H. Ingalls of Harvard Medical School, who was instrumental in confirming that baby blindness was being caused by using too much oxygen in the incubators of premature babies. Today over 150,000 adults can see because of the foresight and concern of these Lions.

Soon thereafter, the Lions supported the Ophthalmic Plastics Laboratory, operated by Dr. William Stone, Jr., which developed pure plastic corneas to be used for persons afflicted with scarred corneas.

In 1953 support was given to the Joslin Clinic under the direction of Dr. Elliot P. Joslin, an energetic man in his early nineties, concerned with the cure for diabetes, which is the leading cause of blindness in the United States. The "Lions Laser Lens" project, which can detect diabetes in the eye before any other physical signs appear, was headed by Dr. Sven Bursell. In addition, Tufts New England Medical Center's Dr. Bertram Silverstone also received grants for his work using radioactive isotopes to cure eye and brain tumors. Further, Dr. Bernard Schwartz at Tufts New England Medical Center received Lions support for his work on modern photographic techniques for damage to the optic nerve and disc in glaucoma.

By 1955, a \$45,000 fellowship was awarded established in honor of Dr. Edwin B. Dunphy for his contributions to eye research. The Retina Foundation (now known as The Schepens Eye Research Institute), under the direction of Dr. Charles Schepens, constructed the first upside down operating table to repair detached retinas using the Lions grant. Schepens has the longest continuous relationship with MLERF and have dedicated some of their laboratories to the Lions for their continued support of their research efforts.

In fact, there are three major laboratories dedicated to the Massachusetts Lions. The first was at the Mass. Eye & Ear Infirmary called the Howe Laboratory of Ophthalmology run by Dr. David Cogan. The Fund set aside \$40,000 for a lab for young doctors being trained in eye research. The lab was actually a janitorial supply room located on the top of the building and was affectionately known as "The Lions Penthouse."

The second laboratory was established in 1969 at Boston University Medical Center, where a major commitment was made for space located on the 9th floor of the new instructional building. It was dedicated exclusively to eye research and is known as "Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Laboratory." Dr. Ephraim Friedman, the first director, and his successor, Dr. Howard Liebowitz, were instrumental in conceiving, designing and constructing one of the first photo-coagulator ophthalmic laser beams, which was later used in surgery. The prototype was housed in an entire room, while today's model is the size of a small microwave oven. The world's first clinical specular microscope was also conceived and built here. In 1975 the "Elton MacNeil Memorial Unit" was dedicated in his name for his many years as chairman and president (1954–1961) of the Mass Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc. PDG MacNeil was known as "Mister Massachusetts Lions Eye Research."

The third laboratory was established in 2011 at



Schepens Eye Research Institute. The Lions Laboratory for Genetic Research was established by Dr. Neena Haider to treat and prevent retinal diseases. The lab identified a genetic modifier that is able to ameliorate retinal degeneration. The lab's current research also revealed a novel role for Vitamin D metabolism in the development of Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) and antioxidants in neuroprotection from light-induced retinal damage. The lab has also developed unique genetic models to study the retinal and vascular observable characteristics associated with macular degeneration.

These are just a few of the major Boston research centers we have supported over the years and just a few examples of some of the basic research conducted in those early years. Today, research has moved light years ahead with the use of DNA, growing of culture cells and the separation of genes to find the genetic cause of eye diseases, but there is still so much more to be done.

The Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund Inc. was incorporated on January 20, 1958, and was given tax exempt status 501(c)(3) in February 1959. In 1971, a memorial fund was established to honor the memory of a loved one allowing individuals to contribute. A separate Trust and Endowment Fund was established in 1980 to perpetuate our research efforts. Today the T&E corpus is over \$1,300,000. The 1998/1999 year was the first time the Fund raised over \$1 million in a single year in donations from the clubs and memorials.

The first statewide project offered to the Clubs was the sale of Westinghouse "Light Bulbs." The Fund bought the bulbs wholesale, and they were then distributed to the clubs for door-to-door sale. This was a major fundraiser for many years through the late 60s and 70s. In the mid 1970s we participated in "White Cane Day" during which white cane stickers were given out for do-



nations and later evolved to a Lions Candy Day. In April 1983 all the special fundraising projects were combined into the "Journey for Sight" project, which asked each club to have one extra project and contribute the proceeds in addition to their regular donations. It was the first time the Fund used advertising on radio, newspapers and TV along with T-Shirts, hats and aprons. The "Pennies" project was born at the same time using a 1/2 gallon milk container to collect coins in local establishments across Massachusetts. The container displayed the new "Lions Logo" and the "Journey for Sight" lettering. In June 1982 the Fund was designated as the Charity of the Senior PGA Golf Classic at Marlboro Country Club. The sponsor was Digital Equipment Corp., who donated a \$25,000 computer for eye research. It was given to Joslin Clinic, and was the first computer to be used for research at that center.



In 1999 the Fund established a "Presidential Grant" in conjunction with LCIF. It is a one-time grant, separate from the normal grants, directed towards projects which do not meet the normal grant criteria but are considered worthy for the advancement of eye research. LCIF matches the MLERFI monies up to \$100,000 annually. The monies from the Fund come from the interest in the T&E trust fund and uncommitted monies from the treasury. To date there have been more than 20 matching grants totaling \$4,026,000.

Over the years, the Fund has given out over \$42 million in research grants. We are proud of the fact that every penny donated since 1951 has been given back in grants to the Eye Re-

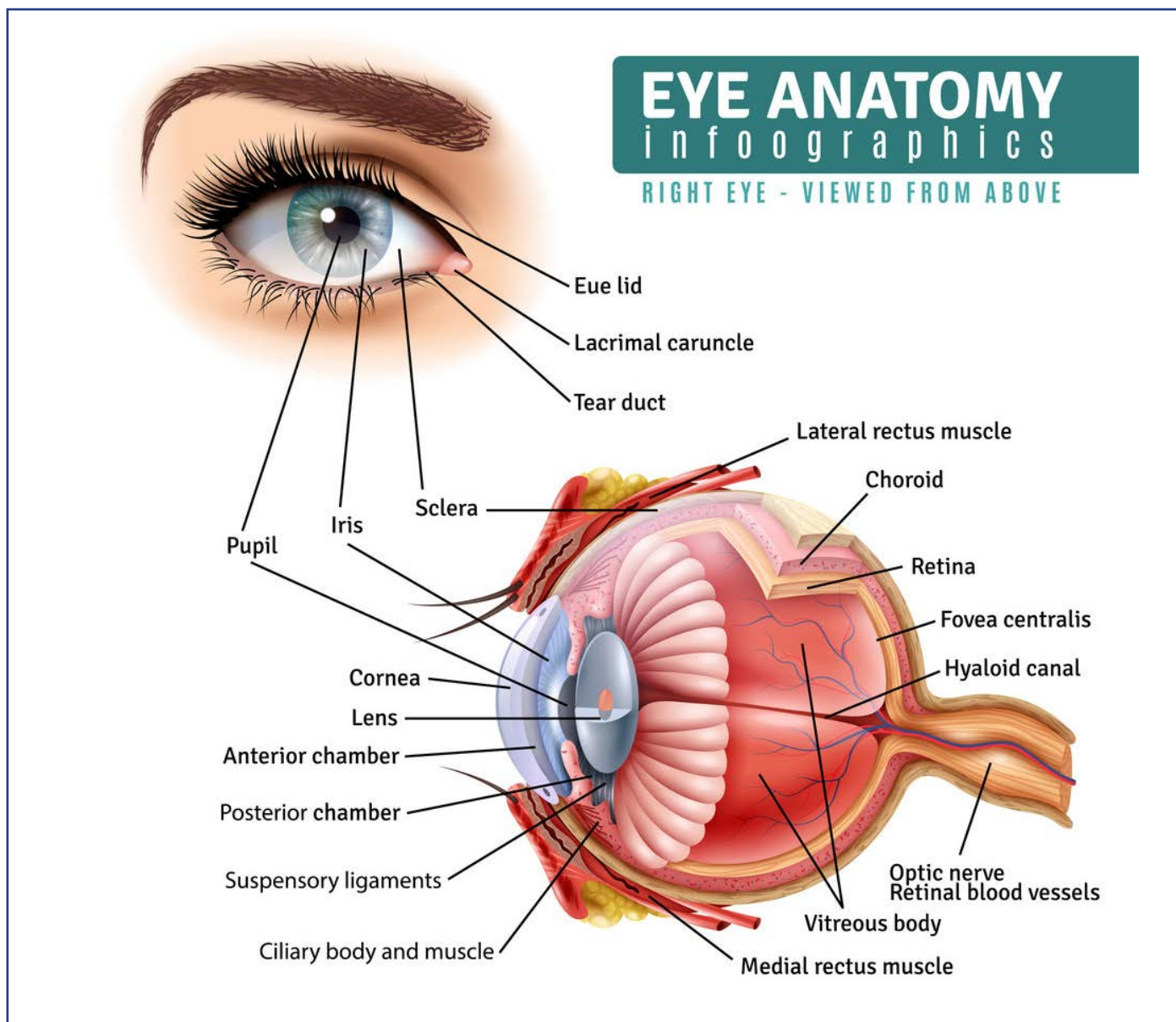


search Laboratories of Massachusetts. The grants are directed for pure research and not brick-and-mortar projects. The most important aspect of the Lions support is flexibility.

These initial grants are the "seed money" that allow researchers to do initial trials and preliminary studies to see if further research is warranted. Once the data is confirmed then the laboratory can apply for government grants which is usually matched on a 10-to-1 basis (or more). Because of Lions support, Boston has become one of the leading eye research centers in the world.

Much has been accomplished...

but there is still much more to be achieved. ■



## MLERF GRANT SUCCESS STORIES

These reports from the medical institutions supported by Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc. are testimony of the accomplishments of the researchers only made possible by the grants which are funded by the generosity of the Lions of Multiple District 33 (MD33) Massachusetts.

### Massachusetts Eye and Ear/Harvard Medical School

PI Name: Milica Margeta, MD PhD, Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at Massachusetts Eye and Ear/Harvard Medical School



### Project: How does inflammation harm neurons in glaucoma?

Glaucoma is the leading cause of irreversible blindness worldwide, whose defining characteristic is the loss of neurons that connect the eye to the brain. Elevated eye pressure is the only modifiable risk factor for glaucoma; however, many patients continue to lose sight despite taking medicines and having surgeries to lower the eye pressure.

Microglia, the resident immune cells of the nervous system, have emerged as important contributors to neuronal death in glaucoma. We have found that microglia produce a molecule called CD300F that leads to neuronal death in glaucoma by promoting inflammation in the retina. In this proposal we investigated how microglial CD300F cause inflammation and neuron loss in glaucoma, using powerful technologies to investigate microglia in live animals with glaucoma and also microglia cultured in a dish.

With preliminary data obtained with these experiments, we were able to secure major funding from NIH (an R01 grant) that will allow us to investigate the role of inflammation in glaucoma further. This work may open new avenues for development of neuroprotective therapies for glaucoma (in which the retina and the optic nerve are directly protected from glaucoma damage despite eye pressure level). This kind of therapy would be both novel and transformative for the field of glaucoma.



PI Name: Joan W. Miller, MD

### Project: Photodynamic Therapy of Ocular Neovascularization

Project: Hypoxia-mediated Release of Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor (VEGF) from the Retina

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is a leading cause of blindness in people aged 50 or older worldwide, and the third leading cause of blindness overall. There are two types of AMD—dry and wet. Dry AMD occurs when the macula (the central part of your eye that processes what you see directly in front of you) gets thinner with age and tiny clumps of protein, or drusen, form. In wet AMD, new abnormal blood vessels grow under the retina, the specialized cells at the back of the eye receive and organize visual information. These vessels may

leak blood or other fluids, causing vision loss faster than in dry AMD. It is estimated that by 2040, over 288 million people will have some form of AMD.

Historically, treatment for this blinding disease was virtually non-existent and outcomes were generally poor. While there are still no treatments for dry AMD, development of photodynamic therapy (PDT) and anti-vascular endothelial growth factor (anti-VEGF) agents have revolutionized the treatment of wet AMD and other retinal diseases. These therapies have transformed the field of ophthalmology, improving vision outcomes and quality of life for millions of people around the world.

For PDT, a dye sensitive to light (verteporfin) is administered intravenously followed by application of low power and long duration infrared laser to close the abnormal and leaky vessels under the retina. Funding from the Mass Lions for preliminary studies provided early support to determine optimal treatment parameters, safety, and efficacy, paving the way for FDA approval as the first treatment for wet AMD in 2000.

Funding from the Mass Lions for preliminary studies also helped uncover the mechanisms of ocular neovascularization, or new blood vessel formation in the eye—leading to the successful pharmacological therapies for AMD and other related conditions. These studies demonstrated that the VEGF protein was both sufficient and necessary for ocular neovascularization, creating the foundational basis for clinical trials for anti-VEGF agents to treat AMD. Approved by the FDA for use in December 2003, anti-VEGF therapy is now a mainstay of patient care for wet AMD, as well as other retinal diseases, preserving vision for millions of patients annually around the world.

## **MLERF final progress report for Elizabeth Rossin, M.D. Ph.D**

### **Projects**

The MLERF funded two main projects that I completed over the last 18 months:

- Development of a computational tool to find new mutations that cause inherited retinal disease (IRD)
- Identification of new genetic causes of central serous chorioretinopathy (CSR)



### **Project #1**

With the advancement in availability of genetic testing and the lower cost of sequencing, IRD is a field with increasing promise and possibility for gene therapy interventions. However, among patients with an IRD, approximately 30% do not have a clear genetic cause, making them ineligible for this treatment. For these patients, additional tools are needed. We developed a computational tool to map patient-specific mutations onto 3D protein structure models and output a comprehensive score that summarizes the predicted effect of the mutation on structure. We showed that this tool predicts mutations causal of inherited retinal disease (IRD), including proteins such as rhodopsin, ABCA4 and bestrophin. Importantly, we applied this approach to 65 patients with an IRD but for whom no genetic cause had been identified, and we successfully identified the likely pathogenic genetic cause in 37 patients. This work resulted in the following

publication:

• Blake M. Hauser, Yuyang Luo, Anusha Nathan, Gaurav D. Gaiha, Demetrios Vavvas, Jason Comander, Eric A. Pierce, Emily M. Place, Kinga M. Bujakowska, and Elizabeth J. Rossin. "Structure-Based Network Analysis Predicts Mutations Associated with Inherited Retinal Disease." MedRxiv, January 1, 2023, 2023.07.05.23292247. <https://doi.org/10.1101/2023.07.05.23292247>.

## Project #2

In working on the structural analysis of proteins, the need for advances in the discovery of genetic causes of other retinal diseases became apparent. Central serous chorioretinopathy (CSCR) is a disease I see commonly in clinic but that we understand very little about. It causes distorted and decreased vision in patients at a young age (typical age of onset is 40-50 years old), and there is no good treatment. Through a large international collaboration, we collected 1,100 patients with CSCR and over 500,000 healthy patients and compared their DNA. This highlighted 5 genes that are different in patients when compared to controls, and these findings pointed to the importance of the complement pathway in CSCR (an inflammatory pathway known to be modulated in other diseases like AMD) and pointed to defects in choroidal vasculature in these patients. This work resulted in the following publication:

1. Rämö JT, Abner E, Nikopentius T, Nõukas M, Marjonen H, Silander K, Jukarainen S, Kiiskinen T, Choi SH, Kajanne R, Mehtonen J, Palta P, Lubitz SA, Kaarniranta K, Sobrin L, Kurki M, Yzer S, Ellinor PT, Esko T, Daly MJ, den Hollander AI, Palotie A, Turunen JA, Boon CJF, and Rossin EJ. Overlap of Genetic Loci for Central Serous Chorioretinopathy With Age-Related Macular Degeneration. *JAMA Ophthalmology*. 2023. PMID: 37410484.
2. Rossin, EJ, & Sobrin, L. (2023). The Pleiotropy of Complement Factor H. *JAMA Ophthalmology*. 2023. PMID: 37410484.

## Summary

I am extremely grateful to the MLERF for funding this work, and only with this funding were we able to make the progress described.



## Boston Children's Hospital

### MLERF PROJECT

Our studies aim to identify new treatment that targeting the root causes of new blood vessel formation in wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Current treatments to block new blood vessels are only effective in ~50% of wet AMD patients. Our goal is to identify new, effective, and safe treatments to prevent and treat wet AMD utilizing a novel neuron-targeting reagent, botulinum neurotoxin A (BoNT/A) to target glial cell activation and stressed photoreceptor neurons, and choroidal neovascularization in AMD. Our proposed project will improve scientific knowledge in the field of ocular neuronal degeneration and vascular biology, especially the roles of neuronal/glial-vascular communication in the pathogenesis of ocular vascular disorders. The com-

munication among neurons, glia, and vessels as well as the release of angiogenic and neurotrophic factors play important roles in controlling CNV, however, the underlying mechanisms are not yet clear. The proposed work will help address this gap. The contribution of the proposed research is expected to conceptually advance the understanding of how modulating both photoreceptor neurons and neuronal/glial-vascular communications controls photoreceptor dysfunction and pathological blood vessel growth in AMD. This work may have broad translational importance in the treatment of AMD.

### **About the Researcher**

Ye Sun, MD, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at Boston Children's Hospital and Harvard Medical School. Dr. Sun's research interests focus on the understanding the roles of neuroinflammation, immune-vascular crosstalk, and neurovascular interaction in the development of eye disorders (including AMD, retinopathy of prematurity, and diabetic retinopathy) using genetically modified mice combined with disease mouse models and developing effective ways to treat or prevent vision loss. Her recent research focuses on the identification of the root causes of neovascularization, aimed at developing therapeutic treatments for wet AMD.

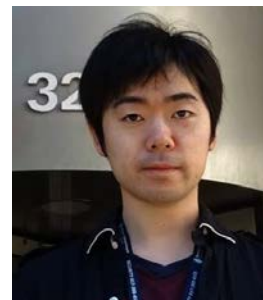
### **Personal Story**

As time goes by, the relatives and friends around us are getting old, and more and more loved ones are suffering from vision loss due to AMD. They cannot read, watch TV, or drive; in the future AMD may affect my own vision as well. We have no way to stop getting old, but I hope that one day we can find a way to stop AMD. The immune system helps protect the body, but as we age, the immune system does not work as well. My lab is very appreciative of and excited to use the funds provided by Mass Lion Eye Research Fund, Inc.—to understand the neuron-vascular communications in AMD during aging and to help people with AMD. I am deeply grateful to all Mass Lion Eye Research Fund donors who so generously support the work of those trying to find cures for this disease.

### **Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Laboratories at the Boston University Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine, Department of Ophthalmology**

Two research programs helped with funding from MLERF

### **Yuzuru Sasamoto, MD, PhD Assistant Professor**



Dr. Sasamoto's study aims to develop novel approaches to treating limbal stem cell deficiency disease. Limbal stem cell deficiency is a disease caused by the loss of limbal stem cells and is characterized by severe vision loss due to the cornea being covered by non-transparent conjunctival cells (the white part of the eye). The limbal stem cells reside in an area called the limbus, which lies between the clear cornea and the white conjunctiva. Dr. Sasamoto's current project focuses on how limbal stem cells give rise to cells that cover the cornea and remain transparent. Also, these cells contribute to the maintenance of a healthy corneal. Dr. Sasamoto hopes to develop novel approaches to treating limbal stem cell deficiency and other corneal diseases (e.g., corneal wounds and dry eye disease). Dr. Sasamoto is a new researcher and faculty member in

our department, and the support received from the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund is helping Dr. Sasamoto develop the preliminary data needed for the NIH grants he has now submitted. This support makes it possible for new investigators to have a chance for success.



**Haiyan Gong, MD, PhD**  
**Professor**

Reducing intraocular pressure (IOP) is the only effective treatment to prevent the progression of primary open-angle glaucoma (POAG), a leading cause of blindness worldwide. We can lower the IOP by improving fluid drainage out of the eye. Fluid flows out of the eye through two circular pathways: trabecular outflow and uveal outflow pathways. Dr. Gong's work has mainly studied the flow of fluid through the trabecular outflow pathway. Dr.

Gong has made and continues to produce highly impactful contributions to understanding the pattern and mechanism of fluid flowing through the trabecular outflow pathway. Thanks to the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund's support, Dr. Gong has begun a new research program on the significance of the uveal outflow pathway in glaucoma. Despite its importance, patterns of uveal outflow and the factors that regulate it remain unexplored. Dr. Gong has found that fluid flows at different rates along the circular uveal outflow pathway and is independent of the rate of fluid flowing through the trabecular outflow pathway. This MLERF-supported preliminary data helped Dr. Gong secure a \$200,000 grant from the Bright Focus Foundation. This new grant allows Dr. Gong to further study the uveal outflow pathway in experimental glaucoma models, hoping to find therapies to enhance the outflow pathways to reduce IOP and protect eyes from developing glaucoma.

## **Tufts Medical School**

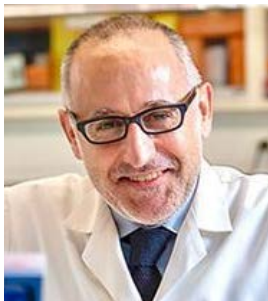
### **Project 1: Discovery of a novel drug to promote healing of corneal wounds**

**Pedram Hamrah, MD**  
**Professor of Ophthalmology**



Neuropathic pain is caused by a primary lesion or dysfunction of the nervous system and can occur in the cornea. However, neuropathic corneal pain (NCP) is currently an ill-defined, yet debilitating disease. Patients suffering from with NCP are extremely challenging to manage, as the symptoms can range from dry eye-like symptoms of dryness and irritation to severe ocular pain. Currently, the field of Ophthalmology relies on slit-lamp examination to assess signs of corneal and ocular surface diseases. Unfortunately, with neuropathic pain, none to minimal signs can be observed on slit-lamp examination in patients who have been either given the rather broad diagnosis of dry eye disease or have been repeatedly dismissed by their ophthalmologists. While systemic neuropathic pain can be diagnosed by skin biopsies, many patients with NCP may not have systemic findings. In our clinical studies that were carried out using Mass Lions Research Fund's presidential grant made to the New England Eye Center/Tufts University School of Medicine, we have been able to visualize corneal nerves in patients with dry eye dis-

ease and NCP. Our data demonstrates that while both groups can show decreased density of corneal nerves, specific morphological nerve changes are present in patients with NCP. These changes are due to abnormal nerve regeneration in these patients that demonstrate damaged nerves with endbulbs that correspond to microneuromas. The studies demonstrate high specificity and sensitivity of these findings and identify patients with NCP and seem to be diagnostic. The data resulting from this support enabled us to successfully compete for two large NIH grants in both clinical research and basic research. The first was an NIH award to develop our preliminary results into a full diagnostic biomarker through analytical, biological and clinical validation through a large multi-million-dollar NIH grant. The second was the recent award of a multicenter consortium grant to develop new therapies that can develop new targets that can prevent and reverse NCP. The results of this grant would identify the pathways that result in the development of NCP through mechanism that underlie inflammation and nerve damage. These studies will result in direct improvement of patient care through accurate diagnosis and treatment of patients with NCP. In summary, the support by Mass Lions Eye Research Fund has resulted not only in direct improvement of patients care but has significantly advanced the field in neuropathic corneal pain, making it less ill-defined.



### **MLERF PROJECT II: Benefits of sugar modification to treat ocular disease**

**Pablo Argüeso, PhD**  
**Professor of Ophthalmology**

Sugars, or carbohydrates, play important functions in the human body. They are the primary source of energy for the body but also play negative effects on the body's health and overall well-being when consumed in excess. In addition to their role in energy production, sugars also coat the surface of the trillions of cells present in the human body. This coating, known as glycocalyx, is fundamental for various biological processes. It allows cells to identify and interact with each other, it can act as a shield against mechanical forces, or it can modulate the ability of cells to receive signals from their environment and initiate various cellular responses. The composition and structure of the glycocalyx can change in response to various pathological conditions and external factors, leading to disease.

MLERF funding has helped understand the composition of this important coating on the surface of the eye. In a series of cutting-edge experiments using microarray technology, we identified a series of cell surface carbohydrate signatures that are unique to the different cell types of the human cornea. These results, recently published in the scientific literature and which acknowledge MLERF support, could foster the identification of novel cornea-specific biomarkers. Importantly, preliminary data derived from these studies are uncovering the potential of modifying the ocular glycocalyx for therapeutic gain, particularly in immunological disorders affecting the cornea and a medical condition known as limbal stem cell deficiency. These pilot data will be used to compete for a large NIH grant to perform in vivo studies in animal models of ocular disease.

**MLERF PROJECT 1 Case Write-up**

A 32-year-old woman with type 1 diabetes for 20 years who recently found out she was pregnant presented to the Beetham Eye Institute. She did not know that she had diabetic retinopathy but on her initial exam it was discovered that she had retinopathy of moderate severity. She was followed closely but at 12 weeks of her pregnancy it was noted that her retinopathy was worsening. Unfortunately, diabetic retinopathy can worsen very quickly during pregnancy and potentially cause loss of vision. Her retinopathy was severe enough to warrant treatment with laser photocoagulation. She was followed every 8 weeks after that. Eventually it was noted that there were abnormal vascular changes beginning to form in the peripheral retina in both eyes which were suspicious for neovascularization.

Neovascularization is the development of abnormal blood vessels which have the propensity to bleed and cause sudden and severe vision loss. General current approaches in the setting of an inconclusive exam would involve a fluorescein angiography test which requires the patient to be injected with a dye and the retina of the eyes photographed. This dye unfortunately is contraindicated in pregnancy. Fortunately, we had developed a technique using a novel device, the Optos Silverstone which was acquired through the generous donation of the Mass Lions Eye Research Fund's presidential grant. This device, in addition to being able to acquire ultrawide field images capturing approximately 85% of the total retinal area, can also acquire optical coherence tomography (OCT) scans anywhere within the visualized retina. OCT scans can identify neovascularization.

Neovascularization has a distinct appearance on OCT which can help determine whether suspicious areas were in fact abnormal blood vessels. The patient consented to being imaged using the Silverstone and a special algorithm developed by us that increased the likelihood of capturing all neovascularization in the eye. In the eye, OCT imaging confirmed the presence of neovascularization. The patient therefore received additional laser treatment which was able to control these blood vessels before the disease worsened and before there was any bleeding. This novel device and technique helped her complete her pregnancy safely without severe vision loss while also controlling her diabetic retinopathy.

**MLERF PROJECT 2 Case Write-up**

A 56-year-old patient presented with a sudden onset of floaters and blurred vision in the right eye. Upon examination, a retinal tear was diagnosed. This condition can arise when the gel within the eye becomes more liquid and attempts to detach from the retina, potentially exerting force on the retina and leading to a tear. Such tears can be perilous as they may allow fluid to pass through, causing the retina to detach from the back of the eye, which is deemed a medical urgency. During a regular examination, it can be challenging to detect the presence and extent of fluid, as well as to ascertain whether any active pulling exists at the tear, thereby keeping the hole open and enabling more fluid to pass through. Fortunately, we employed the novel device, the Optos Silverstone, which was acquired through the generous donation of the Mass Lions



Eye Research Fund's presidential grant. The Silverstone device, enabling us to obtain comprehensive standard and cross sectional scans of the retina, including the far periphery. This not only facilitated the visualization of the tear and the presence of fluid but also revealed some persistent tugging on the tear. Additionally, the device assisted in quantifying the fluid and guiding the treatment process.

Following the scans, it was decided to conduct laser treatment to seal the tear and prevent further spreading of the fluid. The patient expressed interest in understanding the anticipated timeline for recovery and when they could resume daily activities, given their passion for Zumba and an upcoming CPR course. The patient was advised to return for a follow-up appointment in one week. Subsequent follow-ups, two and three weeks later, indicated that the fluid had completely resolved, and the tear was securely sealed without any persistent tugging. The patient was reassured that it was safe for them to resume their regular activities.

The next Eye Catcher will be published in April of 2025. If you have a story, event or fundraiser for MLERF, please send this information to your district reporter.

