



MASSACHUSETTS LIONS EYE RESEARCH FUND

EYE CATCHER

Winter/Spring 2019 Volume 53 No. 2

**65
YEARS**

**65 YEARS OF SUPPORTING
CUTTING-EDGE VISION RESEARCH**

**65
YEARS**



Read all about the cutting-edge vision research being conducted at our area institutions with funding from MLERF...

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Lions from the Commonwealth hit the beach at Lake Pearl for the Annual "Polar Plunge" ...

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Memorial and Honor Donations made during the 2017 - 2018 year...

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2019 - 2020
CALENDAR OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS



2019

5/9/19 Visitation to Mass Eye and Ear
243 Charles St, Boston, MA
(7th floor dining room)

5/16/19 On-the-Road BOD meeting District Y
Blue Bonnet Diner, Northampton, MA

Nominations

5/23/19 Joslin Diabetes Center, Boston
1 Joslin Pl

5/29/19 Dine out for MLER at the Texas Road-
house

6/1/19 Farewell to PCC Art Thomas, benefits
MLER (Tony & Penny's Restaurant, Ludlow, MA)
1pm

6/2/19 District N-Journey for Sight Walk-contact
a director or officer from N for details

6/20/19 BOD meeting, Crystal Room
49 Cedar St., Milford, MA, 6 pm Social
Dinner/Meeting. **Elections**

7/5-9/19 LCI/International Convention
Milan Italy

7/15/19 EyeCatcher reports due in to Deb Hayes

7/23/19 Annual Meeting--Grant distributions—
Boston Children's Hospital, 300 Longwood Ave.
Boston (opposite BCH)

7/31/19 Dine out for MLER at the Texas Road-
house

8/10/19 Annual Installation/Awards Banquet—
Crown Plaza, 15 Middlesex Canal Park Dr.,
Woburn, MA

9/11/19 Children's Hospital visitation
300 Longwood Ave., Boston, MA

9/28/19 District S-Blink of an Eye walk-contact a
director or officer from S for details

10/10/19 Schepens Visitation

10/30/19 Dine out for MLER at the Texas Road-
house

11/14/19 On-the-Road-33A-details to follow

2020

1/10-12 33S Midwinter, Double Tree by Hilton,
Hyannis, MA Theme: A Funny Thing Happened
on the way to Midwinter.

1/24-26/20 33Y Midwinter, Sheraton, One
Monarch Place, Springfield, MA
Theme: "As you are"

1/30-2/2/20 33N Midwinter, Theme "50's"

2/7-9/20 33A Midwinter, Theme: Wonderland

2/15-17/20 33K Midwinter
Dedham Hilton, Dedham, MA

3/12/20 Boston Medical Visitation

4/9/20 On-the-Road-33Y

5/14/20 On-the-Road-33K

6/11/20 On-the Road-33N

News From the Districts

District 33Y



PCC Jean Wilder

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For the past 60+ years the Lions of Massachusetts have donated millions to MLERF. Last year we raised \$1,070,000, our highest ever, and our goal this year is \$1,050,000. The money is held for a year, then granted to the Boston area research facilities below. I am not a doctor, but I will “try” to summarize the grants (mostly in their words) and the researcher’s responses. (sorry in advance for an mistakes, I am certainly not the expert here)

Boston University School of Medicine (Mass Lions Eye Research Labs): have studied ocular immunology, stem cell research, uveitis, and dry eye. Current projects are:

- 1) Reduction of Intraocular Pressure (IOP) in Steroid-induced Glaucoma: they hope to determine if “a rho-kinase inhibitor will decrease the” pressure.
- 2) Effects of suppressing inflammation to protect the retina from damage related to diabetic retinopathy. Blood vessels blocked by elevated high glucose by-products in the blood, can cause retinal cell death, can cause retinopathy. There is no cure, but they hope to develop anti-inflammatory therapy to prevent/slow the disease.
- 3) Changes in corneal proteins that regulate corneal wound repair in diabetes. They hypothesize that Type 2 Diabetes alters proteins involved in maintaining cell orientation. Changes in the organization of the cells after injury cause changes that effect how the cornea heals.

Stephen P. Christiansen, MD, Chrmn Dept of Ophthalmology & Andrew W. Taylor, PhD, Director of Research say “Support is crucial for taking research

ideas and developing them to the point that national research grants can be applied for successfully...The MLER grant also provides critical interim support for investigator’s research when there is a gap between funding.On behalf of all the investigators..... we thank ...the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc. for your generous support for our research.”.

Boston Children’s Hospital:

David G. Hunter, MD, PHD (who developed the Blinq we helped to fund research for) “We feature...projects with the goal of preventing childhood blindness. All are new, and none have had Mass Lions support....Dr. Smith will study a protein that may reverse blood vessel loss in retinopathy of prematurity (ROP), Dr. Chen will see if a protein can be activated to prevent progression of retinitis pigmentosa, and Dr. Hansen will assess possible drugs for treatment of the inherited disease, X-linked juvenile retinoschisis. We are grateful for the funding that we continue to receive from the Lions each year. I am so appreciative of your meaningful recognition of the size and scope of the Boston Children’s research enterprise. We would not be able to support the novel, pilot studies being performed in these vital laboratories without it...”

Joslin Diabetes Center, Inc.

“Diabetic Retinopathy: Pathogenesis, Prediction and Prevention”: The studies have resulted in exciting new discoveries (led to improvements in clinical diabetes eye care worldwide), publications in leading journals, presentations at national meetings, and substantial additional grant support. In 2018-2019 researchers published 16 papers/abstracts, and presented at 5 major scientific meetings based on Lions funded work. A BEI researcher presentation to a Lions club was recorded for nationwide broadcast by the Radio Reading Services.

Many years of funding by MLERF led to a new therapy for Diabetic Macular edema (DME), now firmly established as the global standard treatment for DME. They also learned this is effective against proliferative diabetic retinopathy (PDR) with more visual benefit and fewer side effects than our prior standard therapy.

District 33Y CON'T

Lloyd Paul Aiello, MD, PhD, FARVO says “Funds provided by the MLERF are critical to supporting these early-stage innovative discoveries. We thank you for your consideration and for your tireless efforts in supporting our research to reduce vision loss from diabetes.

Mass Eye and Ear (additional info from their grant is in italics in parenthesis)

Joan W. Miller, MD says in part “Our projects focus on 1) (multi-drug resistant) bacterial keratitis, an inflammation of the cornea which is becoming increasingly resistant to current antibiotic treatments...(this study will result with a very large dataset of bacterial keratitis genomes which will be made publicly available after publication of the work);2) cerebral visual impairment (CVI), highly undetected among preschool children and often results in a variety of visual disabilities; (They have been developing a visual assessment tool using a virtual reality (VR) based testing platform..... environmental simulations and eye tracking with multi-channel EEG recording to monitor performance.) and 3) epidemic keratoconjunctivitis, (aka Pink Eye) a severely contagious viral infection ...which is becoming more difficult to control. (They want to design specific therapy to treat this disease.) They seek funding as seed money to demonstrate their models are feasible, to facilitate federal extramural funding for this project.

.... I am reminded of the longstanding commitment to preserve the gift of sight shared by the investigators... and the Massachusetts Lions. We continue to hold your members across the state in the highest esteem for their outstanding work to further the cause of vision research, and we remain grateful for your support in helping us lay the foundation for revolutionary new treatments serving patients worldwide.’

Schepens Eye Research Institute

Patricia A. D’Amore, Ph.D, MBA, Director of Research says “We are extremely grateful to ... the MLERF for past, present and continued support The partnership between the Lions and Schepens is strong, continues to grow, and becomes more productive with each year.”

Visual Latency and Neural Network Myelination in Periventricular Leukomalacia (PVL). Infants born prior to 36 weeks are susceptible to PVL which can lead to abnormal development of pathways in the brain, may cause slow visual processing speeds, and impact learning and quality of life. The results of this study will improve their understanding of how the delayed visual processing time

and visual perceptual deficits occur and what treatment can be developed.

Microglia-mediated induction of neurotoxic astrocytes in the glaucomatous optic nerve head. Glaucoma can cause optic nerve damage & death of retinal ganglion cells (RGCs), which are neurons that collect info from other cells in the retina and transmit it to the brain via the optic nerve. Death of these cells causes vision loss. The optic nerve has immune cells called microglia & astrocytes, which help RGCs and remove waste. They are studying how they can resolve the problems caused when they stop working well together.

Role of Mitochondrial Transfer in Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) Progression

Research suggests the degenerative process in AMD spreads from cell to cell but the molecular mechanism is undetermined. They propose a new study on how defects in Retinal pigmented epithelium (RPE) cells (a single layer of pigmented cells directly beneath the photoreceptor cells in the retina) may cause degeneration of mitochondria, which may have implication to dry AMD. Mitochondrial replacement therapy would be a novel strategy for rescuing defects. “The experiments will generate the necessary preliminary data for federal funding application (R21/R01) to support further investigation..’

Tufts – New England Eye Center

“The generous support we have received.....from our partnership with..MLERF has made a valuable contribution to the growth of our research effort and potential....have provided the pilot funding critically necessary to explore new ideas and compete for further funding through the federal process. On behalf of Dr. Jay Duker, our Chairman, and the entire New England Eye Center faculty, I want to accentuate how grateful we are to MLERF for the support given to us. Your continued support has been the bedrock of a very productive and successful research ...We are delighted to report...we were proud to acknowledge the support of Mass Lions in 7 high quality publications. We are deeply appreciative and grateful” Noorjahan Panjwani, Ph.D

Optical coherence tomography (OCT) instruments are bulky combinations of laser, optical and electronic equipment costing \$50,000+, which limits the widespread use in primary care, low cost settings &

District 33Y CON'T

developing countries. They have developed specifications for a low-cost proto-type OCT (\$2,500-\$5,000) which provide more available access to diagnosis of diabetic retinopathy.

They are studying Sjögren's syndrome (dry eye disease) and the effect of pDCs (a subtype of immune cells) in the development of this disease. Also targeting Dyamin (an enzyme) for development of new strategies for ocular surface protection, and the long term goal is to develop a FDA-approved drug based on Dynasore, for the treatment of retinal damage after sever damage to the surface of the eye.

Thank you Lions of Massachusetts for your continued dedication to raising the funds MLERF needs to support these facilities in their race to find cures and or prevention of blindness.

HUGS,
PCC Jean M. Wilder

The Lions Charitable Fund of Greater Springfield Inc., part of the Springfield 16 Acres Lions doing great things for Mass Lions Eye Research Fund Inc. Texas Roadhouse dine-out night was a great success for us. Over 40 Lions and friends attended; \$150 received from the raffle; in all over \$400 for MLERF.

We are also holding a fundraiser selling cookbooks. Recipes from Lions and friends went into a cookbook with 150 recipes for everyone to enjoy. We are now working on selling our second 200 cookbooks! All proceeds to be sent to MLERFI. Our Lion was even there to welcome everyone.



News From the Districts

District 33A



PCST, Denise Andrews

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Hello, Lions

Happy Spring! I am writing a story that will truly warm your heart about why we do what we do as Lions. The story is about Lion Tom and his service dog "Millhouse".

It is with great sadness that Lions Joanne and Tom mourn the recent passing of their service dog for hearing, "Millhouse". He was a little over twelve years old, born on January 15, 2007. He was part Border Collie and Alaskan Husky. In his first year of life he went through five different homes. People chose him because he was a cute puppy, not realizing he belonged to two working breeds. "Millhouse" kept being returned to the Worcester Animal Rescue shelter. On the day he was scheduled to be put to sleep, NEADS trainer, Brian Jennings was looking for a dog to train as Tom's next partner due to the passing of Tom's previous service dog for hearing, "Jessie", age thirteen, who had passed away two months before.

After doing some initial testing with "Millhouse", Brian determined that he was a good candidate to train as a service dog. He was amazed that considering he had been in five previous homes, that no one taught him a basic command, like sit. Apparently, "Millhouse" just needed someone to tell him what to do and how to use all the energy he had. After about five months of training, including some prison training time, "Millhouse" became a certified service dog for hearing. Tom and



"Millhouse" began their partnership in March 2008. He exemplified in every way what a service dog should be. For eleven years, day in and day out, he was constantly by Tom's side alerting him to the everyday sounds a hearing person takes for granted. On the second night in "Millhouse's" forever home, he responded and told Tom that the dryer buzzed. This was a sound that he had not been trained for. To Joanne's delight, now that he could "hear", Tom was now regulated to folding the clothes from the dryer. Also, he alerted him to the mail truck stopping by, woke him to the alarm clock, someone stopping by, Joanne wanting Tom for chores, low battery alarms in their detectors, neighbor getting deliveries, and even checking on them when they sneezed. While they were traveling, he also alerted Tom, after midnight and predawn, to three fire alarms in hotels. He and Millhouse greeted the firefighters in the parking lot as he was trained to get him out when the fire alarm goes off. The list goes on and on.

As many of you know, besides being Tom's ears, "Millhouse" was an ambassador and demo dog for Canines for Disabled Kids, whose office is located in Worcester, MA. The team over the past ten years or so traveled extensively up and down the east coast and beyond providing service dog presentations, manning information booths, and talking to individuals and groups. Scouting organizations, too numerous to count, had them present. They helped hundreds of girl scouts earn their "Animal Helpers" badge.

Veterans groups would request them for presentations. They visited Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, DC, three times at the D-Day WWII Memorial in Bedford, VA., VA hospitals and Veterans organizations. Joanne and Tom received security clearances to go on active duty military bases in various parts of New England.

"Millhouse" has traveled to the prairies of Kansas for a four day 4H celebration, provided presentations and maintained booth events in Tucson, AZ, Pittsburgh, PA, Richmond, VA, Baltimore, MD, to name a few locations. These requests often involved repeat visits. In addition, Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, and Granges were some of the many requested visitations for Tom and "Millhouse".

They had yearly standing requests at schools and colleges, including Westford, MA, for 6 years, Newton North High School Deaf inclusion program, 5 years, and Assumption College, 6 years. They educated hundreds of students from kindergarten to graduate school. They participated in "Light It Up Blue for Autism", Ability Expos and Pet Expos. When requested, they traveled by car, airplane, train, and boat to educate about the various types of service dogs, and demonstrate what a service dog for hearing can perform.

Canines For Disabled Kids is a non-profit that provides service dog educational programs, supports parents who feel that a service dog might be a good tool to help their disabled child and provides scholarships to help defray some of the costs of children obtaining a service dog. CDK is naming a scholarship in honor of "Millhouse" and all that he stands for. If you would like to donate, you can do so in two ways: Online at www.caninesforkids.org, select secure donate button, be sure to add "Millhouse's" name under the remarks section; or submit a check to Canines For Disabled Kids and reference "Millhouse" on the memo line. Mail your donation to: Canines For Disabled Kids, 65 James Street, Suite 210, Worcester, MA 01603.

"Millhouse" had a gentle spirit that touched so many lives. They know he is now running free in heaven with his hearing dog predecessors, "Sandy", "Jessie", and "Gracie".

I have been made aware of a program called "WalkFit" under the leadership of Bay State VIP Lions Liz Myska and Jack Peacock. WalkFit is an activity to aid the visually-impaired community with some physical activity and at the same time teach the sighted individuals how to guide and to have an understanding about the visually-impaired community. Liz is a practicing Attorney who lost her eyesight, but continues to have a wonderful active life helping others. The WalkFit program was offered many Saturdays this past winter in the Atrium at St. Vincent's Hospital. Now that spring is here, she would like to offer this program in the sunshine. The first of others to come is scheduled for April 6th at the Blackstone Visitor's Center off Route 146 near Holy Cross and Walmart in Worcester. This event is opened to all Lions and Leos. Often Leos are given a white cane and a guide. It is truly a mind-blowing experience. For the past two years they have made a presentation to the Leos at Midwinter and have been warmly received. First Vice District Governor Colleen believes that this is a meaningful experience as the Lions and Leos are "Knights of the Blind". She encourages all Lions and Leos to take part.

I have one more story of interest. On Saturday, March 30th, a group of about a dozen Lions from all over central Massachusetts gathered in Charlton, MA to help ship 120,000 new single-vision, eyeglass lenses with cutting and shaping equipment to the Rosebud Indian Reservation in Mission, South Dakota. It is the home of over 35,000 Native Americans of the Lakota Sioux Tribe. Don Fortin, District 33A Eyeglass Recycling Coordinator, led the project. Jon Haglund, of Arch Vision Inc. of Shrewsbury, MA had donated the equipment to the Lions back in 2018. The Lions then donated the equipment to Artists for World Peace of Middletown, CT.

District 33A Lions have partnered with AFWP (Artists for World Peace), an organization of global artists and activists, who promote peace by providing education, sustainability projects and healthcare to those in need, to distribute the eye equipment on the Rosebud Reservation. Through their NATIVE EYES project, AFWP brings free eye care to those living on the reservation. To see the amazing work that AFWP does on the reservation and around the world, and the impact this kind of donation has, please visit the NATIVE EYES Youtube video at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=31&v=BjHY6MBmCp8

It has been a pleasure to serve as your Eye Catcher Reporter, and I thank you for sharing your stories with me. You have made my job an easy one. Also, thank you so much for all that you do for MLERF and for your communities; it is very much appreciated. You truly are the "Awesome" District.

Yours in friendship and Lionism,

2nd VDG Denise Andrews
District 33A

News From the Districts

District 33N



PDG/PP Louise J Wojtkiewicz

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Spring is around the corner; clocks have been turned ahead one hour, dark when you get up in the am light longer in the early evening. I wish the weather was a little warmer, before you know it we will be wishing we had the cooler days.

At our Mid-Winter in February I was fortunate enough to get Dr. David Hunter to speak with us about his Blinq camera and explain why he wanted this type of pediatric vision scanner. The Pepperell Lions Club has Cathy Jones of the Blinq committee who worked with Dr. Hunter making a presentation to its members and invited members of other clubs in the area interested in screening younger children with this camera. The hope is to use this system in the North Middlesex school district (Pepperell, Townsend, and Ashby) Groton-Dunstable Tyngsborough, Ayer, Shirley, and Chelmsford School systems along with any club wishing to borrow it.

I was invited along with my club members in hopes we can screen children in the Acton/Boxborough area.

While at the business meeting at our Mid Winter I spoke with the President of the Eye mobile Committee and he tells me on August 11, 2018 the Trustees of the Lions International Foundation awarded the District 33N Eye mobile with a grant of over \$30,000.00. Funds from the Grant, along with donations from Lions Clubs within our District and personal donations enabled us to procure a new vehicle, which is easier and more efficient to operate. The new Lions District 33N Eye mobile is a customized, easy-to-drive Ford Transit van carrying gear to conduct free community screenings to detect systemic hypertension, low vision, color blind-

ness, uncorrected refractive error, ocular hypertension, retinal disease, and hearing loss in children and adults. Lowered to the ground by a rear platform lift, the test equipment can be rolled indoors or under cover outdoors powered by a provided portable generator. All screening procedures are quick, noninvasive, and administered by club and invited Lions. The smaller vehicle eliminates space and driver training requirements, affording the clubs utilizing the District 33N Eye mobile to have a more extensive impact in our communities.

The Mid-Winters are now over and it is back to fund raising for MLERF with Spring Dances for Sight put on April 6th by the Wyoma Lions Club. Think Spring! Think "Spring Dance" Dancing for Sight -Great Music-Wildfire Band
Great Food as usual -Dinner Buffet-Dessert Table/Coffee all for a cost of \$20.00
Tables of 10 can be reserved for a cost of \$185.00.
Tickets go fast see flyer.

Remember our dinning for dollars on May29th, 2019 to benefit MLERF at the Texas Road House in Danvers/Methuen or any other location close to you. District 33N total income from the card sales, raffles and 10% Texas Road House from Methuen and Danvers on January 30th, MLERF Dining for Dollars came to \$1,154.00. Not bad since the weather channel scared everyone away with their "Polar Vortex" and homeland security text messages all evening warning of the impending "Blizzard Conditions". As it turned out, I chalk up to a dress rehearsal for the May 29th, event! Signed, - Lion Mike

Our District is holding their Third Advisory tonight and

hopefully the clubs will make donations to Eye Research our funds are down from last year with only one club donating at the Mid-Winter the Acton Lions with their usual down payment with the balance due at the 4th Advisory. No matter how large or small your club all donations are accepted and the canister money is always a good bet.

Give what you can when you can. Sorry I missed the meeting. Doctor making me stay home hoping to prevent pneumonia

Our District Walkathon is in the planning stages they hope to have it in early June. As soon as I get additional information I will pass the news along.

Enjoy the Easter Holiday and will be in touch real soon.

Respectfully Submitted,
Louise J Wojtkiewicz, 33N

“Blindness Knows’ No Age”

Would you like to get a great meal, with a discount and support cutting-edge vision research?

Ask your MLERF Director how you can get a Texas Roadhouse Gift Card.

5th Wednesday - 2019
Jan 30 May 29* July 31* Oct 30*
<http://www.mlerfi.org>



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GIFT CARD

News From the Districts

District 33K



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A great article on the Polar Plunge....



Chilly Lake Pearl Polar Plunge a heartwarming success

By Heather McCarron - Wicked Local
Apr 10, 2019

WRENTHAM -- For a brief time, there were sharks in the water at Lake Pearl on April 6, but they weren't the only invasive species to break the 39-degree surface. Despite her ability to freeze things on contact, Queen Elsa managed to take a plunge,



along with Super Man and Elvis Presley, and a group of bathers in shower caps, among others.

It was all part of the 3rd Annual Polar Plunge at Lake Pearl,

hosted by the Lions Clubs of Norfolk, Plainville and Wrentham.

The event, which originated with the Norfolk Lions, invites "all strong, brave and kind people" to help raise funds for the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund by taking a dip into the frigid April waters of Lake Pearl. To add to the fun, Plungers are encouraged to wear costumes and compete for prizes.

Ginny MacKeen, dressed as the ice queen Elsa, emerged from the water at the Lake Pearl function facility's beach with her husband Ken and brother in-law Richard, and proclaimed, "It was cold!" "It took the breath away. It was good, though," she said.

Sporting shark headgear, Lyn Benton, of Norfolk, shared the sentiment. Echoing the opinion of other Plungers, she said it was all well worthwhile. "It couldn't be for a better cause," she said. "It isn't something I would have done otherwise."



The other shark to invade the waters briefly was Carl Evans, of Wrentham, who proclaimed the dip "brisk and refreshing," and then agreed with Benton, "It's always worth it."

Wrentham Lion Greg Stahl said the water temperature over the last three years has hovered around the same area of the thermometer. The first year it was 37 degrees Fahrenheit, while last year and this year is was 39 degrees.

The Lions were pleased to have two Leos Clubs participating, he said. "We had the King Philip Leos and the Holliston Leos," he said.

Stahl said the Lions Clubs give all credit to the Norfolk Lions for coming up with the idea to begin with. "They had the idea, and then they came to us (Wrentham Lions) because they didn't have a lake and we did," he said with a laugh.

It was a match made. And soon the Plainville Lions also joined the pride, being a part of the King Philip area family.

Since the first splash on a snowy day in 2017, the Lake Pearl Polar Plunge has seen enough heartwarming success to take the chill off everyone involved. In 2017, according to the Lions' Polar Plunge website, 49 steel-nerved Plungers took the dip, raising nearly \$25,000. Last year, 56 Plungers made their dip into the lake look like going for a swim on a summer's day, all while raising almost \$30,000.

This year, at least 110 Plungers participated -- the Lions were still figuring the total because of late registrations on Saturday.

The Lions were also still taking donations into this week and did not yet have a total for 2019, but early figures place the collection at nearly \$30,000 even as donations continue to come in and be counted up. It was hoped going into the event that 2019 would show the first two years' fundraising feats to be just the tip of an iceberg, and so far it appears this year's event is likely to top the last two.

Wrentham Lion Steve Langley, who is also a Wrentham selectman, was among those who took the plunge, and he was grateful that spring decided to allow a sunny, pleasantly warm day.

"It was probably the best year so far (to take the Plunge) because the water was cold but you could get out of the water and into the sun," he said.

That said, he added, "we can stand some momentary pain" to help the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund. "It's a wonderful organization." To make a donation, go online to www.lionspolarplunge.org.

Thank you very much to all of the clubs and individuals that donated. We hope to grow this event each year and bring about an end to blindness and visual impairment in our lifetime.

GO BRUINS!! GO SOX!

Yours in Lionism,

PDG Doreen
District 33K

News From the Districts

District 33S



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Warren Bennis said “Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality”. Our District Governor Kathy Salem has the vision to raise over Four Hundred Thousand Dollars in 33S for Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Foundation this year. And we and she are well on our way to do just that.

At our Mid-Winter Convention One Hundred Thirty-Eight Thousand Nine Hundred-Seventy Three dollars was given. Of that amount Six Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty from Pennies for Sight. Eight Thousand Seven Hundred from Journey for Sight and Two Thousand One Hundred Sixty-Three from our Belly Flop Contest.

The Convention was a success with all the programs, education and camaraderie. The theme “Arabian Nights” was well carried out throughout the weekend. West Bridgewater and Abington Lions were the host clubs and decorations were something to behold. Pictures of members on the flying carpet and Hookah Tent and our members were in the spirit with their costumes. Yes, even a belly dancer and some lessons taught.

If you have not witnessed our Belly Flop Contest in the past it is something to see. This year bathing suits to fit the theme. Our Governor Kathy as an Arabian Princess, Abington Lion Joe Russell (a perennial) and Rockland Lion Jay Leahy as sheiks and one of Acushnet’s newest Lion Tommy Lipsett as Spiderman. As they pranced around the pool folding money was thrown from the balconies of the guest rooms that overlooked the pool and onlookers cheered.

Our Blink of an Eye this Fall raised Twelve Thousand Dollars for Eye Research. Save the date of September 28, 2019 for our next Blink of an Eye fundraiser on the Cape Cod Canal. This year will include a Poker Run/Walk and a Corn Hole Contest. Now is the time to think about teams.

Paw Sox tickets are on sale for June 9, 2019. Bring your club banner for a Pre-Game Parade. Everyone is invited to participate in the parade. Ten dollars per ticket with half going to MLERF. Mail request for tickets to Nate Helgerson, 356 Chestnut Street Seekonk, MA 02771. June 1, 2019 is the cutoff date for tickets. You’ll have a great time to see the next crop of young players for the Red Sox.

As Lions you can contact the MLERF Directors if you wish to visit our research labs on our visitations. Don’t miss out on this opportunity. Because of limits to the amount of people please contact a board member, check the date and have a visit. You will not be disappointed. Our grants to these researchers are so much appreciated and the results are significant.

At the 33S Cabinet Meeting March 25 I heard Third Vice President Matthew Richardson of MLERF say, “Massachusetts Lions Eye Research is our gift to the world from Massachusetts Lions”. No truer words were ever spoken. Think of how many people can see because of you.

Thank you Lions for all you do. Reach Kathy’s Goal (\$400,000) for 33S. And as Kathy says if you need help with a fundraiser she, her cabinet officers and fellow Lions are there to help you. Just ask.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You to every Lion.

PDG Wayne Smith,
District S & Past President MLERF

POLAR PLUNGE PHOTOS APRIL 6, 2019



POLAR PLUNGE PHOTOS APRIL 6, 2019



DISTRICT 33K LEOS



WRENTHAM LIONS CLUB



MILLIS LIONS CLUB



POLAR PLUNGE PHOTOS APRIL 6, 2019



District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33Y \$2,170.62

IMO Beatrice & Job Vibal		\$100.00
IMO Donald Clark		\$25.00
IMO Donald Clark, PDG		\$100.00
IMO Elizabeth Rhodes		\$30.00
IMO Fred L. Delgreco		\$200.00
IMO Fred L. Delgreco		\$25.00
IMO Gertrude Converse		\$25.00
IMO John 'Jack' Conroy		\$730.00
IMO John "Jack" Conroy		\$30.00
IMO John Enroy		\$25.00
IMO John Porter		\$100.00
IMO Judith Thomas		\$100.00
IMO Leo Schleicher Jr.		\$25.00
IMO Les Allen		\$25.00
IMO Leslie Allen		\$50.00
IMO Leslie Allen		\$50.00
IMO Linda Zagorski		\$25.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Paul Brouillette		\$10.62
IMO Paul L. Brouillette		\$30.00
IMO PDG Donald Clark		\$25.00
IMO PDG John Kuhn		\$25.00
IMO Shawn Wilder		\$50.00
IMO Shawn Wilder		\$25.00
IMO Shawn Wilder		\$40.00
IMO Shawn Wilder		\$25.00
IMO Shawn Wilder		\$25.00
IMO Shawn Wilder		\$25.00
IMO Shirley Harrison		\$100.00
IMO The Duquette Family		\$25.00
IMO Zachariah Lashua		\$25.00
IMO Zacharih Lashua		\$25.00

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33A \$2,580.00

IHO Albert Brooks		\$50.00
IHO Dr. John Mouney		\$50.00
IHO Richard Ferrucci		\$100.00
IHO Todd Karkane		\$50.00
IHO Todd Karkane		\$250.00
IHO Todd Karkane		\$200.00
IMO Alan Slaney		\$50.00
IMO Aram Thomasian		\$50.00
IMO Carl Thornburg		\$100.00
IMO Carole Lambert		\$25.00
IMO Carole Lambert		\$50.00
IMO Carole Lambert		\$50.00
IMO David Nowers		\$25.00
IMO Don Ackerman		\$50.00
IMO Edward Nawnacaj		\$25.00
IMO Eva Marzilli		\$50.00
IMO Frank J. McMahon		\$100.00
IMO Frank Radock		\$50.00
IMO Helen Kularski		\$50.00
IMO Joanne Stoler		\$25.00
IMO Karen Farrell		\$500.00
IMO Marilyn Fuller		\$100.00
IMO Patricia Spain		\$100.00
IMO Paul Brouillette		\$100.00
IMO PDG David Nowers		\$25.00
IMO PDG Paul Brouillette		\$50.00
IMO Robert Canterbury, Sr.		\$50.00
IMO Robert Gloster		\$25.00
IMO Sadie Shippa		\$5.00
IMO Shawn Wilder		\$20.00
IMO Sybil M. Dupont		\$25.00
IMO Sylvia Redpath		\$30.00
IMO Sylvia Redpath		\$50.00
IMO Zacharial Lashua		\$100.00

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33N \$16,293.22

IHO Barbara Picclol		\$25.00
IHO Brian Doherty		\$1,500.00
IHO Brian LaPierre		\$250.00
IHO DG Jim Wagner		\$1,000.00
IHO DG Wagner		\$100.00
IHO DG Wagner		\$250.00
IHO John & Marie Veilleux		\$50.00
IHO Richard MacPherson		\$25.00
IHO Roger Jones		\$100.00
IHO Townsend Lions Club		\$100.00
IMO Angelina M. Caggiano		\$25.00
IMO Anne Beauchamp		\$100.00
IMO Anne Beauchamp		\$10.00
IMO Anthony Carra		\$100.00
IMO Anthony Tufts		\$50.00
IMO Anthoula Meimaris		\$100.00
IMO Antonietta O. Cantwell		\$50.00
IMO Armond LeDuc		\$10.00
IMO Barbara Piccolo		\$50.00
IMO Beth Bennett		\$250.00
IMO Blanche Spilewski		\$25.00
IMO Catherine Doughty		\$25.00
IMO Christ J. Bouras		\$20.00
IMO Chun Sun Bacon		\$25.00
IMO Daniel F. Pimenta		\$30.00
IMO Doloresa Morrissette		\$10.00
IMO Don Jones		\$30.00
IMO Dustin Lemelin		\$26.08
IMO Dwight B. McFadden		\$50.00
IMO Eileen Virginia Doherty		\$25.00
IMO Eileen Virginia Doherty		\$25.00
IMO Elaine A. Chang		\$5,300.00
IMO Elaine Chang		\$25.00
IMO Elaine Chang		\$25.00
IMO Eugene Walsh		\$100.00

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33N \$16,293.22

IMO FranC Celina Marshall		\$25.00
IMO Frances Newman		\$25.00
IMO Francis M. Carroll		\$25.00
IMO Frank Flaherty		\$25.00
IMO Fred Baldwin		\$100.00
IMO Fred MacBorne		\$50.00
IMO Fred Pais		\$25.00
IMO Fred Pais		\$50.00
IMO Fred Pais, PDG		\$50.00
IMO Fred Pais, PDG		\$25.00
IMO Fred Paris		\$25.00
IMO Frederick Pais, PDG		\$10.00
IMO Fredrick "Freddy" Pais		\$25.00
IMO Gertrude Converse		\$25.00
IMO Giselia Resendes		\$10.00
IMO Grace M. Petrucci		\$100.00
IMO Helen Bell		\$25.00
IMO Helen E. Russo		\$10.00
IMO James Miceli		\$100.00
IMO James Young		\$150.00
IMO Jennifer M. Succo		\$50.00
IMO Jo Ann Maille		\$10.00
IMO John DeMichaelis		\$25.00
IMO John J. Mulkerin		\$25.00
IMO John J. Mulkerin		\$10.00
IMO John M. Russo, Jr.		\$100.00
IMO Joseph Cahill		\$50.00
IMO Joseph Cahill		\$25.00
IMO Joseph J. LaFratta		\$40.00
IMO Joseph J. LaFratta		\$25.00
IMO Joseph J. LaFratta		\$100.00
IMO Joseph LaFratta		\$25.00
IMO Julia D. Jean		\$10.00
IMO Kacharih Lashua		\$25.00
IMO Kathleen Gaudet		\$20.00

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33N \$16,293.22

IMO Kay Kozwich		\$25.00
IMO Kay Kozwich		\$25.00
IMO Kay Kozwich		\$50.00
IMO Kerry Flaherty		\$100.00
IMO Kerry Flaherty		\$25.00
IMO Kevin Carlton		\$50.00
IMO Lawrence Leboleuk		\$25.00
IMO LeAnne Leslie Kreamer		\$250.00
IMO Lisa Tea Han		\$20.00
IMO Marion Birch		\$50.00
IMO Marjorie Simeone		\$25.00
IMO Martin J. Lucente		\$50.00
IMO Mary Bertolino		\$25.00
IMO Mary H. Donahue		\$50.00
IMO Mary Rosnov		\$50.00
IMO Micheal Sughrue		\$25.00
IMO Morris Piccolo		\$25.00
IMO Naomi E. "Betty" McManus		\$250.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$20.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Palo Pierce		\$250.00
IMO Patricia Marchand		\$50.00
IMO Patricia Marchand		\$50.00
IMO Paul Ducharme		\$6.00
IMO Paula Block Morency		\$25.00
IMO Pearl Donahue		\$25.00
IMO Ralpy Lingley		\$25.00
IMO Rita Allitto		\$25.00
IMO Rita Allitto		\$100.00
IMO Rita Allitto		\$500.00
IMO Rita Allitto		\$10.00
IMO Rita Attilo		\$50.00
IMO Rita Attilo		\$331.14

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33N \$16,293.22

IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$100.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$10.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$100.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$50.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$50.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$20.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$25.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$50.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$25.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$50.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$25.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$25.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$100.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$100.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$25.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$15.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$100.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$50.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$25.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$100.00
IMO Rita P. Allitto		\$50.00
IMO Robert Biggins		\$250.00
IMO Robert Naughton		\$100.00
IMO Robert Ryan		\$10.00
IMO Robert Ryan		\$10.00
IMO Robert Ryan		\$25.00
IMO Russell J. Janvier		\$20.00
IMO Ryan M. Munson		\$25.00
IMO Sharley A, Skinner		\$50.00
IMO Sharon McAvenia		\$50.00
IMO Shawn Wilder		\$25.00
IMO Sonia Margolies		\$100.00
IMO Stewart Wood		\$100.00
IMO Stewart Wood		\$25.00

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33N \$16,293.22

IMO Sylvia Camilleri		\$50.00
IMO Theresa Brissette		\$10.00
IMO Valerie D. Murphy		\$100.00
IMO Virginia Doherty		\$50.00
IMO William Toomloy		\$30.00
Nicholas Chakoutis		\$25.00



District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33K \$23,217.10

IMO Andy Talvy		\$500.00
IMO Ash Fry		\$25.00
IMO Bob Waters		\$50.00
IMO Bob Waters		\$25.00
IMO Bob Waters		\$51.86
IMO Bruce Wellnitz		\$200.00
IMO Diane Menard		\$50.00
IMO Don Ackerman		\$50.00
IMO Don Ackerman		\$51.86
IMO Donald Ackerman		\$25.00
IMO Ed Quinlan		\$51.86
IMO Edward J. Quinlan		\$100.00
IMO Felix C. Moscheella		\$25.00
IMO Felix C. Moscheella		\$50.00
IMO Felix Moschella		\$100.00
IMO Frank Giunta		\$25.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$10.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$50.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$50.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$25.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$25.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$200.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$100.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$50.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$50.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$25.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$50.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$150.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$50.00
IMO Gerard Wood		\$51.86
IMO Joe Burgoyne		\$5,000.00
IMO Judith M. Cataldo		\$25.00
IMO Louise Ann Thomas		\$50.00
IMO Louise Thomas		\$30.00
IMO Louise Thomas		\$50.00

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33K \$23,217.10

IMO Marie Woodside		\$5,000.00
IMO Marjorie Good		\$20.00
IMO Mark Gifford		\$500.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$25.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$25.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$25.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$525.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$25.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$145.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$500.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$500.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$500.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$25.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$125.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$500.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$1,000.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$1,333.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$75.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$25.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$51.86
IMO Ned Merrick		\$26.08
IMO Pearl Donahue		\$25.00

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33K \$23,217.10

IMO Pearl Donahue		\$50.00
IMO Pearl Donahue		\$20.00
IMO Pearl Donahue		\$250.00
IMO Pearl Donahue		\$50.00
IMO Pearl Donahue		\$50.00
IMO Peter Friel		\$150.00
IMO PID Karla Harris		\$50.00
IMO Richard Sully Leghorn		\$20.00
IMO Rosemary Coates		\$25.00
IMO Rosemary Coates		\$125.00
IMO Sandra Mimms		\$1,500.00
IMO Steve Joseph		\$51.86
IMO Susan Anspacn		\$50.00
IMO Theresa Aponte		\$50.00
IMO Theresa Dunford		\$30.00
IMO William Leacu		\$75.00
IMO Bill Schoellkopf		\$100.00
IMO Bill Schoellkopf		\$100.00
IMO Bill Schoellkopf		\$50.00
IMO Bill Schoellkopf		\$25.00
IMO Bill Schoellkopf		\$25.00
IMO Bill Schoellkopf		\$100.00
IMO Bill Schoellkopf		\$100.00
IMO Bill Schoellkopf		\$100.00
IMO Bill Schoellkopf		\$51.86
IMO Bill Schoellkopf		\$100.00
IMO William Schoellkopf		\$25.00
IMO William Schoellkopf		\$100.00
IMO William Schoellkopf		\$25.00
IMO William Schoellkopf		\$170.00
IMO William Schoellkopf		\$25.00
IMO William Schoellkopf		\$100.00
IMO William Schoellkopf		\$25.00

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33S \$14,508.86

IHO Arthur Westgate		\$135.00
IHO Dennis-Harwich 50th Anniversary		\$50.00
IHO DG Deb Grassi		\$25.00
IHO Joyce Middleton		\$500.00
IHO Joyce Middleton		\$50.00
IHO L. Doug Sime		\$50.00
IHO Mass Cruisers		\$500.00
IHO PDG Dave & Susan Barbour		\$50.00
IHO Sheron Audette		\$50.00
IMO Adeline B. Levine		\$25.00
IMO Armand DuPont		\$20.00
IMO Armand DuPont		\$200.00
IMO Armand Dupont		\$75.00
IMO Armand Dupont		\$500.00
IMO Armand Dupont		\$100.00
IMO Armand Dupont		\$100.00
IMO Armond Dupont		\$100.00
IMO Arthur Blackburn		\$250.00
IMO Ash Fry		\$25.00
IMO Ash Fry		\$100.00
IMO Ash Fry		\$50.00
IMO Ash Fry		\$50.00
IMO Benjamin Swain		\$100.00
IMO Betty McKenna		\$160.00
IMO Bill Frizzel		\$100.00
IMO Billy DeCosta		\$50.00
IMO Cathrine Robbins Howland		\$25.00
IMO Cathy Charpentier		\$50.00
IMO David Nowers		\$25.00
IMO Donald Forget		\$25.00
IMO Doug Reinbold		\$35.00
IMO Ed Benoit		\$20.00
IMO Edward J. Quinlan		\$50.00
IMO Eleanor Souza		\$125.00
IMO Emile Camire		\$20.00

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33S \$14,508.86

IMO Emile Camire		\$230.00
IMO Fred Paris		\$25.00
IMO H. Lindor "Lindy" Salois		\$50.00
IMO Ilia Cenerizio		\$100.00
IMO Joan McMillan Costa		\$50.00
IMO Joe O'Neill		\$50.00
IMO John "Jay" Ribeiro		\$50.00
IMO John J. Gabriel		\$50.00
IMO John Kohn		\$100.00
IMO Joseph Techiera		\$1,000.00
IMO Lee Zagorski		\$50.00
IMO Len Butler 7 checks		\$470.00
IMO Leo R. Schieicher, Jr.		\$100.00
IMO Leo R. Schleicher, Jr.		\$50.00
IMO Leo Schleicher Jr.		\$25.00
IMO Leo Schleicher Jr.		\$25.00
IMO Leo Schleicher Jr.		\$20.00
IMO Linda Mizher		\$50.00
IMO Lois Eliasson		\$100.00
IMO Lydia Mentus		\$400.00
IMO Lydia Mentus		\$50.00
IMO M. David Levine		\$25.00
IMO Marc Bouchard		\$100.00
IMO Marck Gfford		\$100.00
IMO Marie Viello Reggiani		\$25.00
IMO Mario Rosario		\$25.00
IMO Marion King		\$25.00
IMO Marjorie Forbes		\$100.00
IMO Mark Gifford		\$345.00
IMO Mark Gifford		\$100.00
IMO Mark Gifford		\$25.00
IMO Mark Gifford		\$10.00
IMO Mark Silva		\$10.00
IMO Marle Silva		\$1,000.00
IMO Mary Botelho		\$100.00
IMO Mary Jane Ferreira		\$20.00

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33S \$14,508.86

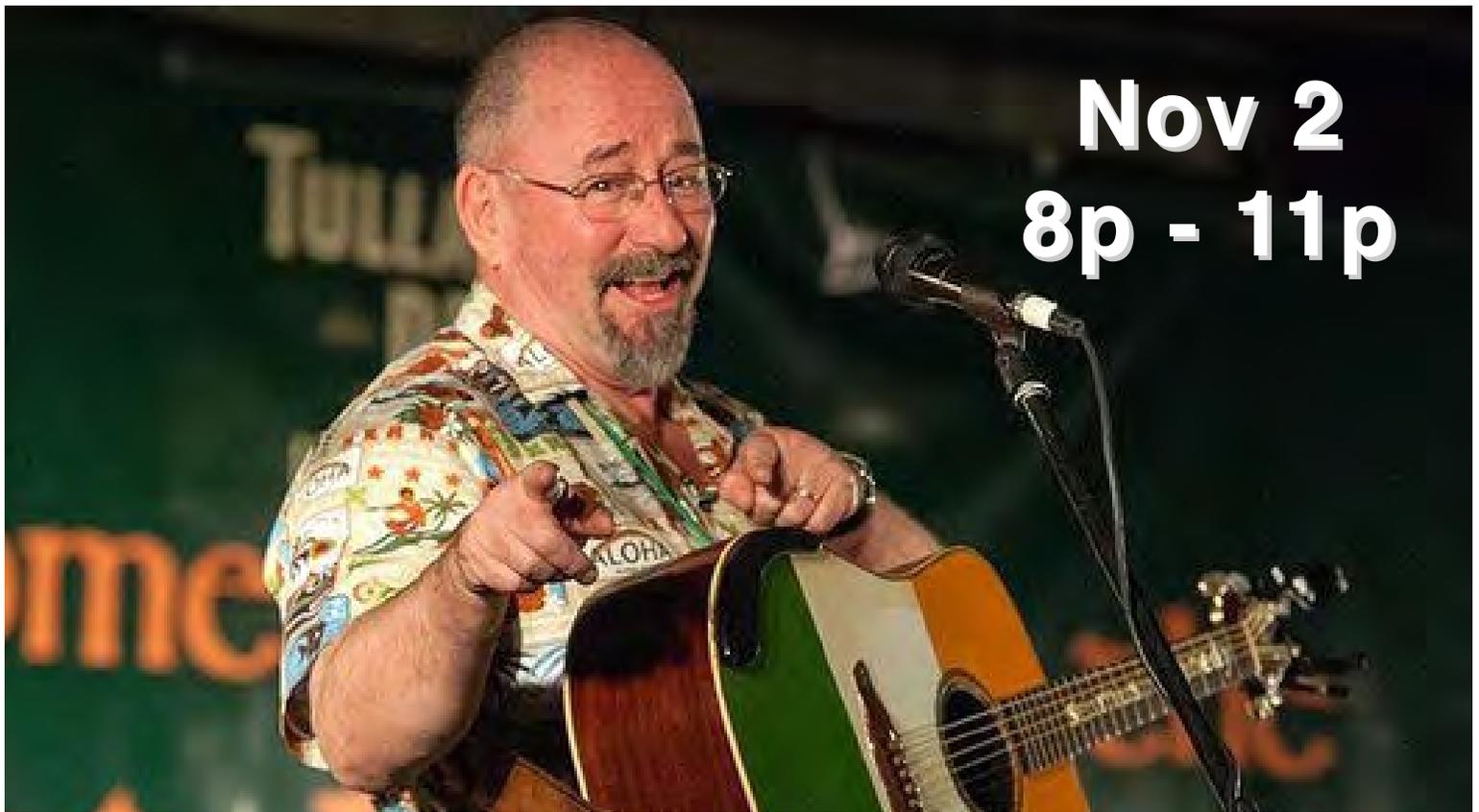
IMO Maurice Tavares		\$250.00
IMO Mitchell Wolski		\$25.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$108.86
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$100.00
IMO Ned Merrick		\$50.00
IMO Ned Merritt		\$50.00
IMO Parker Chick		\$50.00
IMO Paul Fruzzetti		\$1,000.00
IMO Pauline Anne Viera		\$50.00
IMO PDG Bill Emerson		\$100.00
IMO PDG David Nowers		\$50.00
IMO PDG Donald Clark		\$50.00
IMO Peter Duff		\$100.00
IMO Peter Duff		\$100.00
IMO PIP William Wonder		\$25.00
IMO Rita Allitto		\$25.00
IMO Rita Chapdelaine		\$100.00
IMO Rita Chapdelaine		\$150.00
IMO Rita Chapdelaine		\$30.00
IMO Rita Chapdelaine		\$545.00
IMO Robert Perry, Sr.		\$100.00
IMO Robert Reeves		\$100.00
IMO Ronald R. Gohes		\$25.00
IMO Sandra Tavares		\$25.00
IMO Sandra Tavares		\$50.00
IMO Sandy Tavares		\$100.00
IMO Shawn Wilder		\$20.00
IMO Shawn Wilder		\$20.00
IMO Shelia Isserlis		\$15.00
IMO Shirley Ann Perry Thomas		\$50.00
IMO Ted Dumas		\$350.00

District Memorial & Honor Donations 2017-2018

DISTRICT 33S \$14,508.86

IMO Theresa Dunford		\$500.00
IMO Theresa Dunford		\$100.00
IMO Theresa Dunford		\$50.00
IMO Theresa Dunford		\$25.00
IMO Theresa Dunford		\$50.00
IMO Theresa Dunford		\$50.00
IMO Theresa Dunford		\$25.00
IMO Theresa Dunford		\$25.00
IMO Theresa Dunford		\$100.00
IMO Theresa Dunford		\$200.00
IMO Tom Cannon		\$100.00
IMO Veronica C. Strojny		\$25.00
IMO Vishalakshmi Babu		\$100.00
IMO Warren Emerson		\$50.00
IMO Warren Emerson, PDG		\$25.00
IMO William L. Smith		\$50.00
IMO William Moran		\$50.00
IMO Zacharih Lashua		\$25.00





Nov 2
8p - 11p

A NIGHT WITH SEAMUS KENNEDY

To Support Massachusetts Lion Eye Research Fund

Seamus is four-decade veteran of the Irish/Celtic festival circuit, Seamus Kennedy was first influenced by the legendary Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem. From them he learned the importance of not only being a solid musician, but also of being an all-round entertainer.

With a thorough knowledge of the traditional and contemporary songs of Ireland and Scotland, he is equally proficient with American music, be it folk, country, bluegrass or a little Western Swing.

Originally from Belfast, but now based in Annapolis, MD, he has been entertaining audiences all over the U.S. for more than four decades. At home in venues ranging from intimate house-concerts and folk-clubs to large concert halls and festivals, Seamus has been bringing tour groups to Ireland for 30 years to experience the music and culture of his homeland "up close and personal".

**"A master showman with an unmatched repertoire;
a maestro among Irish troubadours."
~ Irish Fest, Milwaukee**

The General Admission is **\$25/ \$30** the night of.
There will be raffle prizes, cash bar and snacks.

Questions? Contact PDG Pat Kalicki 508-498-2770

Franklin Elks Lodge
1077 Pond Street
Franklin, MA 02038

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.



Boston University School of Medicine
Department of Ophthalmology
Sharmila Masli, Ph.D.
Associate Professor

Chronic inflammation of the eye's surface is known as dry eye. The inflammation can affect the whites of the eye, the cornea, and the glands that make tears. This is seen in patients diagnosed with rheumatic disease and Sjögren's syndrome. The abnormal production of tears lead to a loss of its protective and lubricating quality. This irritation and susceptibility to infection of the eye's surface results in chronic inflammation reducing quality of life, and risking the loss of vision if left untreated. While there is no cure, the treatments are limited to steroids and biologics to suppress the inflammation. Long-term use of these treatments are known to cause many complications including infection and death. Previously our research identified a protein called thrombospondin. We found that it has a role in regulating inflammation. Without this protein, chronic dry eye disease develops in animal models. The support from the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Foundation helped us to demonstrate that a small part of the thrombospondin protein inhibits immune cells from migrating out of the blood into the tissue. Using a small part of the thrombospondin protein in eye drops, we were able to suppress inflammation in the animal models of dry eye. This finding holds a promise for an effective and safe new therapy for dry eye disease.

The support from MLERF is helping us to understand how this newly developed therapy suppresses the inflammation of chronic dry eye, and whether it can restore healthy tear production. Our preliminary findings were presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology, and were submitted for publication. Moreover, we used these preliminary results to get an industry-sponsored research project. Such a project means that we are moving closer to clinical trials of this therapeutic approach. The support of the MLERF gave us the potential of finding a possible cure for dry eye disease.



Boston University School of Medicine
Department of Ophthalmology
Andrew Taylor
Associate Dean for Research
Professor and Director of Research

Over the past years the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Foundation has supported our pilot projects to understand how immune cells are controlled within the eye. Recently we have been studying how the healthy eye controls macrophages. Macrophages are the white blood cells that eat material cell waste, bad proteins, and pathogens. They do this to clear or eliminate material that is harmful or infections. When the macrophages do this they mediate inflammation. Within the eye inflammation causes loss of vision; therefore, the healthy eye has a way to prevent inflammation. We have been asking that if the eye prevents inflammation is it also preventing the macrophages from eating? The support of the MLERF had allowed us to do the research to find an answer to this question.

We found that macrophages do eat, but do not process the material in a way that mediates inflammation. We have even found the molecules made by cells in the eye that cause this change in processing the eaten material. By finding the molecules that mediate this activity within the eye, we have the potential of finding new therapeutic approaches to suppress inflammation when it happens in eyes with uveitis.

This work has led to one published paper, and the results were used in a grant submitted to NIH. Also, through the support of the MLERF two masters students in medical sciences completed their thesis on this work and graduated. In addition, one undergraduate student completed an independent research project, and will be an author on the second paper being submitted. Moreover, I recruited a new Research Assistant Professor in my laboratory whose work will include this research, which would not have happened without MLERF support to begin this new direction in our vision science research.



Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary

Title: Neuroplastic reorganization in cortical visual impairment

Investigators: Lotfi B. Merabet and Peter Bex

Cortical visual impairment (CVI) is the leading cause of permanent visual impairment in children and has become a significant, yet poorly understood public health concern. The condition is clinically defined as significant visual dysfunction caused by injury to visual pathways and structures occurring during early perinatal development. Depending on the location and extent of damage, children with CVI often present with a myriad of visual deficits including decreased visual acuity and impaired visual field function. Most striking, however, are impairments in visual processing and attention which have a significant impact on learning, development, and independence. There is evidence that children affected by CVI can successfully undergo intensive training to recover a certain degree of visual function. However, more research is needed to fully understand how the developing brain reorganizes in relation to sensory functional recovery.

A key question is whether observed compensatory behaviors in CVI reflect differential susceptibility in sensory processing streams that sub serve object identification and spatial localization (referred to as the ventral “what” and dorsal “where” pathways respectively). The knowledge gained would assist a multidisciplinary caregiver team in the clinical neuro-developmental assessment, rehabilitation, and the education of a child with CVI.

Thanks to this initial support, we have been able to demonstrate the feasibility and proof of concept of an advanced brain imaging approach that can tract how the brain re-wires itself in young individuals with CVI. Specifically, using high angular resolution diffusion imaging (HARDI), we have demonstrated that the brain of CVI patients is indeed wired differently not only to that of normally sighted individuals, but also individuals who are visually impaired due to diseases of the eye. Furthermore, the degree of developmental brain malformation appears to be associated with the visual and cognitive difficulties observed in individuals with CVI. To our knowledge, this is the first demonstration of its kind using the brain imaging methodology we employed. This has led to a number of conference presentations and a publication in the Journal of American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (JAAPOS; note that our work was the issue cover feature). Finally, due to the pilot data and initial results obtained under this initial support, we were able to secure a substantial grant (\$300,000 over three years) from Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) and the Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) to further study neuroplasticity and CVI.

**Tufts University School of Medicine
YOUR MLERF FUNDS Resulted In –
The Discovery Of A Novel Protein That
Promoted Healing Of Corneal Wounds**

Researchers were able to carry out in vitro experiments for a study which discovered a novel protein, galectin-3, that promotes healing of corneal wounds. Initial preliminary, in vitro experiments for this study were carried out using a Mass Lions Eye Research grant made to the New England Eye Center/Tufts University School of Medicine. The pilot data



resulting from this support enabled us to successfully compete for a large NIH grant (\$~2.0 million) to perform in vivo studies in animals and to characterize the molecular mechanism by which Galectin-3 promotes healing of wounds. This study conclusively established that galectin-3 has a potent ability to promote healing of corneal wounds by a novel mechanism. Mass Lions support was acknowledged in the publication resulting from this work. Tufts University has licensed this invention to a Biotech company to develop a drug for treatment of non-healing wounds.

Our findings that galectin-3 promotes healing of corneal wounds have provided impetus to other scientists to assess the beneficial effect of galectins in promoting healing of skin, intestinal, kidney and uterine wounds.

In summary, modest support made possible by Mass Lions for pilot studies on cornea have resulted in discovery of novel drug targets that may help millions of individuals.

**YOUR MLERF FUNDS Resulted In – Maintaining And Expanding A Large Macular Degeneration Database
And Repository – Discovery Of Several New Genes**

MLERF funds have helped to support the Ophthalmic Epidemiology and Genetics Service maintain and expand their large and unique macular degeneration database and biorepository, a source of numerous studies leading to important discoveries. The databases were initiated 25 years ago at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. The investigator was the first to study epidemiology and to conduct genetic studies of macular degeneration at that institution. This resource has continued to be developed at Tufts Medical Center with the help of the MLERF.

The team has discovered several new genes for macular degeneration in various biologic pathways, made possible by genotyping and genetic sequencing partially supported by MLERF. The team was the first to identify rare genetic variants for this disease, which are strong predictors of disease and provide targets for new therapies. Most recently they discovered more rare variants in 3 genes, and demonstrated that rare variants explain disease in some families with the typical form of age-related macular degeneration.

These results are published in Nature Genetics and other scientific journals which acknowledge Lions support. nsored by the Eye Research Fund.



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