



MASSACHUSETTS LIONS EYE RESEARCH FUND

EYE CATCHER

Summer/Fall 2018 -2019 Volume 53 No. 1

**65
YEARS**

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

**65
YEARS**



Introducing the new officers and directors of the 2018 - 2019 Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund Board of Directors.

Page 1



Welcome message from new MLERF president, past Cabinet Secretary/Treasurer, Robert Haskell of the Fitchburg-Leominster Lions Club

Page 2



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

Page 4



Thank you!

Dear Friends of Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

When I became President of MLERFI in August of 2017, reaching the \$1million goal seemed like a dream...
A dream that YOU, the Lions of MD33 made come true.

I would like to sincerely thank you for your dedication to the cause of finding a cure for preventable blindness. We have all worked hard fundraising this past year, but our challenge is not over. As we speak, researchers are in their labs working hard, never giving up on finding a cure; we must not give up either. The next penny, nickel or dime could be the one that finds a cure!

Again, let me thank each and every Club for helping me reach my goal, for your donations - big and small. The Lions of MD33 are amazing people and you should be congratulated for a job well done.

Sincerely thankful, Yours in Lionism,

Roger Jones, Past President
Mass Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

Board of Directors

Corporate Officers/Executive Committee

PCST Robert Haskell	33A President
PDG Jeanne Farrow	33N 1 st Vice President
PDG Roland Grenier	33S 2 nd Vice President
PDG Matthew Richardson	33K 3 rd Vice President
PCC Jean Wilder	33Y Secretary
PDG Dr. James Roth	33K Treasurer
PDG Roger Jones	33Y Immediate Past President

Assistant Treasurer (Non-Voting)

PP Mike Gmitter, 33N

Directors – District Governors

DG Stephen Karch, 33Y

DG Tim DeVault, 33A

DG Frank Bertolino, 33N

DG Debbie Hayes, 33K

DG Kathy Salem, 33S

Directors – 1st Vice District Governors

1VDG Arthur McConnell, 33Y

1VDG Colleen Oncay, 33A

1VDG David Wilson, 33N

1VDG Dawn Rice-Norton, 33K

1VDG John Babb, 33S

Directors – 2nd Vice District Governors (Non-Voting)

33Y

2VDG PCST Denise Andrews, 33A

2VDG PCST Marcel Plouffe, 33N

2VDG Dr. Deb Wayne, 33K

2VDG PCST Sandy Fife, 33S

Advisors

PID L Doug Sime, Orientation

PID Chuck Kostro, Grants

PDG Wane Smith, Orientation/T&E/PR

PDG Jim Roth, Grants

PDG Roger Jones, Orientation

Dr. Kathy Prucnal, Grants

PDG Randy Pinch, Public Relations

Parliamentarians

PDG Ted Irvin

PDG Wayne Smith

PID L. Doug Sime

Directors - 2019

ZC Jack Walsh, 33Y

CST Teri LaCoy, 33A

PP Mike Gmitter, 33N

PDG Pat Kalicki, 33K

PDG Bev Dillon, 33S

Directors - 2020

Jim Allen, 33Y

PDG Mark E. Desmarais, 33A

PDG Jane Fanjoy, 33N

RC Diana Faust, 33K

Ken Love, 33S

Directors - 2021

PCST Claudette Placzek, 33Y

John Reimer, 33A

Brenda MacPherson, 33N

PCST Peg Needre, 33K

PCT Robert Brown, 33S

Directors - 2022

PZC Maryann Bankman, 33Y

Joseph Allen, 33A

Anthony Pecci, 33N

PZC Gino Angelone, 33K

PC Ted Cummins, 33S

Eye Catcher Reporters (Non Voting)

PCC Jean Wilder, 33Y

PCST Denise Andrews, 33A

PP PDG Louise J Wojtkiewicz, 33N

PDG Doreen Martel, 33K

Ted Cummins, 33S

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Being President of Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc. is truly an honor and privilege for me. I am thrilled to be a part of one of the best, if not **the** best, nonprofit organization in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Over the past 66+ years we, the Lions of Multiple District 33, have worked as hard as we can to raise funds for the Boston area hospitals and research centers, and we will continue to do so well into the future.

Some of the key hospitals that we have supported over the years are Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Schepens Eye Research Institute, Boston University Medical Center, Joslin Diabetes Center, Children's Hospital, and Tufts University School of Medicine. The funds raised by our amazing Lions have allowed these research institutes to make advances in vision research that have saved the sight of thousands.

Bringing ideas to fruition through research takes dedication, years and years of painstaking work, long hours and significant amounts of funding. Thanks to your help, researchers have been able to make new discoveries; ones that have allowed doctors to treat individuals suffering from vision problems, with cutting edge treatments discovered right here in Boston. Over the years these dedicated doctors, scientists and laboratory clinicians, have made great strides and successes in treating patients from all over the world, and they could have not done so without the help of Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund Inc.

Over our 50 years of service we have helped to bring attention to the importance of eye safety, the warning signs of eye diseases and available treatments, and every day clinicians and doctors are using the equipment we have helped purchase, like electron microscopes and special eye scanners, to aid in the detection of disease and treatment. Our mission is to help improve the vision of those who need and improve their quality of life.

I ask all the Lions in Massachusetts to do their very best to help and to continue to raise money and support these institutions to find cures for vision-related blindness and disease and to treat and educate everyone on preventable eye injury.

From my heart I thank all of you for what you have done and continue to do.

Yours in Lionism,

Bob Haskell
2018-2019 MLERF President



2018 – 2019 Calendar of Events



2018

SEPT 27 BOD meeting

Crystal Room, Milford

OCT 18 OTR District S

Adria Restaurant, East Bridgewater

OCT 23 Boston Children's Hospital

Boston

NOV 8 BOD meeting

Crystal Room, Milford

NOV 15 Schepens Eye Research Institute

Boston

2019

JAN 10 BOD meeting

Crystal Room, Milford

JAN 11–13 District S Midwinter

Hotel 1620, Plymouth

Theme: Arabian Nights)

JAN 25–27 District Y Midwinter

La Quinta, Springfield

(Theme: Casino Night)

FEB 1–3 District N Midwinter

Crown Plaza, Woburn

(Theme: Welcome to Bedrock Flintstones)

FEB 8-10 District A Midwinter

Double Tree Hotel, Leominster

(Theme: Friday Night at the Movies)

FEB 15-17 District K Midwinter

Dedham Hilton, Dedham

(Theme: One World –It's a Small World)

MAR 14 BU visitation

Details to follow

MAR 28 OTR District A

Crystal Room, Milford

APR 11 Tufts visitation

Details to follow

APR 18 OTR District K

Details to follow

MAY 1–3 State Convention

Sturbridge Hotel, Sturbridge

MAY 9 Mass Eye and Ear

Boston

MAY 16 OTR District Y

Blue Bonnet Diner, Northampton

Nominations

MAY 23 Joslin Diabetes Center

Boston

JUN 20 BOD meeting

Crystal Room, Milford

Elections

JUL 5–9 LCI/International Convention

Milan Italy

JUL 18 Annual Meeting

Details to follow

Grant distributions

AUG 10 Installation/Awards Banquet

Crown Plaza, Woburn

News From the Districts

District 33Y



PCC Jean Wilder
172 Hope Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
(H) 413-774-5925
jwmartinhl@yahoo.com

Congratulations to 33Y for giving more than \$101,000 in donations last year. We almost beat our highest in donations ever!!! You're the best, I knew you could do it. Thank you to everyone who went the extra mile to help President Roger Jones of our own Agawam Lions to make such a big splash to end his year with a total donations of \$1,070,688 which is the highest ever raised by the Lions of Massachusetts in one year. That is totally AWESOME!!!

We have been doing the Pennies for Sight canisters for many years, and some of you may think "What's a penny?" In 33Y the Pittsfield Lions have been doing canisters for 23 years and have raised over \$55,000 for MLERF, just from pocket change. We are encouraging all Lions to take home a canister (or use an old peanut butter, or mayo jar, Kleenex box, vodka bottle or piggy bank, etc.) to collect your change. If you empty your pockets every night into this container of yours you will be amazed at how fast it accumulates. (I'm told one of our canisters less than half full of silver coins is about \$50! That's a lot!). If you donate \$33 as an individual donation you qualify for a President's pin from Pres. Bob Haskell---he can't wait to be able to present lots of these pins to generous Lions.

We are asking all clubs to increase their donation to 10% more than last year, and if your club didn't donate last year, then we are asking for a minimum of \$100 (but hopefully more). If each club in the state does this, we are sure to make President Bob's goal of \$1,050,000.

Are you having trouble coming up with ideas? or you think your club is too small to raise money. Have you ever thought about collecting cans and

bottles to recycle? I know 5 cents at a time doesn't seem like it will amount to much---but you're wrong, just like the pennies they add up fast. 33Y's Pittsfield Lions, spear headed by Lion Gary Lewis, has been collecting cans since 2002. Any guesses as to how many they have collected in those 16 years??? 1,832,000 is the total. That's a grand total of \$91,600 they used for their annual donations, which included MLERF. A can is about 6" long so that's approximately 10,992,000 inches of cans, or 916,000 feet of cans or 173.48 miles of cans, or 21.68 furlongs of cans--(there are 8 furlongs in a mile). 5 cents at a time DOES go a long, long ways! It's not just the money they raised, imagine how much trash that would be along the side of the road, or in our landfills. If you can't imagine that---in this picture there are 40,000 cans ready for pick up. (photo made available by PCST Pat Hunt) They have a recycling company comes right to their door to pick up the cans.

No project is too small, and no project is too big. If you have a great idea and you don't have enough members ask another club to help you, maybe they are struggling with a lack of members and would be more than happy to help. Even ask another service organization. And if you make it a visible project in the community, maybe you'll get others to help or to join Lions.

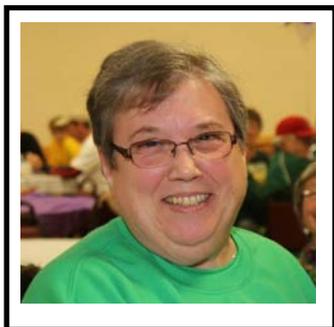
As always if you need canisters, memorial envelopes, or you would like a speaker please contact a director: Maryann Bankman, John Walsh, Claudette Placzek or myself, or a Past President of MLERF. Lions and MLERF is our passion, and we'd love to spread the word.

Have a Happy and safe Halloween, and Happy fundraising to all!

HUGS
Jean M. Wilder, PCC
Secretary MLERF

News From the Districts

District 33A



PCST, Denise Andrews

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Fitchburg, MA 01420
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in Massachusetts performing pure research related to the prevention and cure of eye-related diseases.

Hello, Lions

I have so much to talk about that I don't know where to begin. The Lions of District 33A continue to amaze me with all that they do in raising funds for MLERF and for answering the challenge that Helen Keller asked us to be: her "Knights of the Blind".

The first story comes from the Barre Lions Club. A proposal by Barre Lion Raymond Higgins to hold a raffle to benefit MLERF turned out to be a generous donation for eye research. All members pitched in and sold their share of 2000 tickets. Two winners were drawn and each had their choice of 100 gallons of fuel oil, 100 gallons of propane, 1- ton of pellets or \$200 in cash.

As the raffle proceeded, a 7 foot high goal thermometer was placed on the Barre Common to show raffle progress. The goal was \$1500. The Barre Lions were extremely proud that almost \$2200 in raffle tickets was sold. After expenses, the Barre Lions were pleased to present MLERF with a check for \$2000 at the Mid-Winter Conference. Members and friends of the Barre Lions signed the goal thermometer and presented it to Raymond Higgins. Way to go, Barre Lions!



Also, the Barre Lions Club hosted a Public Forum at the Barre Town Hall which was open to the public. There were four representatives from the MLERF present, including MLERF President Roger Jones. They all spoke on the mission of MLERF and its role as a tax-exempt non-profit dedicated to providing funding to institutions

The Rutland Lions hold an annual voluntary toll booth for MLERF. The one they held in May 2017, \$1700 was raised for eye research. These are but a few of the clubs who hold fundraisers to benefit eye research. Way to go District 33A Lions, you are AWESOME!

The following are two stories in which District 33A was the recipient of two very large donations.

1. It generally takes a year for the 49 clubs of District 33-A to collect 100,000 pairs of recycled glasses. However, on March 10th, it only took three hours for a group of 15 Lions from the Westborough, Shrewsbury, Charlton, Bolton, Grafton, Uxbridge, Monson and Barre Lions Clubs; along with Region 1 Chair John Riemer and Westborough Lions' President Angelo Cavaliere to gather at a Worcester Distribution Center to collect 120,000 new single-vision lenses valued at \$300,000. These were so generously donated to the District 33A Lions by Jon Haglund, President of Arch Vision of Shrewsbury, who also donated the laboratory equipment needed for cutting the lenses and measuring their strength. His donation will help an estimated 60,000 needy people to receive new corrective lenses. Lion Don Fortin, our Eyeglass Recycling Chair, stated that since Mr. Haglund donated both lenses and equipment to cut and shape them into frames that the lenses will be turned into new eyeglasses. District 33A is most grateful for this exceptional donation from Jon at Arch Vision Inc. He has truly enabled the Lions to uphold their motto We Serve and give the gift of sight to thousands who might never have had the opportunity, were it not for his generosity.

2. The second large donation to District 33A Lions came from Sal Imperator of Barre Opticians and his colleagues and Optometrists Dr. Zane Dubour and Dr. Nell

News From the Districts

District 33N



PDG/PP Louise J Wojtkiewicz

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Acton, MA 01720
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lion.louise@hotmail.com

Dear Lions of District N:

I am very proud to say District 33N has the first club to reach the goal of over \$712,161.00 in the state, it is the Newburyport Lions, a big thank you goes out to PDG Jonathan Pearson who started the Yankee Homecoming Road Race and the Newburyport club members for having the bed races to raise all the money donated solely to MLERF. Lexington Lions has reached the over \$602,564.00. Shoe City Lynn has reached \$101,357.00. You the Lions came through once again when asked to collect funds for MLERF to help eradicate blindness. Thank you on behalf of the Directors, Officers and the facilities for your donation of \$273,576.00.

District 33N Lion Brenda Macpherson will be handing out information on dressing up your canister project at our next Advisory meeting in November.. Put your thinking caps on for the best dressed canister.

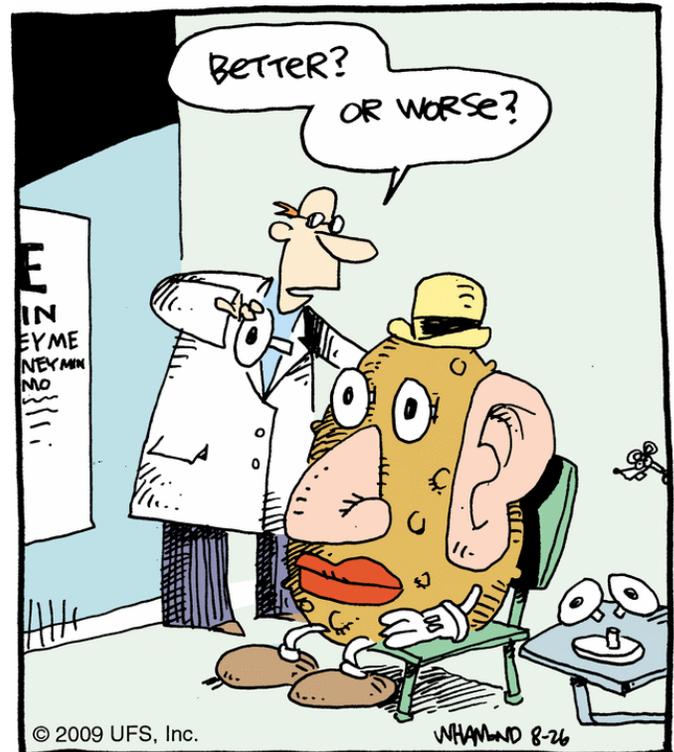
Congratulations IPP Roger Jones for reaching your goal of \$1,072,688.00. The clubs in MD33 small, medium, large and extra large clubs answered your call for donations. Canisters, hats, pins and Journey for Sight projects came through once again. Let's keep this work going again this year for our present President Bob Haskell.

Other ways to make a donation to MLERF is to donate to the Trust and Endowment in Honor or in Memory of someone. The donations are as follows: \$1,000.00 is a Sponsor Award, \$5,000.00 Researcher Award, and \$10,000.00 Founder Award. These are forever donations in the person's name not just for one year to the grant fund. I hope the

directors are explaining the different types of donations to the clubs when they visit them. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

In closing if anyone in our district is having a fund raising event for Eye Research and has pictures or flyers please forward them to me via e-mail so that we can get them in the next Eye Catcher.

Respectfully submitted,
Louise J Wojtkiewicz, 33N



News From the Districts

District 33K



PDG Doreen Martel

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Email:
doreenmartel@doreenmar-
tel.com

It seems hard to believe we are in a new Lions year. However, one need only take a quick look at the District 33K Lions calendar to see Lions of 33K have wasted no time getting their fundraising events underway.

Our Clubs have been busy raising money for the important work they do in their communities and supporting our state-wide funding of Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc. In September alone, there were two dozen events, and currently through the month of October, we are already showing signs of exceeding that number.

Why Your Fundraising Efforts Matter

Last year, MLERF raised more than \$1 million, thanks to the Lions Clubs across MD33. Congratulations to every club that participated in this effort! It is difficult to express the importance of the work you do raising money for MLERF. Whether you are flipping pancakes, hosting bean and frank suppers, or scaring your neighborhood children during hay walks, every dime you donate to MLERF makes a difference.

Without the assistance of every Lions Club in Massachusetts, we would be unable to help so many worthy institutions continue with the important research work they do. Every dollar we raise from the Clubs in our state are donated via grants to the various facilities after careful review of their grant applications.

Additionally, we also should be proud of the fact that we often leverage your donations to obtain a grant from Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) to purchase specialized equipment which is needed for these researchers to continue working on eradicating and preventing blindness.

MLERF Impacts Every Community

Keep in mind, every penny you collect adds up faster than you think! When you hold toll roads, collect pennies at your dinner meetings, or host a fundraising event specifically for MLERF, you help more people than you can imagine. Many of these people are in your own community, and you may not even be aware of their presence.

You may be wondering how this is possible? The answer is as simple as it is complicated: Primarily, it is because the research opportunities you help fund go towards studying the various causes and treatments for macular degeneration, retinitis pigmentosa and diabetic retinopathy. In fact, chances are, if you have a family member who has suffered with any of these conditions, their lives have been impacted by the research you and your Lions Club help fund. Secondly, because we continue to fund these research opportunities, we help ensure the research facilities continue to attract the best and brightest researchers in the United States.

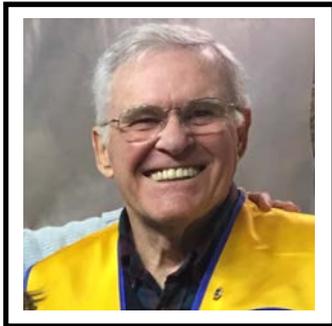
Banding Together to Make a Difference

MLERF is not a one club effort. Every single Lions Club in Massachusetts, big and small makes a difference. Whether you have a huge club donating \$10,000 a year to MLERF or your club is small and is donating \$25 annually, you help make MLERF successful. No donation is too small.

As your club starts preparing for Mid-Winter Conferences, Advisory meetings, and are consid-

News From the Districts

District 33S



PDG Wayne Smith
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Abington, MA 02351
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subwps@aol.com

Congratulations District 33S Lions for reaching three hundred seventy three thousand five hundred seventy six dollars (\$373,576) for Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc. Yes we were the highest fundraising district in 33. But together as YANKS, we raised one million seventy two thousand six hundred and eighty eight dollars (\$1,072,688).

Think of it. One hundred percent going to Eye Research, and when our researchers discover new path ways to prevent loss of sight other funders (National Institute of Health, Military, Pharmaceutical Companies and other Grants) provide many times over original funding. One of these was a \$200,000 investment by MLERF into 20 million in research to prevent our armed forces from losing their sight from explosion blasts.

The Easton Lions Club was the highest contributor in the Commonwealth, with fifty four thousand seven hundred and seventy two dollars (\$54,772). What an accomplishment!

At the Awards and Installation of Officers Banquet on August 4th, the following clubs were awarded plaques with the donations listed: New Bedford Host \$5,320, Lakeville \$5,600, East Bridgewater \$5,719, Middleboro \$5,775, Fall River \$6,130, Fairhaven \$7,467, Raynham \$8,279, West Bridgewater \$8,300, Bridgewater \$8,360, Dennis/Harwich \$8,694, Abington \$9,231, South Attleboro Village \$10,105, South Attleboro \$10,589, Bridgewater Academy \$10,937, Rehoboth Anawan \$11,220, Re-

hoboth \$11,639, Dighton \$13,039, Seekonk \$15,000, Somerset \$16,235, Plymouth \$16,540, Mattapoisett \$21,705, Provincetown \$22,450 and Acushnet \$30,809.

The rest of our clubs will receive certificates for their donations. Every donation is important and without all numbers we would not reach this over one million donations. Thank you all.

Also clubs were honored by reaching historical donation levels in hundred of thousand levels for the first time. They were: Norton \$100,015, Dighton \$201,183, Rehoboth Anawan \$204,610, Somerset \$305,803 and Mattapoisett \$404,549.

Where do we go from here? District Governor Kathy Salem has a goal of over \$400,000 this year for 33S. I am sure that together we can do this and more!

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

PDG Wayne Smith,
District S & Past President MLERF

District 33A CON'T

Naideth of Fitchburg. They donated over \$30,000 worth of optical equipment and lenses to District 33A Lions. Donated collectively were thousands of eye-glass lenses, an edger to cut the glasses to fit frames, a microscope and a slit lamp, heat treaters, an optical projector and hundreds of frames and optical racks to District 33A through the Barre Lions Club. The Barre Lions graciously accepted the donation and together with Don Fortin, our Eyeglass Recycling Chair, arranged to pick up the equipment and deliver it to a storage location in preparation for shipment inside and outside of the United States. Barre Opticians and Drs. Dubour and Naideth's donation will go a long way to bring sight to the visually impaired in locations it is most desperately needed.

District 33A Lions are most appreciative of such donations of equipment, even in small amounts, as the impact on individuals in underserved areas is enormous.

Thank you to all the Lions in District 33A and to all Lions for all that you do in service to others. You certainly epitomize our motto of We Serve. I am so proud to be a Lion and a part of this Awesome District. Remember to always be proud to say that you are a Lion.

Respectfully submitted,

PCST Denise Andrews
District 33A

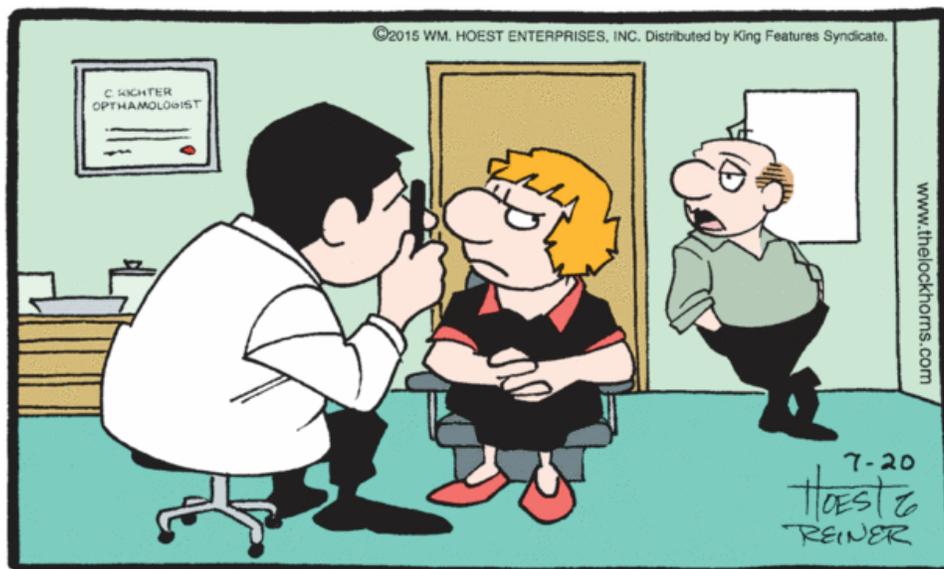
District 33K CON'T

ering how to distribute the funds you are working so hard to raise, keep MLERF in mind. You can help push us over the line again and help us reach another \$1,000,000 during the 2018 – 2019 Lions year. Keep up all the great work you do in your communities and let me join your district leadership to thank you for the important work you are doing every day. Whether you realize it or not, whether anyone in your community thanks you for your efforts, we know the work that goes into every one of your service projects and fundraising activities and we appreciate the effort you put in.

Do not forget, if your club is interested in touring one of the research facilities or you are looking for a guest speaker for a meeting, reach out to one of the capable directors in your District. Remember, your 2nd and 1st VDGs as well as your DG can help as well. Since the next publication will not come out until March, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

GO SOX!
Yours in Lionism,

PDG Doreen
District 33K



"I THINK LORETTA STRAINED HER EYES
ROLLING THEM AT ME."

ANNUAL INSTALLATION BANQUET PHOTOS

Mansfield Holiday Inn
August 4, 2018

SPECIAL AWARDS



PDG Matthew Richardson (K)
received the
MLERF Secretary Award



PCST Robert "Bob" Haskell (A)
received the
*President's Visionary
Service Award*



PCST Claudette Placzek (Y)
received the
*President's Visionary
Service Award*

William T. Murphy Sight Awards



Julio Fontecchio, Millis
District K



Gino Angelone, Randolph
District K



PDG Patricia Kalicki, Sherborn
District K

ANNUAL INSTALLATION BANQUET PHOTOS



Northampton (Y) 2017-2018
\$7,121.00



Lynn (N) 2017-2018
\$5,025.00



Lowell (N) 2017-2018
\$5,965.00



Concord (N) 2017-2018
\$6,000.00



Southwick (Y) 2017-2018
\$5,108.00



Melrose (N) 2017-2018
\$6,000.00

ANNUAL INSTALLATION BANQUET PHOTOS



Lynn Wyoma (N) 2017-2018
\$8,299.00



Randolph (K) 2017-2018
\$5,025.00



Quincy (K) 2017-2018
\$5,342.00



Plainville (K) 2017-2018
\$6,160.00



Framingham (K) 2017-2018
\$6,358.00



Medfield (K) 2017-2018
\$6,800.00

ANNUAL INSTALLATION BANQUET PHOTOS



Needham (K) 2017-2018
\$8,000.00



Millis (K) 2017-2018
\$9,814.00



New Bedford (S) 2017-2018
\$5,320.00



West Bridgewater (S) 2017-2018
\$8,360.00



Bridgewater (S) 2017-2018
\$8,524.00



Dennis/Harwich (S) 2017-2018
\$8,694.00

ANNUAL INSTALLATION BANQUET PHOTOS



Abington (S) 2017-2018
\$9,232.00



West Springfield (Y) 2017-2018
\$15,033.00



Milford (A) 2017-2018
\$15,000.00



Millbury (A) 2017-2018
\$16,965.00



Reading (N) 2017-2018
\$10,305.00



Pepperell (N) 2017-2018
\$10,765.00

ANNUAL INSTALLATION BANQUET PHOTOS



Woburn Breakfast (N) 2017-2018
\$14,355.00



Woburn Middlesex (N) 2017-2018
\$17,202.00



Medway (K) 2017-2018
\$10,007.00



Holliston (K) 2017-2018
\$10,188.00



Norfolk (K) 2017-2018
\$10,425.00



Wrentham (K) 2017-2018
\$14,195.00

ANNUAL INSTALLATION BANQUET PHOTOS



South Attleboro Village (S) 2017-2018
\$10,105.00



Bridgewater Academy (S) 2017-2018
\$10,937.00



South Attleboro (S) 2017-2018
\$10,589.00



Rehoboth Anawan (S) 2017-2018
\$11,659.00



Dighton (S) 2017-2018
\$13,039.00



Seekonk (S) 2017-2018
\$15,000.00

ANNUAL INSTALLATION BANQUET PHOTOS



Somerset (S) 2017-2018
\$16,235.00



Plymouth (S) 2017-2018
\$16,540.00



Saugus (N) 2017-2018
\$20,700.00



Acton (N) 2017-2018
\$23,596.00



Lexington (N) 2017-2018
\$27,700.00



Ashland (K) 2017-2018
\$23,300.00

ANNUAL INSTALLATION BANQUET PHOTOS



Belmont (K) 2017-2018
\$29,207.00



Mattapoisett (S) 2017-2018
\$21,705.00



Acushnet (S) 2017-2018
\$30,809.00



Agawam (Y) 2017-2018
\$17,833.00



Mendon (A) 2017-2018
\$17,278.00



Newburyport 2017-2018
\$35,398.00

ANNUAL INSTALLATION BANQUET PHOTOS



Waltham (K) 2017-2018
\$30,000.00



Easton(S) 2017-2018
\$54,772.00



Belmont (K) Lifetime
\$527,351.00



Norton (S) Lifetime
\$100,015.00



Dighton (S) Lifetime
\$201,193.00



Rehoboth Anawan (S) Lifetime
\$204,610.00

ANNUAL INSTALLATION BANQUET PHOTOS



Somerset (S) Lifetime
\$305,803.00



Mattapoisett (S) Lifetime
\$404,549.00



DG Deb Grassi District S 2017 - 2018
\$373,303.00



DG Margaret Menard District K 2017 - 2018
\$217,784.00



DG Jim Wagner District N 2017 - 2018
\$273,576.00



DG Todd Karkane District A 2017 - 2018
\$106,804.00

DG Sharon Wentworth District Y 2017 - 2018 \$101,221.00

District Donations

Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

DISTRICT "Y"

7/1/2017 ---> 6/30/2018

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Journey for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Adams	1,746.00	60.06	100.00		2,600.00		2,760.06	2,760.06
AIC Amer Int'l Coll	0.00						0.00	0.00
Agawam	6,365.00	3,787.55	1,818.71	1,015.00	11,212.00		17,833.26	17,833.26
Agawam Lioness	1,000.00				1,100.00		1,100.00	1,100.00
Amherst	0.00						0.00	0.00
Amherst Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Ashfield	500.00				500.00		500.00	500.00
Belchertown	0.00				3,500.00		3,500.00	3,500.00
Charlemont	0.00				159.31		159.31	159.31
Cheshire	750.00				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
Chicopee Centennial	0.00						0.00	0.00
Cummington	0.00						0.00	0.00
Dalton	2,600.00				4,000.00		4,000.00	4,000.00
Deerfield	400.00						0.00	0.00
East Longmeadow	4,774.78	254.33			5,050.50		5,304.83	5,304.83
Easthampton	0.00	2,500.00		25.00			2,525.00	2,525.00
Granby	500.00				1,310.00		1,310.00	1,310.00
Granville-Tolland	800.00						0.00	0.00
Great Barrington	0.00				100.00		100.00	100.00
Greenfield	250.00						0.00	0.00
Hadley	500.00				500.00		500.00	500.00
Hampden	1,325.00	240.00			1,500.00		1,740.00	1,740.00
Hatfield	1,500.00				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
Hinsdale	1,000.00				1,220.00		1,220.00	1,220.00
Holyoke	2,000.00				2,050.00		2,050.00	2,050.00
Hoosac Valley Leo	100.00						0.00	0.00
Huntington	5,061.00	70.00	922.00		4,010.00		5,002.00	5,002.00
Indian Orchard	0.00						0.00	0.00
Lee	300.00				1,050.00		1,050.00	1,050.00
Ludlow	1,020.00				1,155.00		1,155.00	1,155.00
Montague Erving	0.00						0.00	0.00
North Adams	0.00						0.00	0.00
Northampton	7,324.11	1,459.88	361.00	100.00	5,200.00		7,120.88	7,120.88
Pelham	135.00		133.00	150.00	100.00		383.00	383.00
Pittsfield	1,000.00	752.00					752.00	752.00
South Hadley	0.00				1,050.00		1,050.00	1,050.00

District Donations

Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

DISTRICT "A"

7/1/2017 --> 6/30/2018

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Jouney for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Ashburnham	1,000.00				1,500.00		1,500.00	1,500.00
Athol	750.00		275.00		2,235.00		2,510.00	2,510.00
Auburn	0.00						0.00	0.00
Barre	0.00		15.00		2,000.00		2,015.00	2,015.00
Berlin	0.00						0.00	0.00
Blackstone Valley Leo	1,000.00				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
Bolton	1,250.00				1,500.00		1,500.00	1,500.00
Boylston	3,000.00				3,000.00		3,000.00	3,000.00
Brookfields	3,550.00			200.00	4,375.00		4,575.00	4,575.00
Charlton	602.24				300.00		300.00	300.00
Clinton	0.00						0.00	0.00
Dudley	200.00				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
Dudley Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Fitchburg Community	1,275.00	1,000.00	65.00		1,300.00		2,365.00	2,365.00
Gardner	1,075.00				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
Gardner Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Grafton	1,000.00	102.11	15.00		1,000.00		1,117.11	1,117.11
Grafton Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Harvard	3,000.00				3,285.00		3,285.00	3,285.00
Holden	100.00				250.00		250.00	250.00
Hopedale	500.00				250.00		250.00	250.00
Hubbardston	514.00				515.00		515.00	515.00
Leicester	99.00		15.00		1,000.00		1,015.00	1,015.00
Leicester Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Leominster	633.00	10.00	111.00	100.00	1,350.00		1,571.00	1,571.00
Lunenburg Turkey Hill	3,055.35		15.00	250.00	3,000.00		3,265.00	3,265.00
Mendon	19,574.50	45.00	1,573.31	150.00	15,510.00		17,278.31	17,278.31
Milford	15,000.00				15,000.00		15,000.00	15,000.00
Millbury	26,165.20		1,765.00	200.00	15,000.00		16,965.00	16,965.00
Monson	204.00		15.00				15.00	15.00
Montachusett Reg Leos	0.00						0.00	0.00
Northboro	2,500.00				2,500.00		2,500.00	2,500.00
Orange	33.00						0.00	0.00
Oxford	0.00				1,700.00		1,700.00	1,700.00
Palmer	1,175.00	147.73		325.00	1,000.00		1,472.73	1,472.73
Paxton	0.00		33.00				33.00	33.00

District Donations

Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

DISTRICT "N"

7/1/2017 ---> 6/30/2018

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Jouney for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Acton	23,366.00	2,500.00	196.00	1,000.00	19,900.00		23,596.00	23,596.00
Amesbury	6,576.63	20.80	448.00	150.00	6,000.00		6,618.80	6,618.80
Ayer/Shirley	475.00		125.00		250.00		375.00	375.00
Beverly	10.00	60.00					60.00	60.00
Billerica	5,770.00	810.00	1,655.00	250.00	2,400.00		5,115.00	5,115.00
Billerica Leo	200.00						0.00	0.00
Chelmsford	3,350.00				3,100.00		3,100.00	3,100.00
Concord	12,375.00				6,000.00		6,000.00	6,000.00
Danvers	50.00		100.00				100.00	100.00
Dracut	525.00						0.00	0.00
Dracut Leo	1,000.00						0.00	0.00
Dunstable/Tyngsboro	100.00		100.00				100.00	100.00
Essex	266.00				300.00		300.00	300.00
Essex County Reg.	125.00		145.00				145.00	145.00
Groton	580.00						0.00	0.00
Haverhill	3,080.00		115.00	125.00	2,800.00		3,040.00	3,040.00
Ipswich	4,350.00		100.00		5,000.00		5,100.00	5,100.00
Lawrence	10.00				240.00		240.00	240.00
Lawrence Latin	10.00				3,500.00		3,500.00	3,500.00
Lexington	27,200.00	100.00	16,000.00	100.00	11,500.00		27,700.00	27,700.00
Lowell	5,233.00		865.00		5,000.00	100.00	5,865.00	5,965.00
Lynn	0.00			25.00	5,000.00		5,025.00	5,025.00
Lynnfield	5,200.00				3,500.00		3,500.00	3,500.00
Magnolia	200.00						0.00	0.00
Melrose	3,100.00				6,000.00		6,000.00	6,000.00
Merrimac	2,300.00				1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
Methuen	233.00		100.00	250.00			350.00	350.00
Middleton	0.00						0.00	0.00
Nahant	4,752.00			26.08	3,000.00		3,026.08	3,026.08
Newburyport	25,320.55	28.25	370.00		35,000.00		35,398.25	35,398.25
Newburyport Leo	10.00						0.00	0.00
North Andover	2,965.00		100.00		675.00		775.00	775.00
Peabody	4,103.00		100.00		3,500.00		3,600.00	3,600.00
Pepperell	12,400.23	589.60	175.00		10,000.00		10,764.60	10,764.60
Reading	10,100.00	104.57	100.00		10,100.00		10,304.57	10,304.57
Salem	695.00	116.81			500.00		616.81	616.81
Salisbury	150.00		133.00		100.00	50.00	233.00	283.00

District Donations

Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

DISTRICT "K"

7/1/2017 --> 6/30/2018

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Jouney for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Arlington	200.00			20.00	200.00		220.00	220.00
Ashland	22,216.00			800.00	22,000.00	500.00	22,800.00	23,300.00
Ashland Leo	25.00				25.00		25.00	25.00
Bellingham	3,000.00				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
Belmont	28,170.06	271.17		25.00	28,811.00	100.00	29,107.17	29,207.17
Blackstone	1,200.00				500.00		500.00	500.00
Boston Chinatown	2,025.00		30.00		1,500.00		1,530.00	1,530.00
Boston Host	558.00				250.00	26.08	250.00	276.08
BU Eye Assoc	1,000.00				1,269.00		1,269.00	1,269.00
Cambridge	200.00					500.00	0.00	500.00
Canton	3,600.00				2,200.00	500.00	2,200.00	2,700.00
Charlestown	20.00			50.00	50.00		100.00	100.00
Foxboro	1,200.00		859.75		1,500.00		2,359.75	2,359.75
Framingham	7,907.41	255.00	53.00	50.00	6,000.00		6,358.00	6,358.00
Franklin	250.00		215.00				215.00	215.00
Greater Ashland	2,975.00	138.94		1,725.00	1,600.00	75.00	3,463.94	3,538.94
Greater Boston Hispanic	50.00						0.00	0.00
Himalayan NE	100.00	9.00			600.00		609.00	609.00
Hingham	543.00				25.00		25.00	25.00
Holliston	11,890.00		188.00		10,000.00		10,188.00	10,188.00
Holliston Leo	25.00				100.00		100.00	100.00
Hopkinton	700.00				200.00		200.00	200.00
Hull	2,233.00		15.00		2,200.00	100.00	2,215.00	2,315.00
Hyde Park	599.00	9.42	518.00	676.86	500.00		1,704.28	1,704.28
King Philip Leos	550.00		660.00				660.00	660.00
Malden	1,483.00				1,710.00		1,710.00	1,710.00
Marlboro	2,233.00			50.00	1,650.00		1,700.00	1,700.00
Medfield	6,066.00				6,800.00		6,800.00	6,800.00
Medford	100.00				225.00		225.00	225.00
Medway	9,205.00		857.25	50.00	9,100.00		10,007.25	10,007.25
Millis	7,232.00		1,005.00	809.30	7,000.00	1,000.00	8,814.30	9,814.30
Natick	5,861.73	41.95	20.00		250.00		311.95	311.95
Needham	2,500.00				8,000.00		8,000.00	8,000.00
NE College of Optometr	50.00				25.00		25.00	25.00
Newton	1,000.00				60.00	100.00	60.00	160.00
Norfolk	16,608.90		10,425.39				10,425.39	10,425.39

District Donations

Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

DISTRICT "S"

7/1/2017 --> 6/30/2018

Club Name	Previous Year	Pennies	Jouney for Sight	Memorial	Grant	T&E	Total Grant	Total Donation
Abington	11,069.66	372.81	719.00	300.00	7,790.00	50.00	9,181.81	9,231.81
Acushnet	27,148.04	345.00	1,138.00	3,300.00	26,025.56		30,808.56	30,808.56
Attleboro Tri Boro Com	1,136.80		428.60	135.00	1,200.00		1,763.60	1,763.60
Barnstable Yarmouth	1,000.00		40.00		1,000.00		1,040.00	1,040.00
Barnstable High Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Bridgewater	8,883.25		1,725.00	210.00	6,539.00	50.00	8,474.00	8,524.00
Bridgewater Academy	1,879.18	1,221.00	1,751.12	475.00	7,490.00		10,937.12	10,937.12
Bridgewater Community	757.38		861.60	25.00	100.00		986.60	986.60
Bridge/Raynham Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Brockton	67.45	9.46			50.00		59.46	59.46
Chatham/Nauset	2,000.00	125.88		50.00	1,100.00		1,275.88	1,275.88
Dartmouth	747.01	51.93	33.00		265.00		349.93	349.93
Dennis/Harwich	7,907.67	464.13	580.00	900.00	6,750.00		8,694.13	8,694.13
Dennis Yarmouth Leo	0.00				1,500.00		1,500.00	1,500.00
Dighton	8,006.80	979.12	600.00	460.00	11,000.00		13,039.12	13,039.12
Dighton Rehoboth Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Duxbury	600.00				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
East Bridgewater	2,140.90	325.06	193.60		5,200.00		5,718.66	5,718.66
Easton	41,782.45	1,242.72	329.39	2,000.00	51,200.00		54,772.11	54,772.11
Easton Oliver Ames Leo	145.00		100.00				100.00	100.00
Fairhaven	6,553.17	100.00	367.30		7,000.00		7,467.30	7,467.30
Fall River	2,220.00		130.00		6,000.00		6,130.00	6,130.00
Fall River Carousel	6,176.00	401.15		25.00	3,398.85		3,825.00	3,825.00
Falmouth	1,129.01	100.00	150.00		1,250.00		1,500.00	1,500.00
Freetown	1,000.00				1,200.00		1,200.00	1,200.00
Greater Attleboro Leo	0.00				50.00		50.00	50.00
Greater Taunton Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00
Halifax	565.00		340.00	470.00			810.00	810.00
Hanover	5,800.00		15.00		4,500.00		4,515.00	4,515.00
Kingston	1,500.00	24.73			1,700.00		1,724.73	1,724.73
Lakeville	11,174.80				5,600.00		5,600.00	5,600.00
Lakeville OCA	1,600.00				2,000.00		2,000.00	2,000.00
Lower Cape Cod Light	0.00						0.00	0.00
Mattapoisett	13,244.00	500.00	605.00	600.00	20,000.00		21,705.00	21,705.00
Middleboro	5,274.80	89.77	200.00	185.00	5,300.00		5,774.77	5,774.77
Nauset NRMS Leo	0.00						0.00	0.00

2017 - 2018 FINANCIALS

Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

Treasurers Report : 2017-2018

7/1/2017 ---> 6/30/2018 - FINAL REPORT

Balance Forward:		\$1,429,327.15
Current Income		
Grant Contributions		
District Y	\$99,604.19	
District A	\$106,804.15	
District N	\$267,005.98	
District K	\$201,322.69	
District S	\$372,744.01	
Total Grant Contributions		\$1,047,481.02
Interest		
CD's	\$9,171.23	
Annuities	\$23,580.23	
Total Interest Income		\$32,751.46
Other Income		
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	
T&E Donations this year	\$25,206.90	
T&E Interest 2017-2018	\$66,288.00	
Total Income 01July - date		\$1,171,727.38
Committed Donations		
Grant Donations this year 2017-2018	\$1,047,481.02	
Grant Donations last year 2016-2017	\$0.00	
Presidential Grant 2015-2016 (Joslin)	\$0.00	
Presidential Grant 2016-2017 (BU)	\$0.00	
T&E Donations	\$0.00	
T&E Interest Committed to Pres. Grant	\$66,288.00	
Total Committed		\$1,113,769.02
Current Expenses		
Approved Grants		
BU School of Medicine	\$165,000.00	
Joslin Diabetes Center	\$165,000.00	
Mass Eye & Ear	\$165,000.00	
Schepens Eye Research Center	\$165,000.00	
New England Eye Center (Tufts)	\$165,000.00	
Childrens Hospital	\$165,000.00	
Presidential Grant 1015-2016 (Joslin)	\$78,549.00	
Presidential Grant 2016-2017 (BU)	\$75,000.00	
T&E Donations	\$25,206.90	
Total Grants and T&E		\$1,168,755.90

2017 - 2018 FINANCIALS

Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund, Inc.

Treasurers Report : 2017-2018

7/1/2017 ---> 6/30/2018 - FINAL REPORT

Administration expenses:

Auditor	\$0.00
Bond	\$885.00
Conferences	\$1,681.99
Directories	\$731.50
General Admin	\$1,777.66
Plaques and Adwards	\$457.00
Fees & Charges	\$664.37
	\$0.00

Committee expenses

C&BL	\$0.00
Canisters & Pennies	\$0.00
Eye Catcher	\$3,014.48
Grants	\$0.00
Installation & Awards Night (Net)	\$10,749.51
Jouney For Sight	\$1,181.39
LRP	\$0.00
Memorials	\$850.00
Public Relations	\$3,626.29
Sight Awards	\$4,532.70
Special Project	\$1,526.36
T&E	\$137.00

Administrative & Committee Expenses	\$31,815.25
Total Expenses & Committed Donations	\$2,314,340.17

Uncommitted Funds	\$286,714.36
Ending Balance	\$1,400,483.38

DID YOU KNOW?

7 AMAZING FACTS ABOUT YOUR EYES

#1

Did you know your eye colour is controlled by the level of melanin in your iris?

Brown eyes have more melanin (a dark brown pigment) in their iris



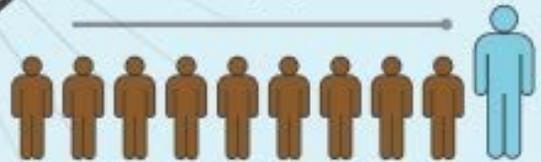
Blue eyes have less melanin, which allows collagen (which is blue), to show through



#2

If you have blue eyes, then you share a common ancestor with every other blue-eyed person in the world

The first person ever to have blue eyes lived sometime between 6,000 and 10,000 years ago. Before then, all people had brown eyes.

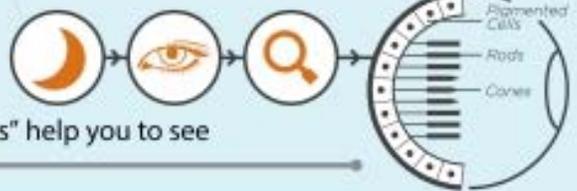


#3

Your eye contains 107 million cells which are sensitive to light

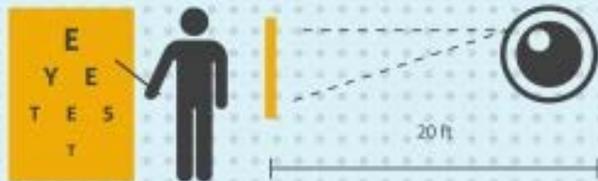
7 million "cones" help you to see colour and details

100 millions cells called "rods" help you to see better in the dark

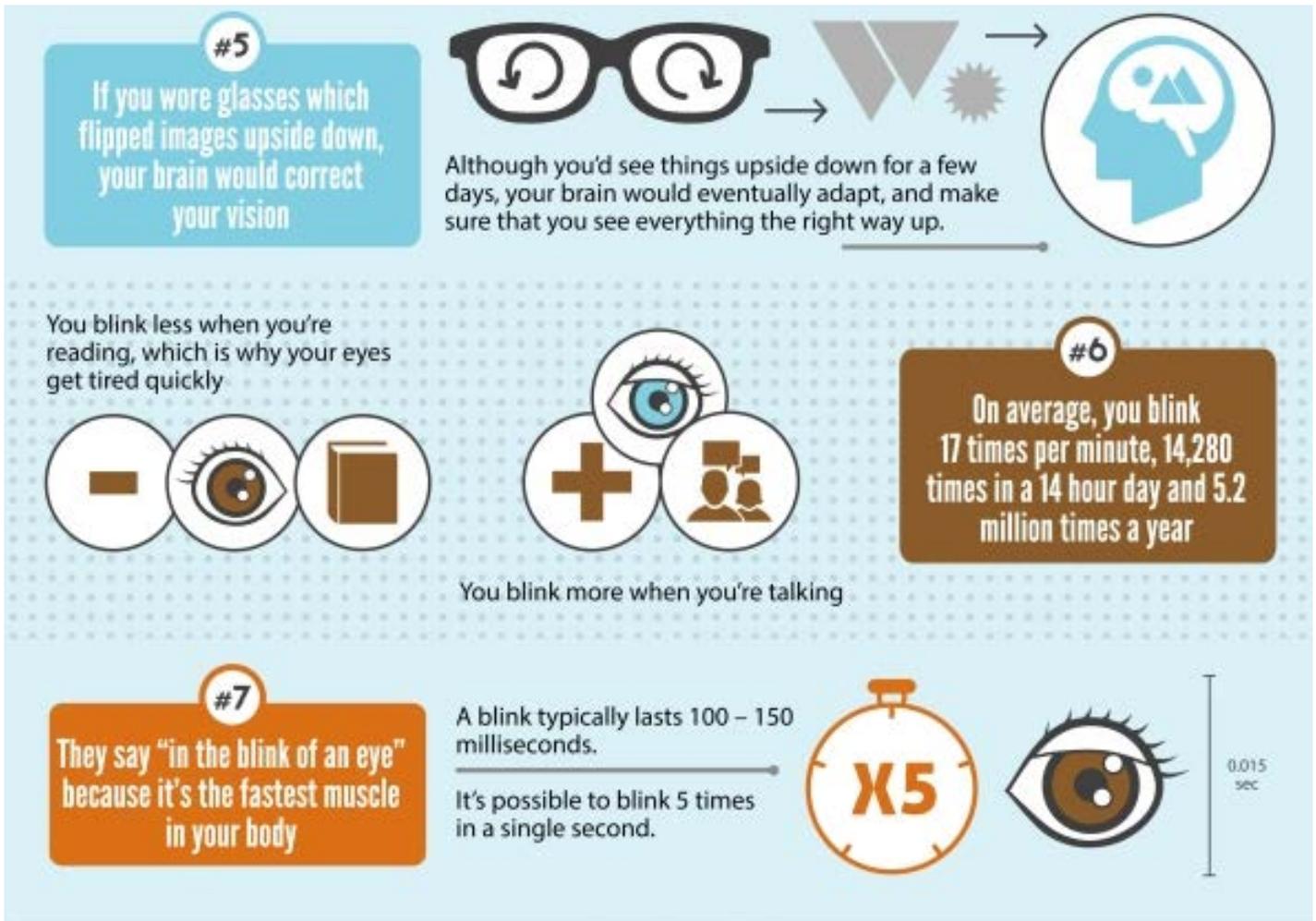


#4

Did you know that 20/20 vision just means your vision is "normal"?



Eye doctors have determined what people should "normally" be able to read on a chart from 20 feet away.



MLERF Trivia

1. Who was the first president of MLERF?
2. Retrolental Fibroplasia is also known as what?
3. Boston's Lying-In Hospital is now called?
4. The first Eye Research Grant was given to?
5. There are 3 major laboratories dedicated to the Massachusetts Lions. Where are they located?
6. In what year Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund Inc. incorporated?
7. In 1982 Digital Equipment Corp. donated a \$25,000 to the Joslin Clinic to purchase the first what, to be used for research?

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 suc-



cessfully 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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