

# LIONS VISION



A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF MULTIPLE DISTRICT 22 LIONS, LIONESS AND LEO CLUBS Fall, 2018



rugged cinema heroes of the old west became my “Matinee Idols”. Perhaps some of my readers can relate to these and other heroes.

Now, I see my fellow Lions and our research partners at the Wilmer Eye Institute as my new “Matinee Idols” for all the work you do to get rid of the bad guys; eye disease robbers who dare to take the sight away from some innocent people. Like those cinematic cowboys you take on challenges that some might deem insurmountable. Does the drama play out in 90 minutes? No, sometimes the Lions and the rest of our posse at the Lions Vision Center struggle for years with grit and determination before achieving success. But if you listen to those whom we have helped over the years, like the testimonials from the Lions Vision Center Ambassadors, you will hear sounds of praise for the progress made and the hope for a better tomorrow for those afflicted with low vision.



**PDG John Schwed**

I am going to date myself by sharing some pleasant childhood memories. I grew up in a single parent household without a TV until I was around 13. Before mom was able to afford a TV, I remember walking downtown to the appliance store that sold TV’s. To promote their sales, they always had a demonstrator playing in the storefront window. The TV sound was fed through an external speaker over the front door. This way potential buyers could watch and listen to shows even when the store was closed. More than once, I walked to that store and stood in front of the window to watch “The Lone Ranger”. I had listened to his exploits on the radio, but it was really cool to see him on black and white TV and render his trademark “Hi Yo, Silver, Away!” as he rode off to take care of the bad guys in the next town.



On Sunday afternoons, my mom would take me to the “State Theater” in downtown Scranton to see the latest western. My heroes then were Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, Lash LaRue, Johnny Mack Brown, Randolph Scott, and Hopalong Cassidy. These

The Lions Family of MD-22 has a very important task of supporting our Lions/Wilmer Team at the Lions Vision Center. I wish to thank all Lions for generously and enthusiastically supporting the work of this team for over 25 years. In fact, this year we celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the MD-22 Lions Convention vote which created the Lions Vision Research Foundation. Now we are in the beginning stages of a new campaign to establish a \$2.5-2.8 million Endowment Fund to fund the Fellow at the Lions Vision Center in perpetuity.

Saddle up Buckaroos, lasso some of your friends, and come to the “Roundup” on Saturday, November 17, 2018 where you will hear the latest eye research highlights from our Wilmer partners and have a chance to tour the Lions Vision Center. The chuck wagon will serve some delicious grub at noon. Oh, please, don’t forget, fill your saddlebags with donations for both LVRF annual operations and the new LVC Endowment Fund.

“Happy Trails to You Until We Meet Again!”

*John F Schwed*  
LVRF Development Chair



# LVRF Chairman's Message

I want to extend an invitation to all Lions across Multiple District 22 to attend the annual LVRF Rally. This year's event, Roundup 2018, will provide testimonials from patients who have benefited from the services provided at the Lions Low Vision Center (LVC). There will also be tours provided of the LVC so you can see first-hand some of the things being done there on a daily basis to assist individuals with low vision. And we will have presentations by some of the Wilmer professionals on the cutting edge research they are doing to combat low vision. Make plans to attend with a fellow Lion, or better yet, bring a non-Lion to expose them to what Lions do.

We are also preparing a new phase of the Low Vision Rehabilitation Network (LOVRNET) project. Over the past 4 years with grants from LCIF and the Readers Digest, we have extended low vision services from Wilmer in Baltimore to 15 different sites across Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, DC. Our LOVRNET Committee is looking for grant opportunities to support operational

costs in 2019. But the backbone of the project relies on Lions committing some of their time and energy to serve those with low vision. To conduct the program we need interviewers who operate from the comfort of home to call patients and compile information needed by the eye care professional. There are direct service opportunities in which individuals may require transportation to an eye appointment or some in-home assistance to implement "low vision friendly" measures to improve their daily living. For information on how to register to assist with these service activities, please visit the LOVRNET website at [www.lovrnet.org](http://www.lovrnet.org)



PDG Larry Burton, LVRF Chair

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Lions Vision Research Foundation

P.O. Box 1714 Baltimore, MD 21203-1714

Bus: (410) 955-1883—Voice mail (only) to be returned.

Residence: (717) 597-4500

### EDITOR

Lion Bill Strauss

(410) 756-4476

williamstrauss@msn.com

### ASSISTANT EDITOR

Lion Phyllis Thompson

(301) 371-9429

bthom206@aol.com



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DG Wayne Cole (3<sup>rd</sup> of 3 years)

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# You Are Invited

**Lions Vision Day  
at  
Wilmer Eye Institute**

## ROUNDUP

**17 November 2018 at 9:30 AM**  
**Chevy Chase auditorium Zayed Building, 1800 Orleans Street,**  
**Baltimore, MD 21287**  
**Parking: Orleans parking garage**  
**Boxed lunch provided by LVRF ★ RSVP for lunch count only:**  
**email to [LVRF.info@gmail.com](mailto:LVRF.info@gmail.com) OR Call 717-597-4500**

**The Wilmer Staff will enlighten and amaze you with reports of ongoing programs on the cutting edge!**

**Join your fellow Lions in a Lions Vision Center Tour ~ you will be led and briefed by staff members.**

**Lions love their vittles and you will join all those corralled for this event with complementary, filling grub.**

**Listen to testimonials from those the LVRF has helped. They have formed a group of their own which they named "Lions Vision Center Ambassadors". They will be inducting new members.**

**Remember to bring the dollars collected in your Vision Days project and from your "Dime" bottles etc. Donations from both clubs and individual Lions are accepted.**

## Where Are They Now? #4

Editor's Note: In the Spring 2017 issue of *Lions Vision*, we initiated a series entitled "Where Are They Now?" bringing back former Fellows of the Lions Vision Center Fellowship program. By doing this, we are learning of the tremendous impact these Doctors are making as a result of their experiences at the Center.

This, the fourth in the series, features Dr. Danielle Natale who was in the Fellowship Program during 2014-2015. She is now working at the Krieger Eye Institute of Sinai Hospital in Baltimore, MD.



Dr. Danielle Natale

When many people think of optometry, they think about a doctor that can make your vision better with glasses and contacts, a doctor that can perform ocular health examinations and manage common eye diseases. But as the Lions Club members know, many people in the world are not so lucky as to be able to be cured so simply. Optometry is a diverse field with many sub-specialties beyond caring for people straight-forward glasses and contacts. As

I completed my Doctor of Optometry degree at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry in Philadelphia, I loved every aspect of optometry from ocular disease to pediatrics and binocular vision to low vision rehabilitation. If you would have asked me what my future career path would look like while I was completing my degree, I could never have predicted the path I traveled.

After graduation, I returned to my hometown on Long Island and completed a residency at the Northport VA hospital. I found a residency that offered diverse specialty clinics with excellent mentors in each specialty, including low vision rehabilitation. That residency changed my life in many ways but one of the biggest changes came when my mentor recommended that I pursue the Lions Low Vision Fellowship at Wilmer Eye Institute.

Clinically, I had already been exposed to specialty low vision care during my residency, but the low vision fellowship at Wilmer was a full emersion. Learning low vision in a full time clinic with access to the latest technologies and experts in all aspects of low vision is invaluable. Working as a team with occupational therapists, certified low vision therapists, and physicians taught me what high level, coordinated low vision care looks like and how to implement those practices myself. In addition to the clinical opportunities to gain more exposure and learn advanced techniques in low vision, the fellowship allowed me to participate in a research project. It taught me to think more critically, how to collect data, and how to communicate research findings orally and in print.

Currently, I am working at the Krieger Eye Institute of Sinai Hospital in Baltimore, MD. My current position is ideal because I get to practice optometry in all of its forms. I am the only optometrist working in a multi-specialty eye care practice. As the only optometrist, I am responsible for the specialized skills that ODs are trained for best including difficult refractions, managing double vision, specialty contact lenses, primary eye care, and, of course, low vision. I had the great opportunity and pleasure to design my low vision practice by emulating all of the best practices I learned during my fellow-

ship. I have been able to help the glaucoma, retina, and cornea specialists manage their patients' visual functional needs that would go unmet without the invaluable experience of the Lions Low Vision Fellowship. In addition, our practice has an ophthalmology residency and I am lucky enough to participate in the training of these young ophthalmologists. Didactically, I teach optics, contact lenses, and low vision. The residents are assigned to my clinic to further learn about these topics in practice.

Being selected to be a Lions Low Vision Fellow has taught me much, changed the course of my career, and will hopefully continue to provide an unparalleled educational experience for future generations.

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## Our New LVR Chair

is the 16<sup>th</sup> LVR Chair since 1988 when PDG Roland Young of District 22-A assumed the duties of the 1<sup>st</sup> LVR Chair. The term of office is two years and rotates through the 5 districts in alphabetical order: A, B, C, D and W.

PDG Larry Burton, who assumed this office in July, 2018, has been an active member of the Darlington Lions Club of District 22-A since joining in 1999. He served as club secretary for 12 years and 6 years as club President. He has and continues to serve as chairperson for numerous committees. He has sponsored 7 new Lions.

He has served as District 22-A District Governor, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice District Governor, Global Membership Team Chair, *LOVRNET* Sustainability Committee, Global Membership Team Club Growth Leader, Cabinet Treasurer, Region Chair, Zone Chair, District Membership Chair and Co-Chair.

PDG Larry is a progressive Melvin Jones Fellow and has been recognized with the International President Leadership Medal, 6 International President's Certificates of Appreciation, the Conowingo Person of the Year award and the U.S. Army Research Laboratory Award for Community Service.

PDG Larry grew up in Bel Air, graduating from John Carroll High School in 1980. His passion for service can be traced to those days when he served as student government President in his senior year. After graduating from Virginia Tech as a mechanical engineer, he returned to Bel Air and volunteered for several years in the Parks and Recreation baseball and basketball programs. He subsequently spent 17 years as a basketball coach at John Carroll High School in Bel Air, the final four as varsity head coach. After departing John Carroll as a coach, he served four years on the John Carroll Board of Trustees. He later helped start the West Cecil Health Center and served 6 years as a member of the Board, including more than 3 years as first Board President.

He has been employed for 35 years at the U.S. Army Research Laboratory where he met his wife Pam during a training program. They were married in 1995 and relocated with daughter Amber to Darlington in 1997. Pam joined Larry as a Lion in 2004. Outside of his service activities, Lion Larry is an avid sports fan and collects baseball cards and coins while also enjoying playing golf.

# Dr. Dagnelie's Lab Gets Even More International!



You may not realize it, but research at the Johns Hopkins University and School of Medicine is a very international affair, and the Wilmer Eye Institute and Lions Vision Center are no exception. People come from all over the world to train here, and quite a few of them end up staying. Dr. Gislin Dagnelie was one of those, arriving from the Netherlands in 1986 for 2 years, and he's still here 32 years later. Since he started his own lab, in the 90s, that lab too has become more international, with trainees coming in for shorter or longer periods, and some of his regular staff is of foreign origin like himself. His senior systems manager Liancheng Yang ("Lindsey") hails from China, but like Dr. Dagnelie is now a United States citizen; and senior research coordinator Olukemi Adeyemo ("Kemi") is from Nigeria.



Dr. Gislin Dagnelie



Roksana Sadeghi

It was only a matter of time before the same would happen to Dr. Dagnelie's trainees. With graduate student Michael Barry (from New Jersey, and as American as apple pie) completing his dissertation in biomedical engineering (BME) this past spring, his role has been taken over by a new BME graduate student, Roksana Sadeghi, and this month postdoctoral fellow Arathy Kartha joined the team.

Roksana grew up in Iran, but came to the U. S. after her college education in Tehran, earning an MS in biomedical imaging at the University of California, San Francisco, before

coming to JHU in 2016. She learned about Dr. Dagnelie's work with the Argus II retinal implant almost a year ago and hopes to do her own dissertation research in the area of the cortical visual prosthesis for the blind, an implant that has been developed in Chicago, but for which Dr. Dagnelie's lab is creating the tools that will be needed for patient testing. Roksana hopes to visit Chicago frequently for patient testing once the first implantation surgery has been performed, in about a year if all goes according to plan.



Dr. Arathy Kartha

Dr. Arathy Kartha grew up in India and received her undergraduate and optometry degrees there. She then obtained a Ph.D. in pediatric low vision rehabilitation at the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia, before coming to the U. S. with her husband and working in California. Her wish to get back into low vision research was fulfilled when Dr. Dagnelie picked her among the applicants for a position as a postdoctoral fellow. Arathy will be working on different projects, but an important part of her energy will be spent on developing assessment and rehabilitation tools for people with very severe vision loss, for whom most adaptive technology is no longer helpful.

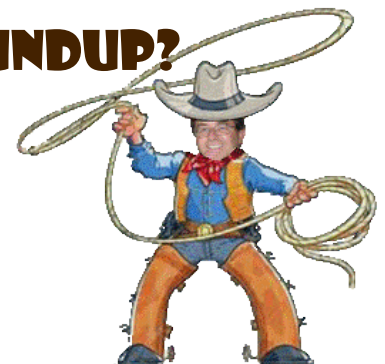
Roksana has already attended one LVRF district dinner, and both Arathy and Roksana look forward to meeting many Lions at the upcoming rally on November 17. With his newly invigorated team, Dr. Dagnelie is confident that the researchers at the Lions Vision Center will continue to help patients around the region and the world, and make LVRF proud.

**HAVE YOU CALLED (717) 597-4500**

**TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE AT THE 2018 ROUNDUP?**



**Don't leave me out!**





The Lions Low Vision Rehabilitation Network (popularly known as LOVRNET) is a model for a new community-based



**Bijoy Mahanti**

healthcare program that addresses the current shortage and distribution of low vision rehabilitation services. As we know, Low Vision is a general term used to describe permanent disabling visual impairment, mostly caused by age-related eye diseases such as macular degeneration, glaucoma, and diabetes retinopathy. Approximately 5.7 million people in the U.S. have low vision with more than 70% over age 65. Only 25%

of people with low vision are eligible for blindness related benefits and there is a severe shortage of services for those who do not meet legal criteria for blindness. Our Multiple District 22 has been resilient in effectively addressing new ways to serve our communities. LOVRNET is a unique organization and is one of a kind in Lions Clubs International. The Lions of Multiple District 22, in partnership with low vision rehabilitation experts at the Lions Vision Research and Rehabilitation Center of the Johns Hopkins Wilmer Eye Institute (Lions Vision Center) have created this program to address the need for service. The Multiple District 22 has been a trend setter and now Multiple District 33 in Massachusetts and other Multiple Districts have adopted our model of service.

I have been privileged to serve this unique population as an Interviewer and as a Direct Services provider. As an interviewer we interview clients before their appointment with the Low Vision clinician. This process tremendously helps the clinician to have information available during the client's visit and saves time in further planning the care. This is a great opportunity to make virtual contact and be of service to a person with low vision; this is a very rewarding experience.

Direct Services include providing transportation to the doctor's office for those who need it, delivering equipment to clients' homes, trouble shooting and, as appropriate, solving their problems. The Direct Services also include helping make safety and adaptive modifications to the clients' home environment, and solving their problems with their use of vision-assistive equipment in the home. These services need a referral from the Low Vision Occupational Therapist and a combined visit to the clients' home with the therapist and her/his various recommendations. The Low Vision Occupational Therapists are highly trained and specialized to meet the needs of lifestyle changes of people with Low Vision.

I have had opportunities to make several home visits to clients and to be of service! It is very satisfying to see this service as

a significant way to improve the quality of life of clients with this condition in our communities. Twice I delivered and set up CCTV to two different clients. Another client needed assistance in placing bump dots on washer, dryer, oven, and microwave controls. These bump dots help clients to feel and align desired temperature control and various settings in appliances. One 58 year-old female client with severe visual impairment needed major assistance in her unexpected changing life style. With the referral and recommendation of the Low Vision Occupational Therapist, I was able to help her navigate and adapt her life-style changes. She identified various needs and we were able to mutually solve many of her problems. We decluttered and organized the food pantry and the refrigerator. We organized various shelves with similar items and labelled them with electronic labelers. We organized and labelled a spice rack using a talking wand. This talking wand (label pen) comes with a tactile label and she was able to record the names of the items in the container. She needed help in organizing binders with color-contrast paper and tactile labels. The binders contained telephone numbers by categories, medical information (bills, insurance etc.), bank accounts, utilities, emergency and various contacts etc. Reading and organizing mail was very challenging to her for which I was able to help. We identified several safety hazards in the home and made several adjustments like replacing throw rugs, high-contrast duct tape for carpet, good lighting, high-contrast receptacles etc. I was informing the Occupational Therapist periodically of various needs and accomplishments. This is always a two-way communication. These are only some of the examples of the Direct Services I have provided.

Nothing replaces human contact and connection. It is so gratifying to have the experience of making a small difference in another person's life and to hear their appreciation. Never underestimate the **"Power of One"**. Being of service to other people is how **Mother** (now a **SAINT**) **Teresa** lived a long and fulfilling life. Our Lions motto is "We Serve". Let us elevate our service to a higher level in this simple path to a life full of purpose. Life provides so many opportunities! Paraphrasing Mark Twain; "Years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things you did not do than by the things you did."

You can find more information at the LOVRNET website: [www.lovrnet.org](http://www.lovrnet.org); by calling (410) 737-2671, or contacting me at: [bmahanti@msn.com](mailto:bmahanti@msn.com).

With much gratitude,

Bijoy Mahanti

Direct Service Coordinator, Multiple District 22



Your help is urgently needed!

Here's How!

In an effort to seek grant and funding support for LOVRNET, employers of Lions in the Multiple District 22 need to be identified. WHY? Because local funding and charitable grant foundations in the Delaware/DC/Maryland area give priority consideration to current and former employees when reviewing submissions and requests for funding.

Some of the local employers that offer funding opportunities include:

- ◆ M&T Bank
- ◆ Wells Fargo Bank
- ◆ Marriott Corporation,
- ◆ Exelon
- ◆ BGE
- ◆ Under Armour
- ◆ Black & Decker (Stanley tools now)
- ◆ Comcast (Xfinity)
- ◆ Joseph Banks

to name but a few.

If you have or currently work for one of these companies, please contact the LVRF Administrative Assistant, Susan Timmons at [sktimmons56@gmail.com](mailto:sktimmons56@gmail.com) so that a registry can be compiled.

Other companies may offer this benefit and you are asked to help identify them. Please check to see if this benefit is offered by your current or past employer or any other organization not on the above list and contact the Administrative Assistant.

The professional experiences and careers of MD 22 Lions is a valuable resource that may assist in seeking funding for programs such as LOVRNET.

Should you have any questions or need additional information please do not hesitate to contact Jim Deremeik by phone at (410) 502-6431 or by email at [jderemeik@jhmi.edu](mailto:jderemeik@jhmi.edu).

Submitted by:  
James Deremeik, RT, CLVT  
Education/Rehabilitation Program Manager, JHMI

Reaching Out!



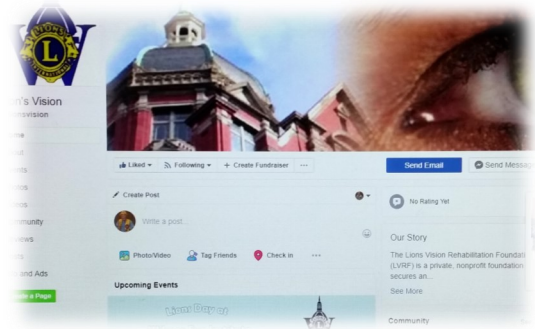
Administrative Assistant  
PDG Susan Timmons

Our Administrative Manager has a request:

**Help Me Help You Reaching Out**

(1) When you conclude an event publicizing or supporting the Lions Vision Research Foundation, *shout it out!*

Post it on the LVRF Facebook Page. Just type in:  
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/lionsvision/>



(2) Should you have any postal mail returned, please contact me via email at:

[LVRF.info@gmail.com](mailto:LVRF.info@gmail.com)

(3) If you would like to treat your club to an informative, educational and interesting program, contact me via email at the above email address.



Dr. Dagnelie (Left) and OT Kristen Lindeman (Right) have been recent speakers at Regional meetings in Multiple District 22.

# LIONS VISION



The Multiple District 22  
Lions Vision Research Foundation, Inc.  
At the Wilmer Eye Institute, the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions  
P. O. Box 1714, Baltimore, MD 21203-1714

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# ROUNDUP!



*Lions Day at Wilmer Eye Institute*

November 17, 2018

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