

LIONS VISION

NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF MULTIPLE DISTRICT 22 LIONS, LIONESSES AND LEO CLUBS Spring 2011

That's What Friends Are For!

By John J. Shwed, LVRF Development Committee Chairman

A true friend is one who is with you during the tough times and one who is there to share the laughter in the good times. When you are fortunate to have a person who is a true friend you have something more valuable than all the gold in Fort Knox. If you have such a friend, in return for their friendship you are ready to go to the ends of the earth for him or for her.

Dr. Arnall Patz was one of those true friends to the visually impaired and to all Lions in Multiple District 22. He was the one who reached out to Lions International and got connected to the Lions of MD-22. He was man on a mission. His desire to help the millions afflicted with low vision for which there is no present medical cure led to the creation of the Lions Vision Research Foundation and the establishment of the Lions Low Vision Center at Johns Hopkins Wilmer Eye Institute.



Dr. Arnall Patz receiving the 2005 LCI Humanitarian Award

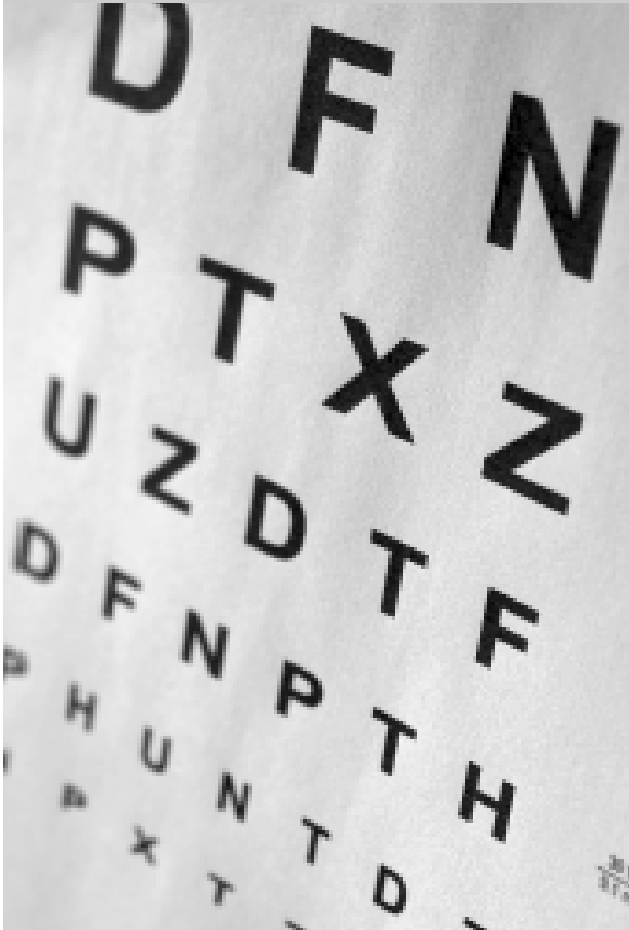
To honor the memory of this true friend, the Wilmer Eye Institute will establish an Arnall Patz Professorship. When the Patz family learned of this initiative the family insisted that the word Lions be attached to the name of this new Professorship because of the special fondness that Dr. Patz had for the Lions organization and its service to those with vision problems worldwide. If we Lions are true friends of Dr. Patz, then we need to show that friendship by donating to this new Professorship.

You will soon receive a letter signed by me and LVRF Chairman John Lawrence requesting that your club or individual Lions consider donating \$2,500 to this Wilmer led campaign and in return have the privilege of honoring someone with an Arnall Patz Fellowship. You can take up to five years to fulfill your commitment. John and I both realize that you are serving your local communities during a terrible downturn in our nation's economy and that these times are tough for you. We also know that long term financial commitments to Campaign SightFirst II should be winding down, thus providing you with an opportunity to take on this new request.

True friends will figure out a way to help. I know you will. That's what friends are for! In addition to the special mailing, you will hear more about this "Patz for Patz" request at the MD-22 Convention.

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Chairman's Message

John Lawrence, PDG, Chairman
LIONS VISION RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Recently I have been asked, "Why do we have to keep giving money to the Lions Vision Research Foundation since we have completed the endowment?"

I guess my first answer is that blindness and low vision go on. As Lions we are committed to service to our fellow man. Since 1925, after Helen Keller asked us to "become knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness," we have placed our emphasis on sight related problems. I can think of no better way to help in this effort than by teaming with the Lions Vision Center at the Wilmer Eye Institute. The Institute has been rated #1 or #2 for eye care for the last several years. The Lions Vision Center has been leading the way in the field of low vision rehabilitation. We should be very proud to be able to assist in their great efforts.

As a second answer, we can look at some of our expenditures last year. Due to the current economic conditions, the proceeds from our endowment last year were under \$150,000. Therefore, the Board of Trustees voted to advance an additional \$50,000 to make up some of this shortfall. However, the largest expenditure was to provide a fellowship for a postdoctoral student to work on the clinic side of the Low Vision Center. As a result, the wait time for patients to obtain an appointment was reduced from months to less than 2 weeks at the clinic. Also, training was made available and given to eye care professionals within our area by the fellowship student. The result has been to improve the well being of people with low vision throughout our Multiple District.

There are several opportunities to see for yourselves the work accomplished by the Lions Low Vision Center. 1) Come to the LVRF Seminar at the MD-22 Convention on 14 May in Salisbury. Dr. Ramulou from the Wilmer Eye Institute will be the guest speaker with information on the research and clinical work being done. 2) Also, plan now to attend the annual Lions Day at Wilmer next November in Baltimore. We will have reports from the doctors as well as testimonials from patients being helped at the clinic. 3) Have your club make a visit to the Lions Vision Center. They are happy and proud to have us come see the work they are doing. 4) If your District holds LVRF Dinners in the fall, be sure to attend. I promise you will come away impressed by the Low Vision Center and proud to be a Lion.

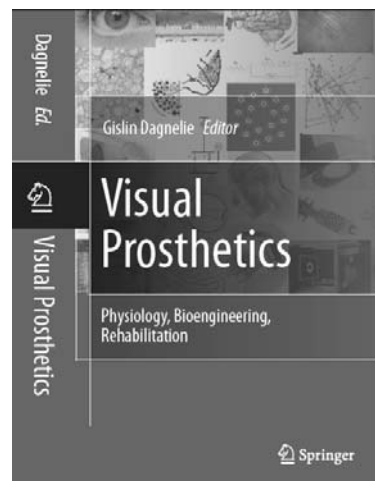
In another article in the newsletter, you will find information about the "Patz for Patz" campaign to honor the memory and work of Dr. Arnall Patz. Please consider a special gift towards funding the Arnall Patz, M. D. Endowed Professorship at the Lions Vision Center. Look for more information at the MD-22 Convention in May.

Visual Prosthetics Rolls off the Press

At the March 19, 2011 LVRF Board meeting, Dr. Gislin Dagnelie, member of the Lions Vision Center's research faculty, proudly presented a copy of his newly published book on electronic implants to restore vision.

Visual Prosthetics, published by Springer after almost 4 years of preparation, counts 21 chapters written by experts in vision research, biomedical engineering, and vision rehabilitation. This is unusual, since most books in similar fields concentrate on either the biology, or the engineering, or the clinical and rehabilitation aspects; combining all these fields in a single book was a novel idea, but one whose time had definitely come. "Researchers and therapists with highly diverse backgrounds work together to make these implants possible," Dr. Dagnelie says, "and this book aims to serve all of them, so their collaborations will become even more effective."

Of course Dr. Dagnelie hopes that the book will also attract new researchers to this exciting field. Most of all, he hopes that it will be the harbinger of a time when we can restore some useful vision to people who are now profoundly blind. "I dedicated the book to the patients who have helped us by volunteering for the clinical studies," Dr. Dagnelie says, "because it is their courage and determination that makes this work possible and motivates all of us as we continue to push the field forward."





Dr. Arnall Patz, 1920-2010

Doctor, Humanitarian, Friend

Join in the mission to pay tribute to Dr. Arnall Patz through the Patz Professorship to benefit the Lions Low Vision Center.

Make checks payable to **Wilmer Eye Institute**, note **Lions Patz Professorship** in memo and mail to:

Wilmer Eye Institute, Wilmer 112
Johns Hopkins Hospital
600 N. Wolfe Street
Baltimore, MD 21287

Contact PDG John Shwed at 302-875-5051 or jjshwed@verison.net for more information.

Lions Low Vision Clinic Makes a Good Move

In January, the Lions Low Vision Clinic at the Wilmer Eye Institute opened the doors to its new space on the third floor of the Wilmer Building. This is the second, but now permanent, move since a major flood in August forced clinical operations out of the lower level of the Maumenee Building, which had been home to the LVC for 11 years.

The LVC staff is delighted with the new “penthouse” appearance of the clinic and its patient-friendly floor plan. Besides windows (yes, a real plus for being above ground), the new space boasts a spacious patient waiting area, two exam lanes, two rehabilitation training rooms, and separate rooms for special testing equipment. There is also a new technology room where the vision rehabilitation therapists can demonstrate electronic video magnification systems and computer adaptations, such as large print software and text to speech conversion programs, to low vision patients; and in turn, the patients can evaluate the effectiveness of the technology and make decisions about incorporating it to help perform their activities at home, work, or school.



Deartra “Dee” Brown

Topping off the new look of the clinic is a new face: Deartra Brown. “Dee” joined the staff in December as the clinic's medical office coordinator and is the first person patients and families meet when they arrive for their appointments. She is looking forward to her first Lions Rally this fall when the staff will provide tours of the new clinic.

Kudos All Around for Ava Bittner, O.D., Ph.D.

Congratulations are in order for Dr. Ava Bittner who just recently completed a PhD in clinical investigation from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. Already a licensed optometrist, Dr. Bittner developed her interest in clinical research as a post-doctoral fellow at Wilmer's Lions Vision Research and Rehabilitation Center (LVC) from 2002-2007, and then she joined the LVC faculty as an Assistant Professor. Over the past three and a half years, her PhD thesis research focused on examining the relationships between psychosocial factors (like perceived stress, symptoms of depression) and day to day variations in vision reported by visually impaired patients with retinal degeneration. She found that significant, measurable (>20%) decreases in patients' visual field area were more likely at times when they reported increased perceived stress and/or a decrease in their general health. Next, Dr. Bittner aims to design and conduct clinical trials involving mindfulness-based cognitive behavioral therapy to attempt to reduce stress and improve the reliability of vision tests. This research would be of real value for clinicians and researchers who often find it difficult to determine whether a visually impaired patient has developed a true change in vision.

In late fall, Dr. Bittner received the 2010-2011 American Academy of Optometry Ezell Fellowship award. Ezell Fellows are selected on the basis of excellence in scholarship, research and teaching. These fellowships support graduate students enrolled in a full-time program of study and training in vision-related research that leads to a Master's or PhD degree. Among the list of former Ezell fellows are over 20 deans and presidents of optometric schools and colleges, over 100 faculty members at those institutions, and over 100 Fellows of the American Academy of Optometry, including three of its presidents. Dr. Bob Massof, director of the Lions Vision Research and Rehabilitation Center, is also a former Ezell Fellow (1972-1975). As an Ezell Fellow, Dr. Bittner joins an elite group of optometrists, educators, and researchers who are recognized as leaders in the field of optics. She was quite honored to receive this very prestigious award.

Dr. Bittner was also selected as a recipient of the Delta Omega Scholarship, which was established by members of the Alpha Chapter of the Delta Omega Honorary Public Health Society to promote outstanding scholarship and research by providing support to individual students whose research proposals demonstrate

merit. She received the scholarship to conduct research with Lions Vision Center post-doctoral fellow, Dr. Pamela Jeter, to develop and evaluate yoga interventions as alternative treatment to reduce intraocular pressure or improve sleep disturbances, psychosocial states, and/or balance in patients with vision loss.

The last honor for Dr. Bittner to date is her election (in early April) to membership in the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Johns Hopkins University. Election to the Society is the highest honor for excellence in scholarship which the University can bestow. She will be formally inducted into the Alpha Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa at a ceremony on Wednesday, May 25, 2011. Kudos to you, Dr. Bittner!



Dr. Ava Bittner

District 22-C Holds Annual LVRF Walk for Sight

Representatives of several District 22-C Lions Clubs met on the morning of Saturday, April 9 for the annual Walk for Sight to raise funds for the LVRF.

Dr. Bob Massof & wife Pat joined them at Emmanuel United Methodist Church in Beltsville at 10:00 a.m. where Dr. Massof informed the group of a number of current considerations, including the potential impact of federal budget problems on programs at the Wilmer Eye Institute.

He also described the possible effects of low vision on balance, and the increased potential for falls, especially when combined with inner ear and perhaps muscular problems.

As expected, the group did not walk very far, but collected a tidy sum for the LVRF.

Buy a Ticket for a Split Side of Beef

The Lions Vision Research Foundation, Inc. is conducting a raffle to benefit the partnership between Multiple District 22 and the Lions Low Vision Center at the Wilmer Eye Institute. The winner of each of four drawings will receive a split side of Angus beef. The donated beef will be wrapped and frozen. Donations are \$5.00 each, with four chances to win.

Ticket stubs and donations should be mailed by May 7 to PDG Dalton Mann, 22944 Lyn Oaks Drive, Preston, MD 21655 or turned in at the Lions Vision Research Foundation, Inc. exhibit booth at the MD-22 Convention in Salisbury, MD by 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 14. The drawing will be held during the Victory Luncheon at the convention on Sunday, May 15, 2011.

You may use the ticket reproduced below to enter the drawing. Make additional copies as necessary.

No: 3305	Name _____	Lions Vision Research Foundation, Inc. Raffle  Split Side of Angus Beef, Wrapped and Frozen 4 Winners Drawings: May 15, 2011 Benefit: Lions Vision Research Foundation, Inc. Donation \$5.00	No: 3305
	Address _____		
	Phone _____		



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