

LIONS



VISION

NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT 22 LIONS, LIONESS, AND LEO CLUBS

SPRING 2008

Chairman's Message

Ted Reiver, Chairman

LIONS VISION RESEARCH FOUNDATION

It has been both an honor and a pleasure for me to serve the last two years as chairman of the board of our Lions Vision Research Foundation, in support of our Lions Low Vision Research and Rehabilitation Center.

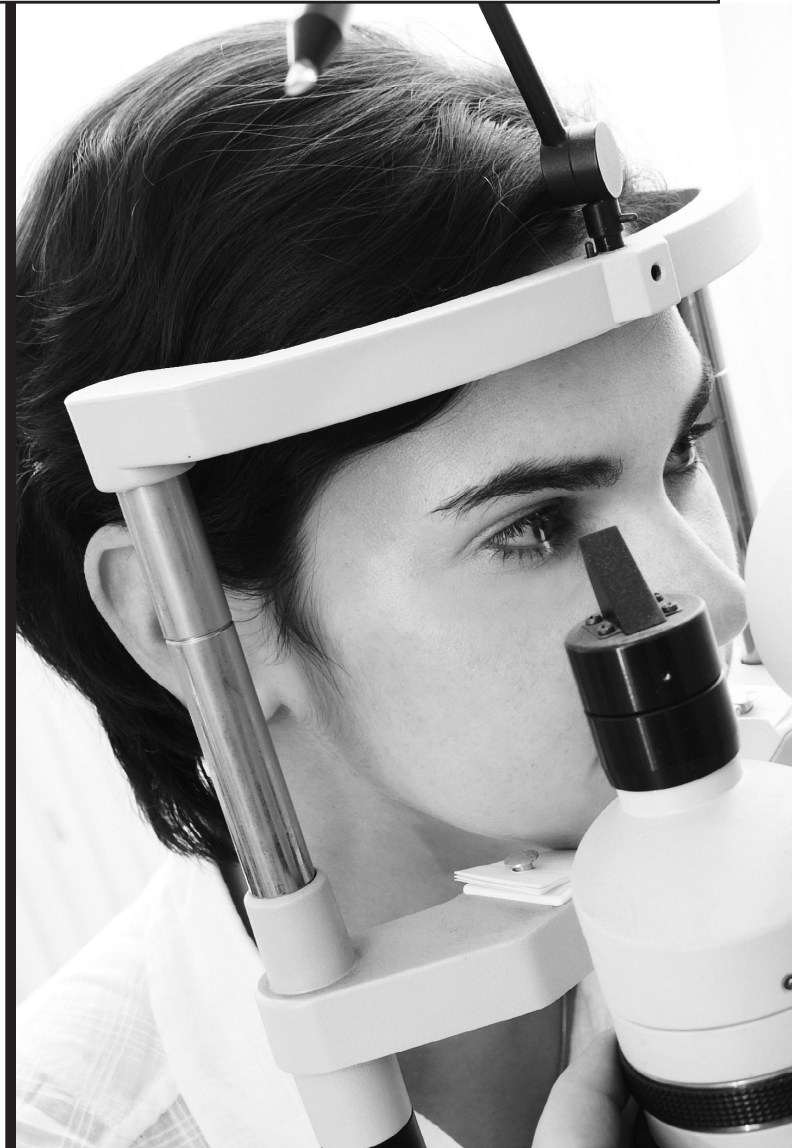
Multiple District 22 Lions should all be proud of what we have accomplished. Just think about it, in 20 years we have created, with our partners at The Wilmer Eye Institute, a world-class low vision research and rehabilitation center. Because of our efforts, the world is becoming a better place. I started making a list of Lions who have helped with the Foundation over the years I've been involved and didn't even slow down as I passed 100 names, the proverbial too many to list here. You all know who you are and every Lion worldwide owes you a debt of gratitude. That is because our center is being used as a model for creating low vision treatment centers around the world. As LVC Director Dr. Bob Massof says, low vision is the hot topic in vision care right now, and we are the leaders due to our long partnership with the Wilmer staff. I hope we continue our support and increase our participation as our Center continues its good work.

Thanks to all the Lions who stepped up when I asked for assistance, you know I couldn't have done it without you. I think we have accomplished a lot in the last twenty years, and now that we're rolling, think what we can do in the next twenty! Let's ROAR!

Yours in Lionism,

Ted Reiver, PDG

Chairman



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Drs. Wang and Dagnelie Visit China to Speak on Low Vision

Dr. Lin Wang, Lions Vision Center fellow, was invited by the Chinese Ophthalmology and Optometry Congress 2008 to organize a symposium on low vision rehabilitation held in Nanjing in April. LVC's Dr. Gislin Dagnelie accompanied Dr. Wang to China. They not only presented at the symposium, but also attended a special meeting with the China Disabled Persons Foundation (CDPF) about planning joint projects in low vision.

Six experts presented their talks at the symposium.

1) Mr. Yang van, CDPF, spoke of the need for greater involvement of eye care professionals in the Chinese rehabilitation model. The model consists of service delivery organizations in each of China's 300 provinces.

2) Prof. George Woo, Dean of the Optometry School in Hong Kong and formerly of the optometry school in Waterloo, Ontario, gave an overview of the low vision evaluation and rehab process as we know it in North America.

3) Marilee Walker, an OT from Sacramento, gave an excellent talk about the approach to eccentric viewing training. She showed examples of how she works with clients and included some information about mobility and devices.



Some of the exhibits displayed at the low vision symposium in Nanjing in April.

4) Dr. Gislin Dagnelie spoke about different categories of devices, their application, and the importance of O&M (orientation and mobility), home adaptations, etc.

5) Lin Wang spoke about the self-report methodology the Chinese version of a questionnaire similar to one we use here in the U.S. called the VALVVFQ.

6) The head of the low vision clinic in the Eye and ENT hospital of Fudan University Shanghai, spoke about the approach of their low vision clinic.

The talks were well-received by the symposium attendees, an audience of about 200.



Dr. Ava Kiser shown examining the FDA approved Eyeport device used for eye exercises for those with low vision.

Dr. Kiser's Study Uses Internet Technology for Vision Tests and Interventions

Dr. Ava Kiser's new study at the Lions Vision Center uses computer and Internet technology to assess her patients' vision. This makes it less challenging for the legally blind patients who participate in her research program to maintain the rigorous schedule of vision tests. Patients can perform these tests from home, thereby eliminating transportation issues that might preclude their ability to be in the program. Dr. Kiser's study uses computerized test programs that were developed in one of Dr. Gislin Dagnelie's former projects.

Via an online webconferencing site that Dr. Bob Massof introduced to the Center and continues to use for his projects, Dr. Kiser's program will deliver two interventions to examine the effects of stress and fatigue day-to-day variations in vision. One intervention, a stress reduction program, involves cognitive-behavioral mindfulness techniques, and the other uses the FDA approved Eyeport device (shown in photo) to perform a series of eye exercises. The intervention groups meet online on a weekly basis for eight weeks. Dr. Kiser hopes the use of these technologies for her research will make it possible for retinitis pigmentosa patients from all across the country to participate in the program.

Hello Fellow Lions and Lioness

By Lion Michael Sano

My name is Michael Sano and I am currently King Lion of the Suburban Lions Club in District 22-C. For those that don't know me, I have no vision. I was not born this way; it is something that happened later in my life. Sight is something that we all take for granted. I too was guilty of this. Now that I do not have that luxury, I must look at things a little differently. Excuse the pun, but throughout this article I will use puns and humor to make it easier for me, and you as well.

One minute I was seeing and the next minute it was all black, literally that quickly. You could not even imagine what it felt like or what it still feels like. And I would not wish this on anyone, even my worst enemy. First, let me say this article presents only my views and my beliefs, and my thoughts only. I do not speak for all the individuals with low vision or no vision. At first it did not sink in, but when it did it hit me very hard. I thought that my life was over. For a while I went through what one would expect, like depression, anger, low self esteem, self pity, loss of faith, loss of hope, denial, loss of will to live like this. I did all the wrong things, such as looking to other things to escape my new reality. But all I was doing was waking up every morning with a hangover, and less money in my pockets and I was still crippled, and with no sight.

At a very low point the Veterans Administration asked if I was willing to try some blind rehabilitation. I was very hesitant at first. They sent me to what I say is the best rehabilitation school in the world. It is located in West Haven, Connecticut. There they taught me mobility, independent living, typing, brail, how to cook, clean for myself, computers, and many, many more things. But the most important thing they taught me was that with the right attitude, right tools, the right motivation, support and the proper training anything, no everything, is possible. I now have the courage, attitude, and desire to achieve more out of life.

Now I say I can do anything you can do, just differently. And I still see, I just don't see what you see. I now see out of the eyes of faith, I see what you are trained not to see. Rehabilitation is a powerful word. It can do so many things. Imagine just the simple



Lion Michael Sano (L) with Lions Clubs International President Mahendra Amarasuriya

things like brushing your teeth without sight, eating food, tying your shoes-oh but first you have to find your shoes. There is the task of dressing yourself every day without looking like a clown. Rehabilitation can teach someone how to read their medicine so that they know that they are taking the right medicine in the right amount. Read your own mail, write someone a letter, pay bills, read a book, write a book, how to access the computer, get a degree, get a job, get a life. Those are just a few of the basic skills you can learn with rehabilitation. We, as Lions and Lioness, could look into some rehabilitation for ourselves. Use the power of numbers and wisdom among us to look at things differently in this changing world we live in, so that with the right attitude, right tools, the right motivation, support and the proper training anything, no everything, is possible. But that is a whole other article in it itself. Please contact me if you would like to talk more on this subject.

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To use someone else's words, "The past is the past and we should learn from it, we live in the present and we should treat it as such a present, and look towards the future."

Lions Low Vision Center Executives Present Seminar at Lions Convention

By Lion Ted Ladd

Dr. Robert Massof and Mr. Jim Deremeik of the Lions Low Vision Center participated in a series of seminars at the Multiple District (MD)-22 Lions Convention in Dover, DE on May 8, 2008.



Dr. Robert Massof

not have in the United States, and they encounter special problems in coping with them.

He suggested that we might think of low vision as the consequence of disease. He noted that some four million people in the United States now have low vision, and said that the number is expected to double over the next 20 years.

Dr. Massof said that studies show that people with low vision have higher accident rates and a depression rate of about 30 per cent. He emphasized the importance of taking the next step to help people cope with low vision, adding that the loss of vision is permanent and the purpose of the treatment is to teach people so afflicted to cope with it.

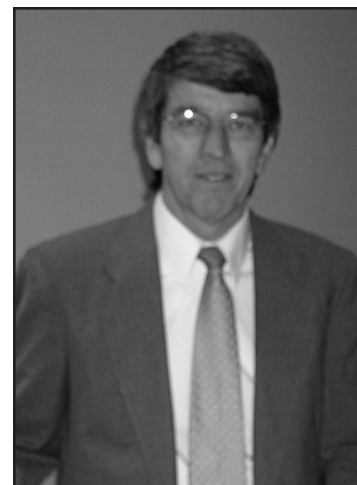
Dr. Massof credited the Lions with creating the Low Vision Center, one of the first in the country, while noting that Dr. Arnall Patz was central to it. He said that Dr. Patz had the dream of establishing a low vision center at the Wilmer Eye Clinic and eventually creating an endowment fund to support its work. It took almost 20 years for the Lions of MD-22 to establish an endowment of \$4 million, and meanwhile these Lions provided the center with \$200,000 per year to support the operation of the center. Dr. Massof called it, "an extraordinarily successful campaign," noting that the impact went well beyond the Multiple District, citing the example of the relatively new Chinese effort to establish a low vision center in Shanghai.

Dr. Massof began his talk with the observation that low vision can be described as a chronic loss of vision that will not be regained. He noted that most low vision is caused by a number of diseases. He indicated many of the diseases are related to advancing age. He said that developing countries have certain infectious eye diseases that we do

He said that specialists are not able to treat abnormal blood vessels behind the retina with lasers without damaging the retina. He added that a specialized injection will reduce these abnormal blood vessels, but they will grow back and the treatment must then be repeated.

Dr. Massof described glaucoma as being manifested by increased pressure in the eye, and stated that the condition can be treated with eye drops to reduce this pressure. He said that the weakest spot in the eyeball is its juncture with the optic nerve, and that increased pressure eventually would cause permanent damage.

Jim Deremeik cited three major tasks at the Wilmer Eye Clinic as patient care, research, and teaching. In the area of teaching, he said that a course is currently offered online with an online textbook and 22 lectures that yields 15 credits upon successful completion. He described a recent project on the use of assistive devices for persons with low vision that was conducted in Dr. Massof's home and used volunteers from the Severna Park Lions Club.



Jim Deremeik

Mr. Deremeik reported that a fellowship at the Lions Low Vision Center would start on July 1, 2008 thanks to the Lions Vision Research Foundation's allocating \$100,000 to fund it.

Dr. Robert Massof is professor of ophthalmology and neuroscience and Director of the Lions Vision Research and Rehabilitation Center, Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Jim Deremeik is a low vision specialist who is the education and rehabilitation program manager for the Johns Hopkins Lions Low Vision Rehabilitation program.

LVRF “Swing for Sight” Golf Tournament

The 9th annual LVRF “Swing for Sight” golf tournament is scheduled for Monday, September 8, 2008 at Hunter’s Oak Golf Course in Queenstown, Maryland. Golfers will have the opportunity to play at this great course, enjoy a wonderful meal, find some bargains at the silent auction, and interact with some great Lions and professional staff members from the Wilmer Eye Clinic. What could be better?

The course is located on the grounds of the sprawling Amberly Estate on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. Don’t be concerned if you have never played golf. There is plenty of time to buy some clubs, take some lessons, and join the rest of us out there. Who knows, you might really be good at it.



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