

Fall/Winter, 2010

**MIDWEST
EYE-BANKS**
DEDICATED TO THE RESTORATION OF SIGHT

VISION

CROSSING PATHS

An unexpected emergency room encounter gives hospital nurse Nancy Peck an opportunity to share her inspiring story of donation.

ILLINOIS EYE-BANK • ILLINOIS EYE-BANK, WATSON GAILEY • LIONS EYE BANK OF NEW JERSEY • MICHIGAN EYE-BANK

Inside:

Back to School: Donation + Transplantation = renewed eyesight for a New Jersey math teacher

Record-breaking Gala, dedicated Visionaries, remarkable Lions and new endeavors make 2010 a year to remember

A look inside Midwest Eye-Banks' Communications and Logistics Center

Big House Big Heart...a big success for the Michigan Eye-Bank and its supporters

Ambassadors put their unique talents to work for the Eye-Bank

Revitalized Golf Benefit captures the spirit of Eye-Bank staff, volunteers, friends and supporters

Eye-Bank mission takes flight at Aviators' Night for Sight



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JOHN JOHNSON **TIMOTHY CONNORS, J.D.**
Chair Treasurer

ELSPETH MOORE **ADRIENNE LOGEMAN**
Vice-Chair Secretary

GARY BABCOCK
Immediate Past Chair

RASHID L. BASHSHUR, Ph.D.
WILLIAM CONSTAD, M.D.
ESTHER LAMOTHE
PETER J. LATZ
JULIE LOWERY, Ph.D.
CELESTE THOMAS WILLIAMS, M.D.
KEVIN W. ROSS

EDITORIAL STAFF

DAN REYNOLDS
Director of Communications

STEPHANIE TOSSEY
Communications Coordinator

AMELIA SKIMIN
Staff Journalist

MIDWEST EYE-BANKS

4889 Venture Drive • Ann Arbor, MI 48108
Toll-Free: (800) 247-7250
www.midwesteyebanks.org

ILLINOIS EYE-BANK

A Subsidiary of Midwest Eye-Banks
547 West Jackson Blvd., Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60661
Toll-Free: (800) 548-4703
www.illinoiseyebank.org

ILLINOIS EYE-BANK, WATSON GAILEY

A Subsidiary of Midwest Eye-Banks
1717 R.T. Dunn Drive, Unit 201-7
Bloomington, IL 61701
Toll-Free: (800) 548-4703
www.illinoiseyebank.org

LIONS EYE BANK OF NEW JERSEY

A Subsidiary of Midwest Eye-Banks
77 Brant Avenue, Suite 100
Clark, NJ 07066
Toll-Free: (800) 653-9379
www.lionseyebanknj.org

MICHIGAN EYE-BANK

A Subsidiary of Midwest Eye-Banks
4889 Venture Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48108
Toll-Free: (800) 247-7250
www.michiganeyebank.org

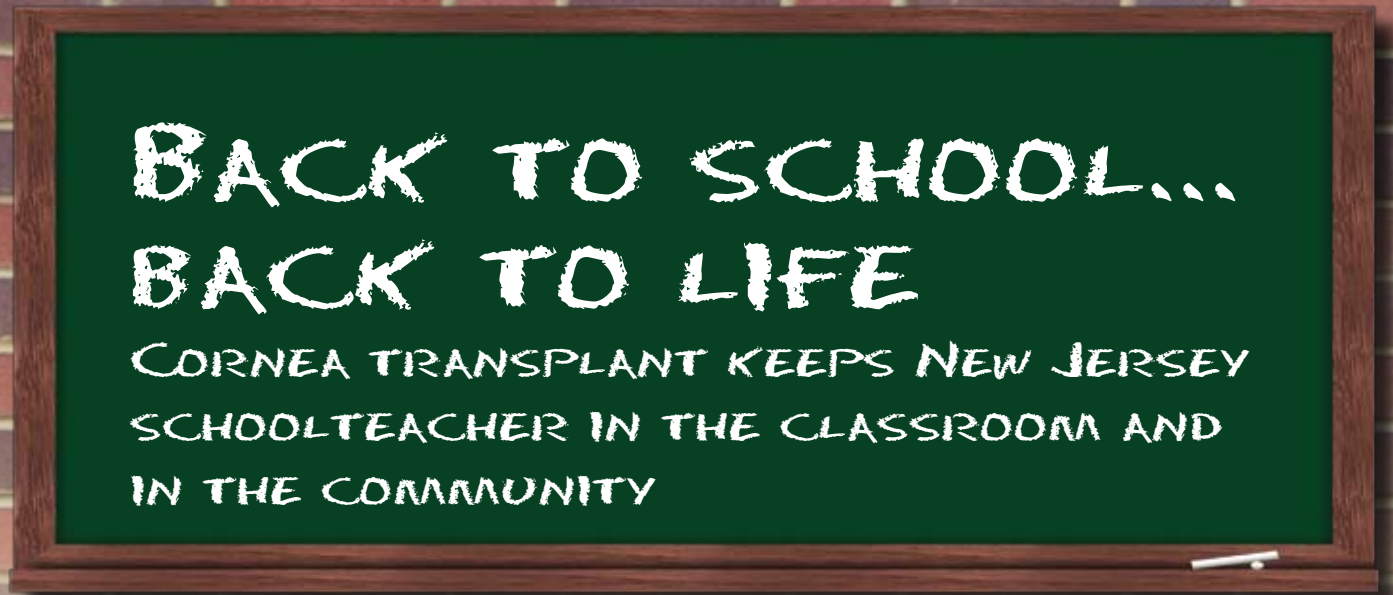
Midwest Eye-Banks is a 501(c)(3), independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to the restoration of sight. Through our locations in Illinois, Michigan and New Jersey, we recover, evaluate and distribute eye tissue for transplantation. Our Eye and Vision Research Program supports research into the causes and cures of blinding eye conditions. We also provide public and professional education on topics related to eye, organ and tissue donation.

VISION SHARE



MEMBER

Cover photo by Dove's Photography
www.dovesphotography.com



What does autumn look like? For countless adults and children in much of the country, the changing season conjures images of crisp, colorful leaves, football games and the inevitable back-to-school routine.

This year, the sights of autumn are anything but routine for middle school math teacher Brian Harms of Kenilworth, New Jersey. Before his cornea transplant in March, Brian had spent a decade suffering from *keratoconus* – an eye disorder that distorts the shape of the cornea and often leads to painful vision loss. He knew he needed a transplant, but was fearful of the procedure.

“I put off the surgery for 10 years,” Brian confesses. Like many who suffer from blinding eye conditions, he was terrified at the thought of eye surgery. But as his vision loss progressed, Brian knew his important work as a schoolteacher and youth sports coach was in jeopardy. It was time.

“I remember the days before the surgery... Not sleeping, not eating, worrying,” he recalls, crediting his wife Dana and young son Aiden with helping to ease his anxiety.

The surgery went well, but it did take time for Brian to recover. “I was in some pain,” he acknowledges, explaining that he experienced some blurriness and light sensitivity – common symptoms following a cornea transplant procedure. “About a week later, though, all of those symptoms began to diminish. I felt a whole lot better.”

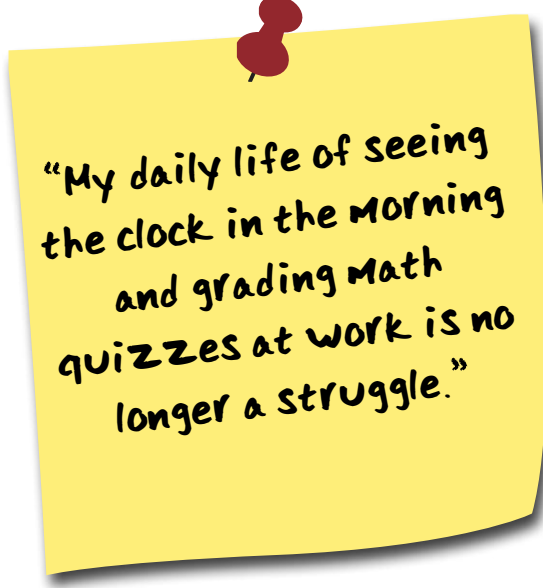
Brian was proud to have finally overcome the fear he had lived with for so many years. But during his recovery, he also began to think about the person who had donated his cornea, and the donor’s family members who were still out there somewhere. He imagined that the pain and fear they faced during the loss of their loved one were not unlike the pain and fear he had endured surrounding his surgery.

“They went through nights without sleep, not eating, worrying,” Brian surmised. “They were scared, nervous, felt pain and were terrified for their loved one.”

It took bravery for Brian to confront his debilitating vision loss, to overcome his fear and seek a transplant. And he understood that it also took a brave family to make the decision that ultimately saved his sight. Brian chose to express his gratitude in a letter to the family – an important step that the Eye Bank makes possible by handling confidential correspondence between transplant recipients and donor families.

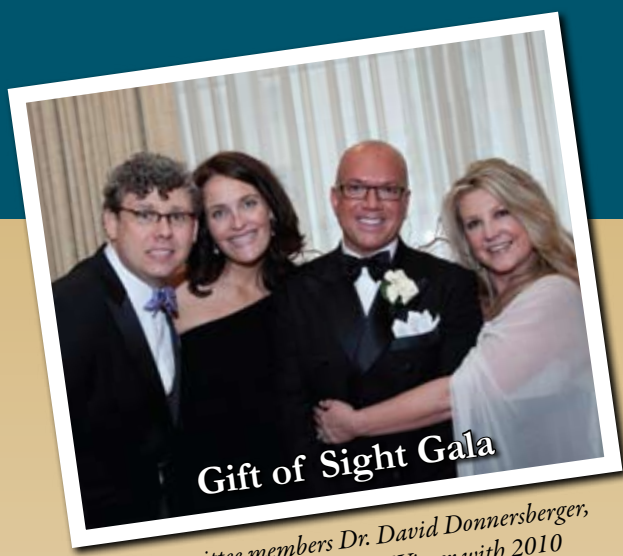
In the letter, Brian explained that the transplant had changed his life: “I have a two-and-a-half-year-old son that I can see grow and play. My wife looks even more beautiful. My daily life of seeing the clock in the morning and grading math quizzes at work is no longer a struggle. I hope you find comfort that your loved one’s donation is helping me to live a happier and healthier life.”

Brian also wrote a letter of gratitude to the Lions Eye Bank of New Jersey, and was invited to speak at its 2010 *Visionary of the Year* event as a result.



“He couldn’t make it,” explains Dan Reynolds, the Eye-Bank’s Director of Communications. “But we were thrilled to hear the reason: he was busy coaching high school football that night. He was busy doing something his eyesight has made possible... something he loves... and making a difference in the lives of young people in his community. That is true fulfillment of our mission.”

To learn more about corresponding with a donor family or recipient, or about supporting the Eye-Bank’s mission, please call or E-mail the Eye-Bank using the contact information on the left side of this page.



Gift of Sight Gala

Gala Committee members Dr. David Donnersberger, Dr. Claire Kenneally and Amy Wimer with 2010 Man of Vision Greg Hyder.



Visionary of the Year Banquet

Visionary honorees Lion Gene Polgar, PID and Lion Al Brandel, PIP with Lions Eye Bank of New Jersey Executive Director Margaret Chaplin.



Leadership Weekend

The Eye-Bank's Walkway of Honor was made possible by generous contributions from the Lions of Bedford Township.



Crystal Cornea Award

Madison and Malia with their Crystal Cornea Awards.



MEACO/MEAEBO Conference



Night for Sight at the Ballpark

Eye-Bank staff enjoy a night at the ballpark and spread the word about eye, organ and tissue donation.



Northern Michigan Friendraiser



Night with the Somerset Patriots

The Lions Eye Bank of New Jersey's new mascot, Iggy, was a big hit at the Somerset Patriots game.

Snapshot: 2010

12th Annual Gift of Sight Gala

Longtime Eye-Bank supporter Gregory Hyder was honored as 2010's Man of Vision at the Illinois Eye-Bank's 12th Annual Gift of Sight Gala on May 21 at The Peninsula Chicago.

The event, which raised a record-setting \$126,000, included an extraordinary dinner, live entertainment and a fabulous silent auction.

Preparation for the Gala was handled by the Gala Committee, led by Amy Wimer, Dr. David Donnersberger and Dr. Claire Kenneally.

Visionary of the Year Banquet

The Lions Eye Bank of New Jersey was proud to honor Lion Al Brandel, past President of Lions Clubs International and current LCIF Chair; Lion Gene Polgar, President and CEO of the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley; and LensCrafters as 2010's Visionaries of the Year at a banquet at Mayfair Farms in West Orange on October 13.

"We chose our Visionaries because they have done what others could not," explains Lions Eye Bank of New Jersey Executive Director Margaret Chaplin. "They have stepped up and made miracles happen for those who might otherwise face blindness."

The Eye Bank also paid tribute to the late Lion Horace Brown, who passed away last year after many years of supporting the organization's sight-restoring mission.

Leadership Weekend

Lions Club leaders and special supporters of the Michigan Eye-Bank were invited to a Leadership Weekend in Ann Arbor on August 13 and 14.

The Weekend began with an Appreciation Dinner on Friday evening, followed by a day of activities at the Eye-Bank on Saturday, which culminated in the unveiling of the Eye-Bank's Walkway of Honor.

The Walkway of Honor recognizes more than 50 groups and individuals who have played key roles in the Eye-Bank's history.

Crystal Cornea Award

Eye-Bank Ambassadors Madison and Malia were honored by the Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA) on October 14, when the organization presented the girls with its prestigious Crystal Cornea Award at the EBAA National Convention in Chicago.

The Crystal Cornea Award is given to individuals and organizations in recognition of "efforts that help us give the gift of sight."

Madison and Malia, 11-year-old cornea recipients, have traveled throughout Michigan on behalf of the Eye-Bank, sharing the inspirational story of their journey to sight. Their experiences led them to write and illustrate the children's book, *The Blind Porcupine*, which was printed for distribution by the Eye-Bank.

To promote the book, the girls signed copies of it at Eye-Bank events and appeared in a Public Service Announcement (PSA) about the Eye-Bank. The PSA is being shown in 98 Michigan Secretary of State branch offices.

Additionally, Madison and Malia held a Michigan Organ Donor Registry drive at their church in recognition of National Donor Sabbath.

MEACO/MEAEBO Conference

Midwest Eye-Banks hosted a conference entitled *Eye Bank Development: An Overview of Key Issues* at its Illinois Eye-Bank location in Chicago on October 17. The conference was held in conjunction with the Middle East Africa Council of Ophthalmology (MEACO) and the Middle East Africa Eye Bank Organization (MEAEBO).

Night for Sight at the Ballpark

More than 300 supporters of the Illinois Eye-Bank, Watson Gailey attended its Night for Sight at the Ballpark on July 17, when the Normal CornBelts took on the Southern Illinois Miners at the Corn Crib, the CornBelts' new home.

Tickets to the event included admittance to the game and an all-you-can-eat barbecue.

"It was a really good time," says Illinois Eye-Bank, Watson Gailey Regional Coordinator Dave Hearn. "We hope to do it again next year."

Northern Michigan Friendraiser

Dr. Robert Carrier, founder and Medical Director of Northern Eye Optical, opened his Alpena home to local business and community leaders when he hosted the Northern Michigan Friendraiser in September. The event helped raise awareness about the Michigan Eye-Bank, along with several other organizations.

Lions Eye Bank of New Jersey Night with the Somerset Patriots

The Lions Eye Bank of New Jersey teamed up with the Somerset Patriots, a minor league baseball team, to raise awareness about eye, organ and tissue donation during a game at TD Bank Ballpark in Bridgewater on August 3.

"It was a beautiful night, and we appreciate all those who turned out to support the Eye Bank," says Cathy Wasner, Community Engagement Coordinator for the Lions Eye Bank of New Jersey.

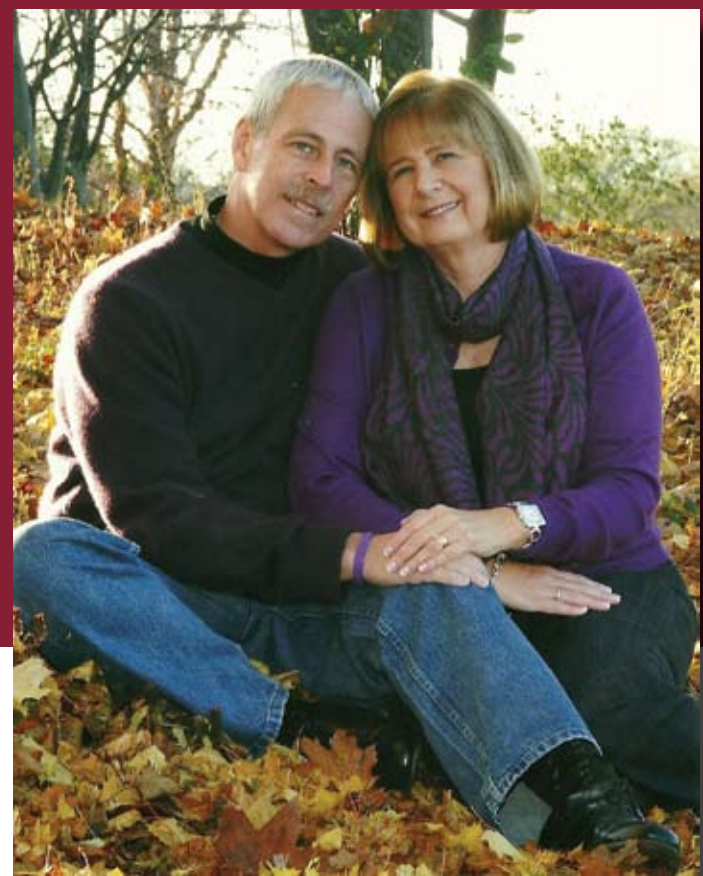
Wasner hopes to hold the event again next year.



Want to see more photos of Eye-Bank events?

Visit www.illinoiseyebank.org, www.lionseyebanknj.org or www.michiganeyebank.org and go to News and Events > Photo Gallery to see pictures of our local events.

Crossing paths



Nancy Peck lost her husband, Bruce, in January, and had an unexpected chance to share Bruce's story with the Eye-Bank.

Chance meeting allows donor wife to share her story

It started with a baseball cap and a broken arm.

The baseball cap was emblazoned with the Midwest Eye-Banks logo, and belonged to Midwest Eye-Banks Chief Operating Officer Chuck Pivoney. The broken arm belonged to his six-year-old daughter, Maria.

Chuck was wearing the cap when he and his wife took Maria to the emergency room to have her arm examined. The injury, it turned out, would require surgery to set it. Maria and her parents were ushered into the hospital's pre-op area.

While waiting for the anesthesiologist to arrive, a nurse explained the procedure and what to expect. During the conversation, Chuck noticed the nurse glancing at his cap; she then turned to walk away.

She only made it a few steps before she turned around.

"Do you work with the Illinois Eye-Bank?" the nurse asked. Chuck told her he did, and she began to tell him her story.

The nurse's name was Nancy Peck. She explained that her husband, Bruce, had become a donor after passing away in January. His loss was devastating to his family, and to the communities he served as an optometrist.

"My husband was just a very humble person," Nancy said. "He wanted to serve other people."

Bruce's career gave him the opportunity to do that. On many occasions, he donated his services and glasses to people in need. "(He) wasn't in business for the money," Nancy explains; he simply wanted to help people.

He continued to work, helping people to see, even after being diagnosed with cancer. It wasn't until he had a stroke shortly before his death that he gave up working.

On the day Bruce passed away, as Nancy and her children were preparing to leave his hospital room, Nancy's cell phone rang. The caller was Eye-Bank Communications and Logistics Center Specialist Ben Kelley, whose responsibilities include making compassionate contact with donor families and



The Peck family

Inside Midwest Eye-Banks' Communications and Logistics Center

It's a difficult task, calling a grieving family to ask them to consider donating their loved one's eye tissue. Time is of the essence; the phone call must be made within hours of the loss. But to those in need of a cornea transplant, that call is vitally important.

That thought is what helps Ben Kelley get through a day – or night – at work.

"You know you're helping somebody in the end," he explains.

Ben is a specialist at Midwest Eye-Banks' Communications and Logistics Center (CLC), which began operation in March, 2009. The CLC is the communications portal between Midwest Eye-Banks' member eye banks and important contacts, including donor families. CLC personnel are on shift 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.



When a call about a potential donor comes in to the CLC, specialists like Ben follow up with the potential donor's medical care providers and family to

determine suitability and obtain consent. Because there is only a small window of time after death when tissue can be recovered, this follow-up must take place as soon after a donor's death as possible.

CLC specialists are trained to be sensitive and supportive when speaking with donor families. Still, each specialist must find his or her own voice – a way to provide comfort while still asking difficult, but necessary, questions. Ben finds it helpful to simply listen and let the family talk about their loved one.

"It's what comes naturally to me," he says. "I want the family to know they can trust me."

Reactions from families run the gamut from tears to anger. Some families act as if nothing out of the ordinary has happened, while others' grief is palpable.

It's not uncommon for people to need more time to make the decision, or even change their minds and call back after initially turning down the option of donation. That's why CLC specialists provide families with contact information and welcome phone calls at any time to answer questions. Some family members have called four or five times before giving consent.

offering them the option of donation. Ben asked whether Nancy would be interested in donating her husband's corneas. It wasn't something that Nancy and Bruce had discussed, but she knew immediately that it was the right thing to do – that it was what Bruce would have wanted.

So, she said yes. Ben asked her the questions required to obtain Bruce's social and medical history, and then told her about the donation process. He also took time to answer all of her questions. Nancy was struck by his compassion, particularly at such a devastating time for her and her family.

"He was very kind and helpful," she remembers.

A few weeks later, Nancy received a letter from the Eye-Bank, letting her know that Bruce's corneas had been donated to two people in Michigan. Even in death, Bruce was still helping people see.

"I just wanted to cry," Nancy says. "I thought this was amazing."

For her, the fact that the people who received Bruce's corneas were in Michigan had special meaning. She and Bruce were originally from Michigan, but had moved to Illinois for Bruce to attend optometry school. While they continued to live in Illinois, Michigan was still, in many ways, their home.

But the best part, according to Nancy, was the letter she received several months later, from a recipient of Bruce's cornea.

"Because of you and your loved one's generosity and the work of an excellent surgeon, I can see," the recipient wrote. "I should say, 'we can see,' as your loved one's cornea lives on in my eye." The recipient went on to explain how he could read a newspaper in normal light, drive a car at night and on the expressway and use a computer without his right eye twitching uncontrollably – none of which was possible before his transplant.

"My thoughts and prayers of thanksgiving will be with you and your loved one for the rest of my life," the letter said, in closing. "You have restored my quality of life."

Hearing from someone who could see because of Bruce's gift helped soothe the grief Nancy and her family felt after their loss.

"To get a letter – it was such a wonderful gift to hear how his life had been changed," Nancy explains. "It gave us such comfort."

As she relayed her story to Chuck, tears formed in both their eyes.

"After she told me about Bruce, and about getting the letter, she gave me a hug," Chuck recalls. "And I said, 'I should be hugging you.'"

For Chuck, this chance encounter spoke volumes about the Eye-Bank's role in the community: "The Eye-Bank is donors, like Bruce, who make the selfless choice to help others as their own lives draw to a close. The Eye-Bank is donor families, like the Pecks, who, in a time of tragedy, realize their loved ones' wishes and make the gift of sight possible. The Eye-Bank is cornea recipients, who take a moment to share their gratitude for an irreplaceable gift that enables them to enjoy life to the fullest. And the Eye-Bank is the people who dedicate their time, talent and energy to making the donation and transplantation process work.

"Meeting Nancy meant a lot to me. If the Eye-Bank was able to provide comfort to her and her family while also helping them offer this precious gift to someone in need, then we have fulfilled our mission."



*Photos by Dove's Photography
www.dovesphotography.com*

"We empower the family to make the decision," explains CLC Manager Chad Santos.

After a family agrees to the donation, the CLC specialist must gather the potential donor's medical and social history. The questions are similar to those asked before a blood donation. Due to the personal nature of the questions, they can be difficult for family members to answer, but they're necessary to ensure the donor's eligibility and the safety of the donated tissue.

Families are always welcome to ask whatever questions they may have. CLC specialists go through more than a month of rigorous training, which prepares them

for almost any question that may arise. If they don't know an answer, they find out.

It's an intense job, and not everyone is comfortable doing it.

"Emotionally, some people can't handle it," says Chad.

But Ben Kelley wouldn't want to do anything else.

"It's the Boy Scout in me," he says. "It's my daily good deed. Even when I can't do it in my personal life, I know I've done it at work."



Meet the CLC staff

Top row from left: Ryan Simmons, Tyler Hicks, George Rutledge

Middle row from left: Wendy Braun, Lisa Robinson, Nicole Wilson, Jeff Tylo, Kady Cooper, Ben Kelley and Paul Aldrich

Bottom row from left: Kristopher Mavin, Elizabeth Tennant, Ashley Beeckman and Chad Santos, CLC Manager

Not pictured: Monique Batiest, Barry Dowdy and Hope Milligan



THE BIG HOUSE Big HEART a big success



Ask any University of Michigan football fan, and they'll tell you... There's no place like the Big House in the fall.

Located in Ann Arbor, the U of M Stadium – better known as the “Big House” for its massive size – is the third largest stadium in the world. With an official seating capacity of 109,901, crowds have actually topped 113,000 on football game days.

For fans, running through the tunnel and across the field would be a dream come true. And on October 3, participants in the Big House Big Heart 5K, 10K and one-mile races got to do just that.

The Michigan Eye-Bank was proud to be represented by a team of more than three dozen walkers, runners, wheelers and strollers at the Big House Big Heart, where participants were invited to raise money for their favorite charitable organizations.

“What they’ve done is absolutely inspiring...Not only did they raise a large amount of money, they thought outside the box to do it.”

Team Michigan Eye-Bank raised more than \$4,000, thanks to its dedicated team members.

“We’re thrilled that this group of participants chose to support us,” says Lisa Langley, Executive Director of the Michigan Eye-Bank. “They have done amazing things to raise money in support of our mission.”

The honorary captain of Team Michigan Eye-Bank was Cassandra Perry, a bilateral cornea recipient. She and her children, Elizabeth and Jack, first learned about the Big House Big Heart team at an Eye-Bank event in April. Elizabeth and Jack thought that participating in the Big House Big Heart would be the perfect opportunity to show their appreciation for their mom’s second chance for sight.



Cassandra Perry with her children Jack and Elizabeth

They set a fundraising goal of \$2,500, and got to work. When Cassandra’s co-worker Susan Siroky and her daughter, Isabella, heard what the Perrys were doing, they were eager to lend a hand.

Elizabeth, Jack and Isabella held coin drives at school and sold candy bars, jewelry, painted rocks and lemonade to raise money.

“We’ve had a lot fun for a great cause,” says Cassandra.

In total, the Perry and Siroky families managed to raise more than \$3,000 for Team Michigan Eye-Bank – smashing their original goal.

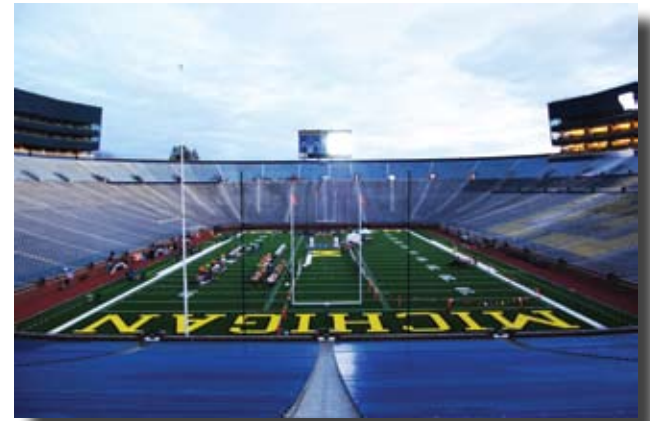
“What they’ve done is absolutely inspiring,” explains Lisa. “Not only did they raise a large amount of money, they thought outside the box to do it.”

For their part in making Big House Big Heart a success, the Michigan Eye-Bank presented the Perry and Siroky families with a Shared Vision Award in November. The Shared Vision Award recognizes individuals or organizations that have gone the extra mile in supporting the Eye-Bank and its mission to restore sight.

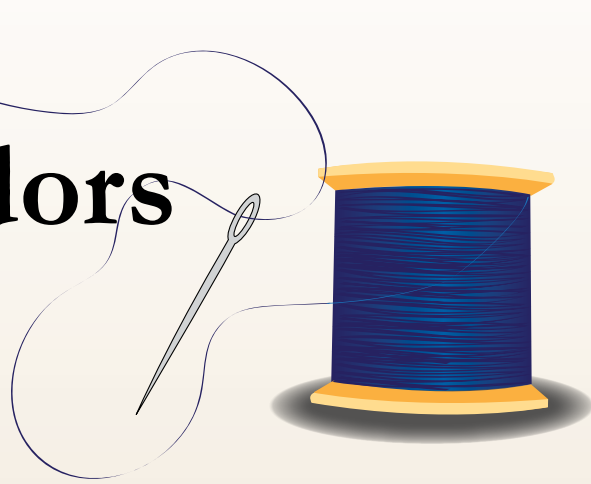
“I can’t think of anyone more deserving of a Shared Vision Award than these amazing families,” says Langley.

Want to get involved in next year’s Big House Big Heart event?

Contact Chris Dempsey at (734) 887-2326 or cdempsey@michiganeyebank.org for more information.



Talented Ambassadors find creative ways to get involved



You may have seen the Eye-Bank's new mascots — the Illinois Eye-Bank's *Seymour*, the Michigan Eye-Bank's *Cornelius* and the Lions Eye Bank of New Jersey's *Iggy* — at recent events, but what you may not know is that the enormous eye costume shared by each of the mascot personalities was the result of many hours of work by a dedicated volunteer.

The costume was designed and created by Michigan-based fiber artist Barbara Skimin, mother of Eye-Bank staff member Amy Skimin. Remembering the wonderful Halloween costumes Barbara had made for Amy and her sisters when they were young, Amy knew the costume creation would be a huge success.

"We always had the best costumes," Amy recalls.

These days, most of Barbara's sewing time is devoted to creating intricate wall quilts using a variety of techniques and materials. She put her other projects aside, though, as she rushed to get the costume completed in time for the mascot's debut at the Illinois Eye-Bank's *Night for Sight at the Ballpark* in July.



Barbara Skimin with *Cornelius* at his Michigan debut.

"It was a challenge," Barbara admitted. "I've never made anything quite like that before. There were times when a part wasn't working like I wanted it to, and I'd have to find a solution as quickly as possible because I had a limited amount of time."

By putting her talents to work, Barbara was able to create a unique and universally-recognizable character that helps to build awareness of the Eye-Bank, while also creating excitement about its mission. But she isn't the only Eye-Bank Ambassador to volunteer her talents for the good of the organization.

In October, New Jersey physical therapist Christine Scarano — who, in addition to being a cornea recipient, is an avid photographer — graciously provided a sample of her amazing photos to the Lions Eye Bank of New Jersey for its first-ever *Celebration of Sight*, held at the public library in Clark, New Jersey. The event featured photography, paintings and other works created by cornea transplant recipients whose sight had been restored. Christine's works were met with rave reviews, and her contributions created a deeper understanding of the gifts made possible by eye donors and their families.



Christine Scarano with several pieces from her photography collection.

"I was surprised at how it felt to talk with the donor families who came," Christine remarked at the conclusion of the event. "It turned out to be a very emotional experience for me."

Those interested in viewing or purchasing photos by Christine can reach her through the Lions Eye Bank of New Jersey at (800) 653-9379.



Michigan Eye-Bank takes a swing at "fun" raising

Golfers teed off in support of the Michigan Eye-Bank on June 21, when the Eye-Bank hosted a Golf Benefit at the prestigious University of Michigan Golf Course in Ann Arbor.

In past years, the event was held by the Ann Arbor Host Lions Club — the Club whose members helped to create the Michigan Eye-Bank in 1957. In addition to being its beneficiary, the Eye-Bank was a strong supporter of the event, offering volunteer staff and sponsorships each year to help ensure its success.

"We reached a point where our staff members were so involved in the event, that it just made sense to make it an official Eye-Bank function," explains Dan Reynolds, Midwest Eye-Banks' Communications Director and the Michigan Eye-Bank's Golf Committee Chair.

More than 100 golfers turned out to support the Eye-Bank. Some were long-time supporters; others were new faces.

"Each new sponsor, and each new golfer, represents a new opportunity for us to connect with those we serve," says Reynolds. "We need to build community connections if we are to build mutual support."

According to Reynolds, the most meaningful part of the Golf Benefit is the volunteerism and charitable giving it brings forth from Eye-Bank staff and Ambassadors, as well as Lions Club members in Ann Arbor and beyond.

"Two fantastic young bagpipers volunteered to play as the golfers rolled out onto the course," he explains. "More than a dozen members of our staff volunteered to set up, handle registration, cook and serve food all day on the course, assist golfers, prepare raffle items, and help clean up when it was over. Many Eye-Bank staff members spent money out of their own pockets to donate supplies — food, beverages and much more. Ours is a seriously dedicated team."

The Michigan Eye-Bank would like to extend a special thanks to the organizations, individuals and staff members who helped make this year's golf outing a success!

Gold Sponsors

Gift of Life Michigan
Russell Video

Silver Sponsors

Facility Matrix Group
IBS
Miller's Lawn & Landscaping
Rightaway Delivery
Thayer-Innes Insurance/
Westfield Group

Hole Sponsors

Ace Barnes Hardware
Donate Life Coalition
George Meyer Co., LLC
Howard Conlon
Ipanema Solutions
James D. Herter, DDS
Kellogg Eye Center
Michigan Donor Family Council
Midwestern Consulting
MOTTEP
PLY Architecture
Port Huron South Park Lions Club
Preservation Solutions, Inc.
Three Cedars Farm Landscaping
TLC Eyecare and Laser Centers

Volunteers

Jessica Alamdari
Paul Aldrich
Ashley Beeckman
Bill Bresler
Susan Bresler
Diane Carver
Alison Claerhout
Holly DeMasi
Chris Dempsey
Jeanne Ellis
Sandy Galli
Gayle Geider
Lauren Johnson
Cathy Koning
John Krienke
Cindy Maggetti
Michelle McCowan
Nicole McCowan
Dan Reynolds
Zach Ribble
Katy Ross
Suzanne Ross
Vivian Ross
Chad Santos
Bryan Singer
Amy Skimin
Barbara Skimin
Barb Smith
Sue Sovia
Brad Tennant
Elizabeth Tennant
Stephanie Tossey
Darlene Wade
Diane Wentland

Flying High

Midwest Eye-Banks earns its wings at Aviators' Night for Sight

A fashion show. A cigar lounge. Exotic cars. Live music. Creative cocktails. Casino gaming. International cuisine. And, of course, luxury private jets. What else would you expect from a charitable fundraiser benefiting an eye bank?



The newly-formed Ambassadors for Vision (A4V) Council – spearheaded by volunteer supporters Franco La Marca and Anthony Contrucci – labored for months to assemble the most outrageous and memorable shindig ever held on behalf of Midwest Eye-Banks. They succeeded and, on October 16th, the A4V Council and more than 200 of their closest friends prepared for takeoff.

Upon arrival at the Chicago Executive Airport, guests were whisked into an enormous airplane hangar that had been transformed into something out of this world. Flanked by samples of Chicago's finest international cuisine, the bustling hangar became a maelstrom of luxury jet aircraft, exotic car displays, fashion models, local celebs and the rhythms of live music.

"This is an entirely sponsor and donor-driven event," La Marca told guests, acknowledging the remarkable support from sponsors Marquis Jet, Lake Forest Sports Cars, Breitling and Beermann Swerdlove – to name a few. Marquis provided Citation and G4 private aircraft for guests to tour;

Horseshoe Casino set up gaming tables; food and drink were provided by RL Restaurant, Trump Hotel, Cafe Bionda, Mid America Club, Le Colonial and Grey Goose. There was even a special recorded greeting for the event from Tony Tasset, Chicago multimedia artist and creator of the infamous 30-foot-tall "EYE" sculpture featured in Chicago's Pritzker Park.



To remind the crowd exactly why they were there, La Marca introduced Illinois Eye-Bank Executive Director Diane Hollingsworth, and the most special guest of the evening – 10-year-old Anthony Diaz, whose sight

was saved six years ago through the miracle of corneal transplantation. Standing in the shadow of a giant luxury jet, Diaz and his parents offered their own thanks to the crowd for supporting Midwest Eye-Banks' mission to restore sight.



Funds raised by the event will support the Eye-Bank's community education and outreach programs, as well as its research funding efforts.

VISION

A Publication of Midwest Eye-Banks

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Ann Arbor, MI
Permit #43