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After receiving a corneal transplant as an infant, Jana runs, jumps, skips and plays like a 3-year-old should. Read more on page 4.
**Eye Bank Marks 30,000 Donors**

For June, a recent cornea donation meant relief and clearer vision. For the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley, that same donation marked the 30,000th time a donor had made such a gift possible since the eye bank’s opening in 1957.

A retired executive secretary and cancer survivor, June had worn contact lenses for most of her life. After her ophthalmologist of 30 years retired, June learned from her new doctor that she had significant cataracts. Her surgery was challenging due to the advanced nature of the cataract in her left eye, and she developed corneal swelling. When medical efforts failed to give her relief, her doctor referred her to LEBDV Medical Director Dr. Sadeer Hannush.

Wills Eye Institute’s Cornea Service Attending Surgeon Dr. Hannush recommended a cornea transplant using the new partial thickness, sutureless technique. Only several weeks into recovery, June was delighted at how well she could see and relished her better quality of life. “However,” she confessed, “I had no idea how dirty my house was!”

June credits Dr. Hannush and his team for their professionalism, their level of care, and most of all, for helping her to laugh (which she does, often).

As a result of her surgery, June is a passionate advocate for donation. “People don’t realize how much of an impact these donations can have,” she said. “Before my surgery, I didn’t even know one could donate a cornea. I’m so lucky that someone else did. I tell everyone to donate and support cornea transplantation. It’s made all the difference in the world for me. The work that the Lions Eye Bank does is a wonderful way to give sight to others.”

**Mission of the Eye Bank**

“The Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley is committed to enhancing a person’s quality of life by restoring or improving vision through corneal transplantation, medical research and education.”

**Growing Need Met By Growing Capabilities and Support**

**forSight**

**LICF Grant Enables Laboratory Upgrade**

Thanks to the generosity of the Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) and local Lions Clubs, the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley (LEBDV) has purchased highly sophisticated equipment and is planning an expansion of its laboratory space.

Since 1957, LEBDV has been the recognized leader in providing the highest-quality ocular tissue. It has coordinated more than 35,000 cornea transplant surgeries from more than 30,000 donors. In 2011 alone, of approximately 1,700 recovered corneas, more than 1,000 were suitable for transplantation.

The LCIF funding was in the form of a match: if LEBDV could secure $60,000 in donations, LCIF would give another $60,000. With the support of tri-state Lions Clubs, LEBDV identified matching funds.

Those funds are being used in two ways: to expand the laboratory and to purchase cutting-edge equipment for measuring and assessing corneal tissue. For example, the Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) unit is a state-of-the-art device that evaluates corneas for thickness, incisions, wounds and defects. The OCT is critical to the success of Descemet’s Stripping Automated Endothelial Keratoplasty (DSAEK), a procedure in which only the inner endothelial cell layer is replaced, instead of the whole cornea. DSAEK is considered the most significant development in the field of corneal transplantation in the last 100 years. With it, the transplanted cells are held in place by an air bubble, not stitches, and healing is measured in days and weeks, rather than the months and years associated with previous procedures. Since 2008, about half of the corneas being processed at LEBDV have been used in the DSAEK transplant surgeries, and that percentage is expected to increase because of the procedure’s popularity.

To accommodate the growth associated with DSAEK, both in terms of equipment and storage, LEBDV’s laboratory needs to expand. Construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2012.

**Becoming the Area’s Premier Eye Bank**

It is hard to believe my term in office has ended. What a fantastic year I had working with the dedicated and loyal board of trustees and staff of the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley. Until you sit in this position, you will never be aware of what it truly takes to be at the helm of such an outstanding organization!

Much has been accomplished this year, of which I am very proud. We’ve also begun other ventures, such as the expansion of the laboratory. Many thanks go to Lions Eye Bank Chairman and Immediate Past District Governor Phil Shober of District 14-P and the Lions, Lionesses and Leos of his district who spearheaded the grant proposal for the lab expansion submitted to Lions Clubs International Foundation.

Because of the expediency of the eye bank staff in getting all the necessary paperwork to accompany the grant request, the support of the eye bank’s medical directors, the two sitting international directors from Pennsylvania and Delaware and the nine governors of the districts that support the eye bank (Delaware District 22-D; Pennsylvania Districts 14-A, 14-P, and 14-H; New Jersey Districts 16-A, 16-B, 16-C, 16-D, and 16-E), the matching grant of $60,435 was approved.

The skills of our technical staff combined with great social media marketing have given LEBDV recognition as the area’s premier eye bank. We’re proud of our ability to supply quality corneal tissue to physicians for their patients.

The board of trustees stepped up their efforts to raise funds; the endowment goal to raise $10 million is gaining stride, and the annual calendar raffle and golf tournament continue to be profitable.

I cannot thank the board and staff enough for making my year as chairman such a great experience. President and COO Jim Quirk and I have truly had “an excellent adventure!”
Consultation with Dr. Hammersmith

The eye bank’s medical advisory board is comprised of nationally and internationally acclaimed physicians. In each issue, forSight gets an appointment with these professionals for a check-up on developments in their field.

Dr. Kristin Hammersmith is an active part of the teaching program at Wills Eye as director of the institute’s Cornea Fellowship Program and instructor for the Wills Eye Institute Residency Program. She is also an assistant professor of ophthalmology at Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University. Dr. Hammersmith is one of few doctors nationwide involved in treating severe ocular surface disease with the artificial cornea transplant, Boston K-Pro. As a mother of two, Dr. Hammersmith developed a special interest in corneal disease in children.

Ivy cites that life-changing experience as the reason LEBDV was forefront in her mind when her colleague from the ambulatory department, energetic and motivated Social Worker Amanda Fonash, requested her help in hosting an eyeglass collection drive. While attempting to reach a Lions Club for more information about their regular drives, Ivy serendipitously contacted the eye bank in a fortunate error.

“We were really inspired by Ivy’s story and her passion for spreading the gift of sight. After learning more about the project and how it aligned with Lionism, we wanted to do everything we could to help her and Amanda raise awareness and host a successful drive,” said Eye Bank President and COO Jim Quirk.

Lions Eye Bank contributed 50 stylish collection boxes that Amanda and Ivy placed around the hospital and clinics in Philadelphia, as well as suburban health centers. To their delight, the impact was tremendous, with the collection boxes filling up multiple times per day. Patients and their families, employees and even members of the extended CHOP community were eager to help.

“Knowing that others in need will be given the gift of sight through the collection drive makes the time and effort worthwhile. It was great to see how the CHOP community and Lions Eye Bank came together to make the event a success,” said Amanda.
"Each day," Eileen wrote to the family after the surgery, "our family thinks of the terrible loss you suffered. We have such respect that you had the courage to think of another family at such a difficult time. We want to thank you for giving our daughter a new cornea that has enabled her to lead a normal life."

As Jana grows older, her sisters will undoubtedly teach her many life lessons. She is also going to learn, when the time is right, about another girl in her life: Jana will know the powerful and life-changing story about a heroic family’s gift to her – their daughter’s cornea.

Jana’s curls bounce as she zigzags across the room, clutching her Dora the Explorer doll. Eileen, her mother, bends quickly for a passing kiss, watching fondly as Jana pauses to check that her sparkly pocketbook is still hanging at her side. It’s life as usual with a 3-year-old – but this child’s short life has been anything but “ordinary.”

Jana was born with an extremely rare eye condition. At birth, her left eye resembled a blue marble, but as days and weeks went by, the eye began to grow in size. By the time she was 8 weeks old, it had become so large that she could not close her lid, and then it dried out and became quite painful. Skin began to form over the eye. Jana’s parents took her from doctor to doctor in search of a diagnosis and a solution that would relieve their baby’s pain.

Finally, they went to see Dr. Kristin Hammersmith at Wills Eye Institute, who has a special interest in pediatric corneal disease. Dr. Hammersmith recommended that the skin growth be removed from the eye. She gently explained to Louis and Eileen that Jana faced three possible outcomes from surgery. Ideally, there would be a normal cornea under the growth of skin. Or, Jana might not have a functioning cornea (in fact, she may not have one at all), which would require a transplant. Finally – and most frightening – Jana could lose the eye entirely.

Convinced that surgery was the right decision, Louis and Eileen agreed to the procedure. Dr. Hammersmith found that Jana had no cornea and proceeded with the transplant, made possible by a donation to the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley from the grieving family of a young girl from the Philadelphia area.

Brave little Jana has needed several follow-up procedures, and doctors continue to evaluate how much vision she has in her left eye. Jana, who can see perfectly out of her right eye, runs, jumps, skips and plays like a 3-year-old should. Her left eye, thanks to the Lions Eye Bank donation, doesn’t scare others. Eye drops are a daily event, as are anti-rejection meds, but that seems like a small price for this normal life, especially when Jana’s parents think of the family of the donor child.

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Harry’s Legacy: Gift of Sight Continues
Proud Father’s Support of Others

A “Mr. Fix-it” by day and family man by night, Harry loved to help and share his experiences with others. Now, Harry’s wife and son find comfort knowing that his gifts have given someone in need a new chance to see the world as he did.

Harry and Debra took their six-year-old son Adam to visit the beach for a long weekend, just as a hurricane was rolling in. Adam was nervous when the power went out and the house was dark, but his dad fixed up a circuit so the TV could work and his son could be entertained. For three days Harry made sure his son was safe and taught him not to be scared.

It’s a story Debra said captures the essence of who he was and what led him to become a cornea donor.

Harry had spent his life working as a car mechanic. By age 21, Harry owned his own auto repair business, but his interest did not stop at cars. He enjoyed trying new recipes in the kitchen and figuring out computer problems. “Once, my computer was infested with ants and he just took it apart, cleaned it and put it back together. His sense of direction and purpose was so great that he was better than any GPS on the market,” Debra added.

Harry and Debra visited the Thomas Edison Museum in Fort Myers, Florida, which Debra said was one of his favorite trips. “He seemed to identify with Edison; the inventing, the thrill out of learning something new and the perseverance to overcome obstacles and reach a goal.”

Most mechanics are not available over the holidays, but Harry was always there for his family and friends. He was forever kind and generous; he did not care about liability issues: his first thought was always how he could alleviate someone else’s trouble. “If you were a friend of his, there is literally nothing he would not do for you—always giving of himself to a friend or stranger in need,” Debra said.

Harry and Debra met in Florida and were together for 22 years. When they grew tired of Florida, they decided to move to Philadelphia and start a family. “Harry had travelled to Europe and Israel, but nothing excited him more than the birth of his son Adam. He was a patient father, always involved in Adam’s life and as huggable as a teddy-bear,” she said.

He liked classics like old James Bond movies, the Dick Van Dyke Show and Bob Newhart. He enjoyed music from the 50’s and 60’s, and Debra believed that they reflected his values. “Family first, do the right thing, be happy. That was how he lived his life.” Harry hated to see children in the hospital or people in nursing homes; he never wanted anyone to endure pain, theirs or a loved one’s. “Nothing was more important than the people he loved—he was devoted to them until the end.”

At age 57, Harry’s health declined greatly, despite Debra’s belief that “a mind that can fix a car can fix anything.” Harry calmly talked to Debra about cornea donation. Though it was not on his license, Harry wanted his corneas to be donated, to “pay it forward.” He had seen amazing things in his life and wanted someone else to have the ability to see as well. Even in death, Debra said, he is still helping people.

“Friends send me funny Harry stories,” said Debra, who is committed to making sure Adam will know what kind of person his father was. Debra and Adam planted a tree at Adam’s school in Harry’s memory to continue his legacy through his family.

“Don’t put things off: You don’t know what will happen, you have to live your life now. The fights about the bills and in-laws and who has to drive the car just don’t matter. You have to appreciate and love people. I told him before he died how much I loved him, how thankful I was for him, and though it didn’t change the outcome, he knew.” Debra said that Harry gave her the greatest gift, her son Adam, but she finds peace knowing that Harry gave someone else a gift as well—the gift of sight.

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Words of Thanks From Recipients

Dear Family of the Cornea Donor:

We are so very grateful for the gift of the cornea. Without your donor’s gift, there was no chance that my brother would gain sight in his eye.

We understand how fortunate it is that someone is a donor. My brother has experienced certain medical struggles throughout his life, so it is with special thanks that he could be a recipient of a cornea.

We hope this letter conveys our thankfulness and that you know that someone has an opportunity to see because of the gift by your donor.

Thank you ever so much.

With great appreciation,
A thankful recipient’s family

Dear Donor Family:

May it console you to know that my thoughts and prayers will continually be with you. I hope that precious memories of your loved one will lessen the shadow of your pain in the loss of your loved one.

I was the recipient of a donor cornea transplanted from your loved one, and thanks to your loved one and my skilled surgeon, my sight has been restored. I am able to once again be a nighttime driver, what a blessing. I will always value this blessing from you and your loved one. I thank you for the gift of sight that has been restored in my left eye.

- A forever-grateful recipient
18th Annual Gift of Sight Charity Golf Classic

It’s that time of the year again. Tee up this summer to support the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley.

Save the Date:
Monday, August 13, 2012
Radnor Valley Country Club
555 Sprout Road
Villanova, Pennsylvania 19085

FIRST EVENT – TEE-OFF
11:00 a.m. Registration & Lunch
12:30 p.m. Tee Off
$125 Per Golfer Registration Fee
(includes cart, fees, dinner buffet & more)

Early Bird Special – Register your foursome before August 1, 2012, and save $50.00!!!

SECOND EVENT – NOT A GOLFER?
Beginning at 4:30 p.m.

Dinner buffet, $35.00 per person
Awards
Silent & Chinese Auctions
Art Auction

2012 SPONSORSHIP LEVELS
To see what’s included in each sponsorship level package visit, www.lebvd.org or call the Eye Bank at 1-800-743-6667.

Event Sponsor – $5,000
Visionary Sponsor – $2,500
Flag Sponsor – $1,000
Visionary Sponsor – $2,500
Club-Level Sponsor – $250
Hole Sponsor – $100
Prize/Auction Sponsor – (monetary or in-kind donation)

NAMING AND CONTEST SPONSORSHIPS:
Buffet Dinner – $1,500
Lunch – $1,000
Giveaway Bag – $750
Putting Contest – $500

Congratulations to Past Deputy District Governor William Hansen, the top trunk of cheer raffle seller. PDG Hansen has been a Board member since 1992.

Congratulations to Past Deputy District Governor William Hansen, the top trunk of cheer raffle seller. PDG Hansen has been a Board member since 1992.

Clifford Cohn (left), Warren Maurer, Dr. Steven Nierenberg and Ulf Akerblum

By the Numbers
Here’s a look at the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley’s financials for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2011.

**Includes corneal tissue imports**

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We are happy to report that since we announced last year the need to escalate our fundraising efforts, over 30 additional contributors have received the Endowment Fund’s highest honor, becoming Gene Polgar Fellows, with many more becoming or increasing their Progressive Fellowships. The contributions of these inductees mark a significant milestone along the eye bank’s journey towards reaching its fundraising goal of $10 million.

While our Endowment Fund supports our long-term mission, the Polgar Fellowship Program helps us restore sight by providing funding for our daily operations. The fund was established in 2005 and is supported each year by people throughout our community.

Your generous support enabled us to help more than 1,000 patients receive corneal transplants last year. The recipients span the tri-state area, living in 20 Delaware towns, 130 Pennsylvania cities and more than 150 New Jersey cities.

Endowment Fund News

Did you know?

Thanks to a new partnership between Facebook and Donate Life America, Facebook has updated its system to enable individuals to include their organ/tissue/eye donor status in their profile and, if not currently a registered donor, to follow a link to register.

In support of this initiative to increase the number of donors that save and heal lives, we encourage all registered donors to update their Facebook profile to show their donor status and for unregistered donors to use this feature to sign up today!

While you’re at it, be sure to “like” us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/lebdv.

Lions Eye Bank Endowment Pledge Form

I. Endowment General Fund Donation

☐ I would like to make a contribution in the amount of:

☐ $500 ☐ $250 ☐ $100 or ☐ $________

☐ Please accept this as a one-time payment, or

☐ Installments of ___________ over 1 year or Installments of ___________ over 2 years

II. PID Gene Polgar Fellowship

I choose to support the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley Endowment Fund and the continuation of the “Gift of Sight” Program. I would like to make a donation of $1,000 or more to become a PID Gene Polgar Fellow. Please accept:

☐ One-time payment of $__________, or

☐ Multi-year pledge: $__________ per year for 2 years $__________ per year for 5 years

Person to be named as PID Gene Polgar Fellow (please print):

Name: _______________________________________

III. Payment Method

☐ For credit card payments and additional information, call 1-800-743-6667 or visit www.lebdv.org.

☐ Enclosed is a check in the amount of $__________ payable to “Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley Endowment Fund” (mail to 401 North 3rd Street - Suite 305 - Philadelphia, PA 19123)

Contributor Name: _______________________________________

Address: _______________________________________

Telephone Number: ______________________ E-mail Address ______________________

National Eye Donor Month

Each year, the Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA) and the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley promote March as National Eye Donor Month to raise awareness of the need to donate corneas. This year, U.S. Congressman Joseph Pitts (R-Pennsylvania) entered a proclamation into the Congressional Record in honor of National Eye Donor Month.
Bon Voyage with LEBDV

Discover colonial history, natural beauty and maritime treasures aboard the MS Maasdam, a 4-star ship venturing to New England and Canada. Your seven-day river cruise sets sail from Boston, Massachusetts, and includes visits to Maine, Prince Edward, Nova Scotia and Quebec.

For as little as $3,946.54, you can take part in this unforgettable Holland America cruise designed for maximum comfort. All rates include meals, room service, port charges, taxes, government fees, daily activities and a $200 IRS-deductible donation to the eye bank. Three-day pre-sail and post-sail packages are also available.

Reserve your space today by contacting the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley at 1-800-743-6666 or Georgiann Jaworskyj of Custom Travel Services at 1-856-663-0444. Bookings should be made by October to hold the price and cabin with a $250 deposit per person.

Calendar of Events

July 26, 2012 – Newly Elected District Governors’ and Eye Bank Chairmen’s Night
August 13, 2012 – 18th Annual Gift of Sight Golf Classic
October 23, 2012 – Delaware Sight Night
November 2012 – Annual PID Gene Polgar Endowment Brunch

For more information regarding the above, please visit www.lebdv.org or call 1-800-743-6667.