

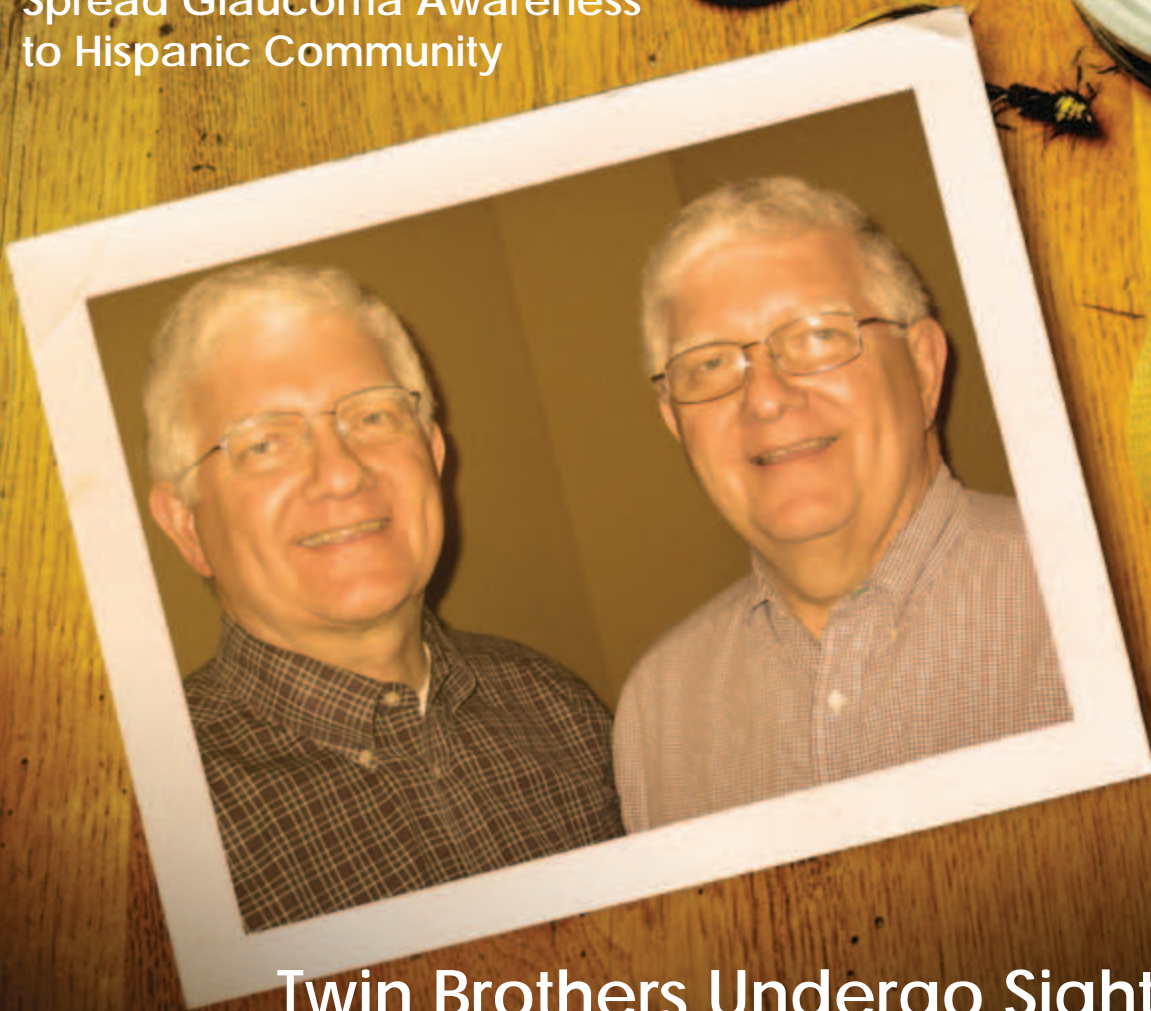
MISSOURI LIONS EYE RESEARCH FOUNDATION & HEARTLAND LIONS EYE BANKS

Perspectives

MLERF Selected as a Best Nonprofit Organization to Work For 2011

When Lazy Eye Displays No Symptoms

Grant Award Helps MLERF Spread Glaucoma Awareness to Hispanic Community



Twin Brothers Undergo Sight-Saving Transplants on the Same Day

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From Our Executive Director

As an organization involved in the eye banking and donation community, we're surrounded by a remarkable group of individuals, each one dedicated to making life brighter for those in need. This May, we at Heartland Lions Eye Banks were on the receiving end of this incredible compassion.



On May 22, 2011, a devastating F5 tornado struck Joplin, Mo. We received the shocking news that evening that our Joplin branch manager, Darian Vanderhoofven, and her son, Joshua, lost their lives in the storm. In addition, the homes and belongings of two Foundation employees were completely destroyed.

Within minutes of announcing the Darian and Joshua Vanderhoofven Memorial Fund, the outpouring of support was overwhelming. As of June 4, 2011, our fellow eye banks, partners in donation, vendors, Missouri Lions and friends donated more than \$12,000 to help the Vanderhoofven family. In addition, many more sent their thoughts and prayers our way via email, Facebook and Twitter.

The kindness and support you showed in the days following the tornado were so incredibly appreciated. You truly gave us the strength we needed to continue our mission at a heartbreaking moment. On behalf of everyone at Heartland Lions Eye Banks, I share my thanks with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald J. Walkenbach". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ronald J. Walkenbach, Ph.D.
Executive Director

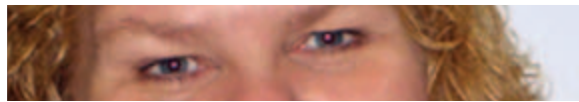


The Missouri Lions Eye Research Foundation is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation based out of Columbia, Mo. The Foundation is dedicated to the preservation and restoration of sight through eye banking, community vision programs and the support of research. For more information on our programs, please visit www.mlerf.org.

Cover Story

As identical twins, Garry and Larry have shared a lot in common – careers in the insurance industry, a love for fishing, and unfortunately, Fuchs' dystrophy, a genetic disease which slowly stole their eyesight over the years.

6



A Memorial to One of Our Own

The Joplin, Mo. tornadoes in May were devastating for the city and for our partner hospital, St. John's Regional Medical Center. For the Heartland Lions Eye Banks family, it was incredibly heartbreaking.

4



Champions of Donation – Cox Health Systems

HLEB's ability to connect cornea recipients and surgeons to sight-saving donor tissue depends on our partner hospitals that help facilitate the donation process.

5



HLEB Moves to a New Location in Springfield, Ill.

Thanks to a \$17,000 donation from the Springfield Noon Lions Club, the Springfield, Illinois branch of HLEB opened our doors this spring to a new location at 400 Chatham Rd, Ste. 103.

5



When Lazy Eye Displays No Symptoms

Amblyopia, or "lazy eye," is one of the leading causes of blindness in children. The earlier the condition is caught in childhood, the more effective treatment can be in preventing future vision loss.

7



Grant Award Helps MLERF Spread Glaucoma Awareness to Hispanic Community

In addition to launching a Spanish-language public educational campaign, "Enfoque en La Glaucoma" features free public Spanish-language Healthy Vision Screenings at organizations across Missouri.

8



MLERF Selected as a Best Nonprofit Organization to Work For 2011

The Missouri Lions Eye Research Foundation was recently selected as one of the Best NonProfit Organizations to Work for 2011.

12



A Memorial to One of Our Own

The Joplin, Mo. tornadoes in May were devastating for the city and for our partner hospital, St. John's Regional Medical Center.

For the Heartland Lions Eye Banks family, it was incredibly heartbreaking.

On May 22, 2011, Joplin branch manager and hospital services coordinator, Darian Vanderhoofven, and her one-year-old son, Joshua, lost their lives to the storm. In their honor, the Eye Bank set up a memorial page for the family at www.hleb.org/vanderhoofven.

Darian played an essential role in the Eye Bank's operations and was a key figure in the Donate Life Missouri and Donate Life Kansas communities. She worked closely with Midwest Transplant Network, hospitals, funeral home directors and coroners to increase eye, organ and tissue donation awareness in Joplin and set up best practices for donation in the region.

Because of Darian's hard work and dedication at the Eye Bank, hundreds of recipients in the Midwest and beyond have received the life-saving and life-enhancing transplants they desperately needed.



Pictured left to right: Peggy Wobbema, Marion Michaliszyn, Amy Cabal, Bill Harris, Bob Farris, Don Lucore, Christine Harris and Larry Cooper.

Champions of Donation – Cox Health Systems

Heartland Lions Eye Banks’ ability to connect cornea recipients and surgeons to sight-saving donor tissue depends on our partner hospitals that help facilitate the donation process.

In 2010, Cox Health Systems in Springfield, Mo. and its team of chaplains, who serve as designated requestors, led the way in the number of donation requests with 149 eye donors and 173 corneas transplanted.

Said Kharim Strayhorn, hospital services coordinator

in Springfield, “The chaplains at Cox Health Systems are one of the most passionate requestor teams I have had the privilege to work with. While the Cox chaplain team obtained 163 consents, more than any other hospital in 2010, they did it with only 7 chaplains!

Such an accomplishment can only happen if you work together. Designated Requestors around the country can learn a lot from these special people. I would like to personally thank them for all of the hard work they do every day.”

HLEB Moves to a New Location in Springfield, Ill.

Thanks to a \$17,000 donation from the Springfield Noon Lions Club, the Springfield, Illinois branch of HLEB opened our doors this spring to a new location at 400 Chatham Rd, Ste. 103.

This renovated facility gives HLEB the space and equipment needed to better serve our hospitals and corneal surgeons across Central Illinois.



Again, we thank the Springfield Noon Lions Club for its support in making our new location a reality!

Congratulations to the Eye Bank Association of America

This June, HLEB joined eye banks from across the U.S. in celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA).

The EBAA is the oldest transplant association in the country and is a nationally-recognized accrediting body for eye banks. The association was initially conceptualized in 1955 by 12 founding eye banks, including HLEB, and since 1961, its member organizations have restored sight to more than 1,000,000 individuals.



Big congratulations to the EBAA and to all participating eye banks for 50 years of saving sight worldwide!



Twin Brothers Undergo Sight-Saving Transplants on the Same Day

As identical twins, Garry and Larry have shared a lot in common – careers in the insurance industry, a love for fishing, and unfortunately, Fuchs' dystrophy, a genetic disease which slowly stole their eyesight over the years.

The only hope to restore their lost vision would be a cornea transplant in each of their eyes. In a unique twist of fate, the two brothers who shared so many things over the years were about to share something else – a date for their cornea transplants.

For years, poor eyesight had hindered both brothers' lifestyles. Larry, for instance, was forced to retire early because he could no longer read clearly at work. In addition, the bad eyesight affected their favorite pastime. "My brother and I like to fish, but the Fuch's made it very difficult," said Larry. "Trying to tie a hook on to a line – now that was a lengthy process."

In December 2010, a caring donor family made the heartfelt decision to donate their loved one's eyes to save the vision of others. The corneas were offered by Heartland Lions Eye Banks to Dr. Timothy Cavanaugh of Cavanaugh Eye Center in Overland Park, Kan. who immediately scheduled surgeries for the brothers on the same day.

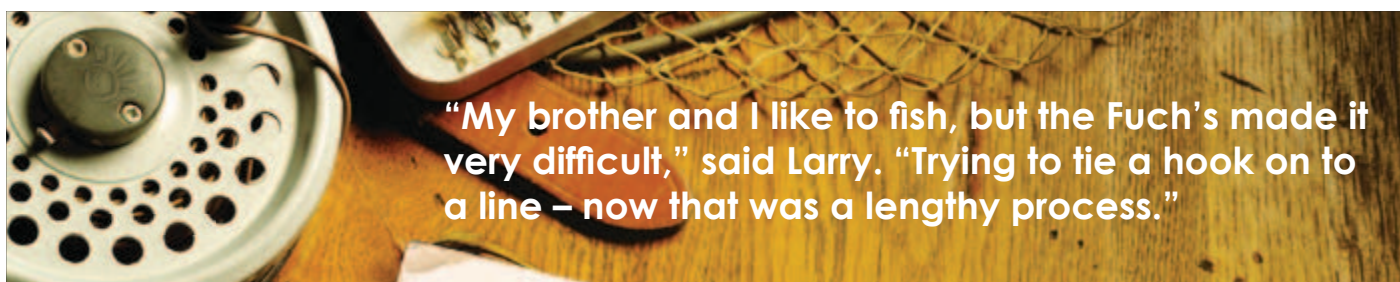
Larry underwent the surgery on his right eye first, followed by Garry. It was only after the surgeries did the brothers learn their corneas were from the same donor.

While Larry and Garry are still in the recovery process, their sight has improved dramatically. Garry, who had a transplant on his left eye in October 2010, is seeing a significant difference in his eyesight already, and Larry will be undergoing a transplant on his left eye in 2011.

"We're thrilled with how the transplants have turned out," said Larry. "We have been dealing with this disease for some time, so the opportunity to get our transplants was wonderful."

Because of their experience, Larry and Garry encourage others to consider joining their state's eye and organ donor registry.

Remarked Larry, "When you're asked at the DMV if you'd like to be a donor, you take it for granted. You think it's not really a big deal, but it is a big deal to someone else. If you haven't needed a heart or kidney or cornea, you might not appreciate it. But after getting our transplants, we have a whole new appreciation for what others have gone through."



"My brother and I like to fish, but the Fuch's made it very difficult," said Larry. "Trying to tie a hook on to a line – now that was a lengthy process."



When Lazy Eye Displays No Symptoms

Amblyopia, or “lazy eye,” is one of the leading causes of vision loss in children. The earlier the condition is caught in childhood, the more effective treatment can be in preventing future vision loss.

One would assume that with lazy eye, the condition would be obvious – the eyelid would droop or the eye would wander inward or outward. However, in the majority of cases, there are no tell-tale signs of amblyopia.

For Bobbie of Seneca, Mo., that was the case with her 6-year-old daughter Liberty.

“I had slight knowledge of amblyopia,” Bobbie remarked. “I thought it was more physical. I didn’t realize that my daughter had decreased vision in one eye. I had always looked for clues such as squinting, but never saw any. In Liberty’s case she did not physically have a lazy eye.”

In 2010, at a Missouri Lions Eye Research Foundation Children’s Vision Screening event, the technician noticed

something was amiss with Liberty’s vision. Bobbie was encouraged to take the little girl to an eye care professional who performed a thorough eye exam.

Said Bobbie, “Liberty was diagnosed with a slight ‘lazy eye.’ Dr. Brothers prescribed her glasses and set up appointments every three months for follow-ups to monitor her progression.” With her new glasses, Liberty is able to better enjoy her favorite activities, including playing T-ball and watching movies.

Both Bobbie and Liberty are thankful her vision problem was caught early enough to prevent vision loss. “If the Lions did not screen her, it may have been years before her first exam. Not only have glasses prevented her vision from worsening, her vision has actually improved!”

To learn more about amblyopia or to schedule a free Children’s Vision Screening in Missouri, visit www.mlerf.org or call 800-753-2265.

“If the Lions did not screen her, it may have been years before her first exam. Not only have glasses prevented her vision from worsening, her vision has actually improved!”



Enfoque en La Glaucoma

Grant Award Helps MLERF Spread Glaucoma Awareness to Hispanic Community

Glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness among Hispanics, and according to the Glaucoma Research Foundation, up to 75% of glaucoma cases are undiagnosed. In fact, the disease steals sight so slowly, one may not realize he or she is losing vision until it's too late. The only way to truly protect one's eyesight is to get tested for the disease.

Since 1981, the Missouri Lions Eye Research Foundation has provided free glaucoma screenings to 35,000 Missourians through our Healthy Vision Screening program. After witnessing the devastating effects of the disease in the Hispanic community, the Foundation saw an opportunity to increase glaucoma awareness in Missouri.

With a \$5,110 2011 Healthy Vision Community Award from the National Institute of Health/National Eye Institute and a partnership with Centro Latino in Columbia, Mo. and the Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services' "Tomando control de su Salud" program, the Foundation launched our "Enfoque en La Glaucoma" ("Focus on Glaucoma") campaign targeting the Hispanic population on May 1, 2011.

In addition to launching a Spanish-language public educational campaign, "Focus on Glaucoma" features free public Spanish-language Healthy Vision Screenings at organizations across Missouri.

Said Tamara Oberbeck, vision screening manager for the Foundation, "Glaucoma is so prevalent in the Hispanic community that one's risk for the disease reaches 20% by age 75. Through this NEI award, the Foundation and our partners hope to screen 7% of the Hispanic population in Missouri, helping to stop this devastating disease in its tracks."

To view "Enfoque en La Glaucoma" website, please visit www.mlerf.org/glaucoma. Businesses, community organizers, clubs and senior support organizations that wish to schedule screenings at their events can contact the Foundation at 800-753-2265.

Schedule screenings at
www.mlerf.org/glaucoma



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MLERF Selected as a Best Nonprofit Organization to Work For 2011

The Missouri Lions Eye Research Foundation was recently selected as one of the *Best NonProfit Organizations to Work for 2011*. The awards program was created in 2010 and is a project of *The NonProfit Times* and Best Companies Group.

This nationwide survey and awards program was designed to identify, recognize and honor the best places of employment in the nonprofit industry, benefiting the industry's economy, its workforce and businesses. *The Best NonProfit Organizations to Work for 2011* list is made up of 50 organizations.



Said Dr. Ron Walkenbach, executive director for MLERF, "For the past 51 years, MLERF staff members have gone above and beyond to provide the gift of sight to individuals in Missouri and around the world. We believe MLERF rewards these incredible employees for their skills and passion and provides a solid foundation for further career growth and development. To be recognized by *The NonProfit Times* for our human resource efforts is a huge honor."

MLERF was profiled and ranked in *The NonProfit Times* April 1, 2011 issue.