

The Lions Eye

A Publication of the
Lions Eye Foundation of California-Nevada, Inc.



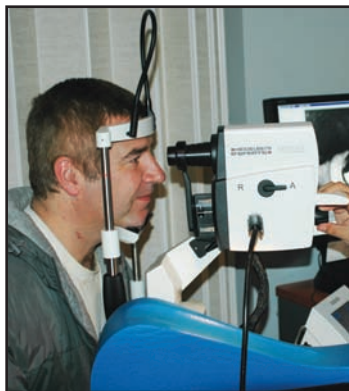
Fall 2009

LEF Lifts Fog From Eyes of Hard-Working Man

"I thought the city was covered with a dense fog when, in fact, it was me that was in a fog," is the description Bob Gierhart paints of his cataract experience.

Most jobs require tasks that can be complex and challenging. But when one's vision is compromised, the easiest tasks can take longer and use more energy doing mundane things that others take for granted. Add to that stress the lack of health insurance, and individuals often "make do" with the situation, trying to survive.

Bob Gierhart was having trouble functioning at his job. He is employed as a courier, a position which requires reading documents and instructions for delivery to steamship companies. Bob completes all of his deliveries by walking. His decreased vision made it difficult to step off curbs safely, to see signs and, of most concern, dodge cars flying past him in the financial district in San Francisco. Bob did not want to tell his boss how bad his vision had become so he hid that fact from his employer. His employer knew something was going on but was not aware how bad and dangerous the situation had become for Gierhart.



Heidelberg Spectralis Exam

Bob had always had poor vision, requiring strong prescription glasses. Glasses were second nature as he had been wearing them since second grade. Now 45 years old, he knew something was different and his vision was worsening. He thought new glasses might do the trick.

At a visit to an optometrist for an exam, the doctor explained to Bob that new glasses would not help because he had now



Bob Gierhart

developed cataracts in both eyes. This was difficult news to hear. Because Bob did not have insurance, he could not afford the needed cataract surgeries.

In discussing his options with his friends, one mentioned that she had a friend who is a doctor. That friend turned out to be Dr. Kyle Rhodes, Chief Resident at the Lions Eye Clinic. Dr. Rhodes suggested that Bob get in touch with the Lions Eye Foundation. After talking to the Lions staff at the Clinic, the Sight Conservation Chair at the Park Presidio Lions Club and submitting the required forms, Bob was given his first appointment. Gierhart's luck was changing for the better.

At his first appointment, Bob received a thorough history and examination. He was told that he had more going on with his eyes than just cataracts. He was diagnosed with CME (cystoid macular edema), an inherited disease that causes the retina to have pockets of swelling. After extensive testing and a visit to the retina specialist, Bob was cleared for surgery. He found that he would need to be followed in the Eye Clinic on an on-going basis to monitor and treat his CME, even after surgery. Gierhart recently had both of his cataracts removed. His first surgery involved his left eye and, about five weeks later, the cataract on his right eye was removed. Immediately, things changed for the better. Colors were brighter, signs and documents were easy to read. In fact, his vision improved so much that he only wears reading glasses even though his vision, due to the CME, is not quite 20/20. He says it is the best he can remember.

Bob Gierhart would like to thank everyone at the Lions Eye Foundation Clinic. He does not know what he would have done without our support and encouragement. Amazingly, Gierhart continued to work throughout his surgery and treatment, not wanting to lose his job or ask for assistance from his employer. "Couriers are a dime a dozen," he stated. "I want to work!" Today, he continues his deliveries, only in a much safer manner. One of the few things LEF can't change is that financial district traffic—but Bob can see it coming now!

Mission Statement: "The Lions Eye Foundation preserves and restores the gift of sight by providing free ophthalmic examinations, operations and medications to the less fortunate members of our community."

Becoming a Member Club ... the Best Deal in Lionism

Any Lions Club in the geographic areas we serve can become a member of the LEF by paying a one-time application fee of \$100 and annual contributions of \$9 per individual Lion. The application form can be downloaded from our website. A dues contribution statement will be sent out semi-annually.

Membership in the Lions Eye Foundation allows the club to refer individuals from the club's local communities who require complex eye medical or surgical care. Each member club should appoint a Sight Conservation Chairperson to make sure that a potential patient meets the eligibility requirements and has been referred by a local doctor. Details and forms are also available on our website.

Once the patient is scheduled for surgery, the club is responsible for the costs of getting the patient to and from San Francisco. When in San Francisco, LEF pays for motel and all medical costs. Because of our current very favorable contract with the California Pacific Medical Center, where surgeries are performed, LEF has started a pilot program of reimbursing clubs for part of the transportation costs. Again, details and forms will be available soon on our website.

By far, the vast majority of clubs in our districts are already member clubs. For those clubs that are not, here are two major reasons why your club should make the commitment to join.

First is the satisfaction of helping those in need and, indeed, saving somebody's sight. You are undeniably becoming "Knights of the Blind."

Second, there are very few, if any, clubs that could plunk out \$15-25,000 for major eye surgeries. A club of 40 members commits to \$360 per year. This means that it would take 42 to 69 years' worth of dues to pay for one major operation. Elsewhere in this issue you can see how many surgeries are being performed and what leverage your annual dues have.

Becoming a member club is one of the best investments a Lions Club can make!

From the Editor

Welcome to the first edition of our new publication that is being sent to every Lion in every club in the districts we cover. Our intent is to share with you what our foundation is doing and to keep you informed. Thus every issue will have the story of at least one patient in detail and give some statistics on the number of patients and costs. Each issue will profile one key individual who has been instrumental in getting us where we are today. This issue profiles our Executive Director, Don Stanaway.

Did you know that we now have a Future Vision Society?

- To honor those individuals who include the Lions Eye Foundation in their estates, we have established the **Future Vision Society**. To become a member, all you need to do is send a letter to **Lions Eye Foundation, Attn: Don Stanaway, Executive Director, P.O. Box 7999, San Francisco, CA 94120**, confirming that the LEF is included in your will or trust. The amount of the bequest need not be stated, but your name, address, and phone number does need to be included. A unique lapel pin will be given to the donor. This is an excellent way to support the LEF without spending money now.

Many of you have asked "What is the difference between Lions in Sight (LIS) and the Lions Eye Foundation (LEF)?" Here is the answer:

- LIS is the program, recognized by Lions International, for collecting used eyeglasses. These glasses are measured for prescription, cleaned, and taken to developing nations, usually by a team of volunteer Lions and Optometrists. There patients are examined and fitted with the glasses.
- LEF provides free ophthalmic examinations, operations, and medications to patients who otherwise could not afford this service. The program operates through referrals from member clubs. Surgeries are performed at the California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco.

If you have any questions that could be answered in this publication, please email them to me at sommerfred@sbcglobal.net. Do include your name, email address, and club/district affiliation so that we can give you credit.



Fred Sommer
Editor

Meet Don Stanaway, LEF's Executive Director



Don Stanaway

Don Stanaway is a native Californian, born in Grass Valley, and who now resides in Millbrae. He attended Polytechnic High School in San Francisco, and graduated with a major in accounting from the University of San Francisco. Don served in the Navy during the Korean War. He has two grown daughters and two granddaughters. Don retired in 1979 after 25 years as an independent retail grocer.

Don is a life member of the Burlingame Lions Club and was District Governor in 1979-80. He was awarded the "Ambassador of Goodwill" of Lions International, the highest award that an International President can present to a Lion member.

Don is a Life Member and Helen Keller Fellow of the Lions Eye Foundation. He was appointed Executive Director of the Lions Eye Foundation in 1983. Don communicates regularly with Mark Paskvan, Program Director, and meets with Dr. Susan Day, Chair of the Ophthalmology Department, whenever she feels it necessary.

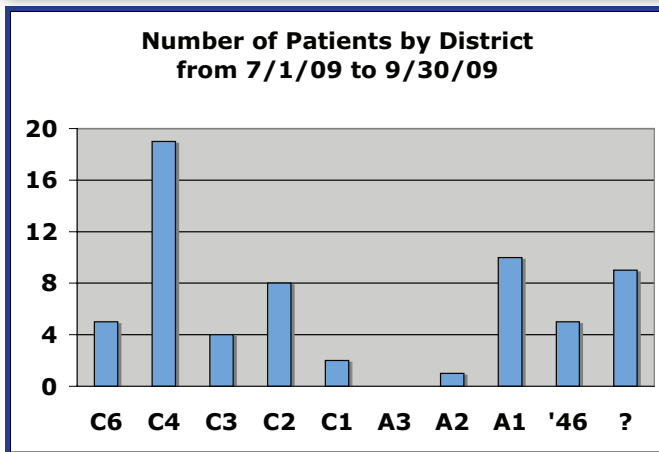
If she has a request for a new piece of equipment for the eye department, Don will bring that request to the Executive Committee or the Board of Trustees. He provides quarterly reports to the Board of Trustees and promotes gifts and bequests to LEF.

Don makes presentations to clubs and districts to give them information about the LEF, the various community services that the Foundation provides for eye care through the eye department, Life, Memorial and Helen Keller Fellowships, and the procedure for a club to recommend a person for eye surgeries and the responsibilities of the club once that person is accepted. He maintains liaison with District Governors and Vice District Governors of the LEF districts for their help in promoting support for LEF. Don also promotes interest and participation by the trustees and advisors in presenting LEF informational programs at club meetings.

When Don became Executive Director, there were less than 2,000 Life Members; today there are over 5,000. The Helen Keller Fellow program was started shortly after Don became Executive Director. Today, there are nearly 1,000 Fellows. The net worth of the Foundation has virtually doubled during his tenure.

In short, Don, who lives LEF on a 24/7 basis, can best be described as the Ambassador at Large of the Lions Eye Foundation.

Statistics and Leverage



Total number of Patients --- 63

New Referrals ----- 91

Actual Dollars Spent --- \$72,200

Estimated Value ----- \$790,000

LEVERAGE 10.9:1

Fast Facts

- The most prevalent surgery was for cataracts
- There were 11 surgeries for retina or cornea problems that would have cost \$25 - \$30,000 each
- The youngest patient was 13, oldest was 74 years old

Acknowledgements and Thanks

July – September 2009

New and Progressive Helen Keller Fellows

- Dr. Howard Levenson • Monica Fuller • Eleanor Lindquist • Elma Loreda • Lourdes Pescador (Ruby) • Evangeline Roberts

New Life Members

- David Barnes • Brian Chapman • Betty Graeber • Kevin Kieley • Eleanor Lindquist • Bob Martin • Ernie Mashler • Jim Noah • In Memory of Richard Stuart

Memorial Donations (at least \$200)

- Sam French • Don Stanaway • Sally Territo-Wong • Daly City Host Lions Club

General Donations (at least \$200)

- Toni Nava (50th Anniversary Celebration) • Geneva Mission Lions Club • Nikkei Lions Club (Library Fund) • North Lake Tahoe Lions Club • Waterford Lions Club

Total Received:

General Fund	\$5,376
Restricted (Life) Fund	\$4,275



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For More Information: www.lionseyeca-nv.org

Late Breaking News!

New Member Clubs!

Congratulations to the following:

- Lathrop Lions Club in 4-A1 joined with **24** members.
(Thank you Modesto 500 Lions club for supporting their membership.)
- Santa Rosa Roseland Lions Club in 4-C2 joined with **20** members.
- Bayview Hunters Point Lions Club in 4-C4 joined with **18** members.
- S.F. Merced Heights Lions Club in 4-C4 joined with **10** members.
- Cotati Lions Club in 4-C2 rejoined after a lengthy absence with **19** members.

Future Vision Society Members

The original members are:

Lilette Quesnoy
Tom Scanlon
Fred Sommer
Don Stanaway

FLASH – The President of Lions International will attend our 50th Anniversary party!



*Mark Your Calendars!
LEF's 50th Anniversary!
September 11, 2010
San Francisco Area!*