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.
As they say, what a difference a year makes. Since our last issue of forSight, the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley has grown and changed greatly. From physical expansion to new personnel to record numbers of recoveries, LEBDV has again evolved to further its legacy of enhancing the quality of life for people throughout our region.

One year into my role as president and chief operating officer, I am pleased by all of the progress described in this issue and grateful to the many people who’ve made it possible. First and foremost, my thanks go out to all of the eye bank’s dedicated staff.

We welcome the latest additions to our team. Ken Stewart joined the eye bank in February as director of compliance and regulatory affairs. Ken comes to our eye bank from the Southern Eye Bank in New Orleans, where he served as assistant executive director and quality assurance director. Kacey O’Connor joins our staff as relations coordinator after graduating from Temple University with a bachelor’s in public relations. She has interned at the eye bank since January and is excited to start her full-time position.

We’re also excited to discuss in this issue the expansion of our lab facilities and significant upgrades to the technology that has kept us at the forefront of cornea recovery, medical research and education. In addition, you’ll meet some of the many thankful people whose lives were made better by the dedication of our staff, the ultimate gift from donors and the generosity of many supporters.

Of course, we can never have enough of those supporters. For that reason, forSight includes summaries of our financials to show how donations to the eye bank directly benefit people in our region and to encourage more of that assistance. As always, we heartily thank those who enable our daily operations. We hope even those who’ve donated will help further by spreading the word about our successes and the good that more support will empower.

Jim Bark, president and chief operating officer

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

**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.”

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

**Mission of the Eye Bank**

“ForSight” 2012

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**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.”

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**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, Lebanonese 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-R; 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!”

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**LCIF 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 some 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.

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**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.”
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.

I also have a concentration of care in blepharitis—eye lid inflammation—which can range from non-specific causes to causes due to rosacea, psoriasis, allergic reaction and other dermatological reasons. Blepharitis symptoms may include eyelid itching, light sensitivity, watering or dryness or burning. Again, don’t delay in contacting your physician, as the condition can cause significant discomfort and sometimes serious complications like scarring and infections.

forSight: Will you bring us up to date on the Wills Eye Cornea Fellowship Program?

Dr. Hammersmith: Dr. Peter Laibson at Wills Eye Hospital founded the cornea fellowship in 1967. It is a fellowship training program offering the opportunity for a post-residency-year of targeted study, instruction and research in cornea and external disease.

As of 2012, over 200 physicians have been trained by Cornea Service and its physician associates. We refer to it officially as the Cornea Service and External Disease Fellowship, which begins the first week of July and ends exactly one year later. We are delighted to have research fellows, many of whom come from around the world. Wills Eye is affiliated with Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. We consider the training here as training in “extreme cornea,” as the level of pathology is incredible.

forSight: While there is no substitution for human corneal tissue, what benefits from the Boston K-Pro artificial cornea transplant and what outcomes might a patient expect?

Dr. Hammersmith: Patients with really bad ocular surfaces pemphigoid, chemical injuries, aniridia and multiple failures with cornea transplant are not served well with traditional corneal transplant. In these cases, sometimes an “artificial” cornea can be of benefit. The Boston keratoprosthesis has been developed and championed by Dr. Cles Dohlman, who is in his nineties and was one of Dr. Peter Laibson’s teachers. This consists of a plastic center in a human carrier. So it is very similar to a corneal transplant, but is a very exciting development in our field.

forSight: What is the meaning behind the name of your department at Wills Eye, Cornea and External Disease?

Dr. Hammersmith: The eye is truly the window to the world in that it, of course, allows us to see and interact. The eye is also considered by many as the window to your soul. However, when you visit an ophthalmologist, for an eye examination, the eye then becomes the window to your many body systems. External disease generally refers to the disease on the surface of the eye.

forSight: Tell us about your work at Wills involving diseases associated with Ocular Pemphigoid?

Dr. Hammersmith: Mucus membrane pemphigoid is an autoimmune disease where blistering occurs on mucous membranes. It can be a multi system disease surfacing on the skin, mouth, eyes, nose, genitals and other areas where mucous membranes are located.

When occurring in the eye, patients may experience a sensation of grittiness or pain. Conjunctivitis, when you usually see someone with reddened sclera together with pain, may be another symptom of ocular infiltration of this disease. Serious problems arise when blistering lesions eventually leave scar tissue, which can then result in reduced vision and blindness.

On the second Friday of the month, Wills Eye holds a specialty clinic staffed by two cornea specialists, Dr. Raber and me, and Dr. Penne of the oculoplastics service. Patients are referred to this clinic, where our team assesses, evaluates and makes recommendations depending upon the location of the disease and its extent.

forSight: What other types of patient illnesses do you find interesting to treat?

Dr. Hammersmith: I found that I enjoy anterior segment surgery, which not only includes the cornea but extends to cataracts, dry eye and glaucoma, to cite a few examples. The specialty allows for the development of long-term relationships with patients. Having the opportunity to dramatically make a positive impact on a patient also affects the patient’s entire family. That’s one of the best parts of medicine.

forSight: What is your favorite aspect of medicine?

Dr. Hammersmith: I found that I enjoy anterior segment surgery, which not only includes the cornea but extends to cataracts, dry eye and glaucoma, to cite a few examples. The specialty allows for the development of long-term relationships with patients. Having the opportunity to dramatically make a positive impact on a patient also affects the patient’s entire family. That’s one of the best parts of medicine.

Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley Medical Advisory Board

Behind each of the life-changing procedures the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley helps coordinate stands an unparalleled team of corneal surgeons who serve as members of the eye bank’s medical advisory board.
“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.”

Gift Sets Baby Girl with Rare Eye Condition on Easier Path

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.

“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. Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the generous gift you gave to our newborn daughter.”
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’s Legacy: Gift of Sight Continues
Proud Father’s Support of Others

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 carpool 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.
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.lebdv.org or call the Eye Bank at 1-800-743-6667.

EVENT SPONSOR – $10,000
VISIONARY SPONSOR – $2,500
HOLE SPONSORS – $100

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

SPONSORSHIPS:
NAMING AND CONTEST
Hole Sponsor – $100
Club-Level Sponsor – $250
Visionary Sponsor – $2,500

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.

REVENUE
Investments 1%
Contributions 6%
Tissue Distribution 93%

EXPENSE
Administrative 5%
Fundraising 2%
Program Services 93%

Eye Bank Support at Work
Through the generosity of donor families and financial supports, the eye bank recorded the following clinical outcomes ended December 31, 2011**: 879
CORNEAL TISSUE DONORS*
CORNEAL/GLOBE TISSUE GIFTED**
CORNEAL TISSUE GIFTED FOR TRANSPLANT SURGERY***
CORNEAL TISSUE GIFTED FOR EDUCATION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH

Since 1957, the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley has coordinated more than 30,000 cornea transplant surgeries at the request of donor families and their loved ones.

*Donor Profile:
Ages 1 to 10 = 1%
Ages 11 to 20 = 3%
Ages 21 to 40 = 12%
Ages 41 to 60 = 53%
Ages 61 to 70 = 28%
Ages 70+ = 3%

** Includes corneal tissue imports
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.

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.

Endowment Fund News
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.

Please keep up this terrific support for the eye bank by making your donation today using the form at right, by contacting the eye bank at 1-800-743-6667 or by donating online through www.lebdv.org.

National Eye Donor Month

Did you know?

Endowment Fund News

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 ________________________________
forSight
News & Updates from The Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley

Bon Voyage with LEBDV

Discover colonial history, natural beauty and maritime treasures aboard the 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 $1,946.54, 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 1-800-743-6667 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.

Fred Williamson (back left), Rich Zimmermann, Dick Wilson, Brenda and Barry Hinkle, Bettye Ricks (front left), Ruth Epprecht, Ronnie Williamson, Ship Captain, Peggy Wilson and Marion Goldberg aboard Island Princess during the LEBDV 2012 Panama Cruise

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.