



The Beacon

April 2010

April is White Cane Month!

What do you feel when you see someone with a white cane? Compassion? Gratitude for your sight? A desire to help? These are typical reactions of people who see this device, which is used by the visually impaired. What is not typical is the way Lions Clubs across Georgia put their desire into action.

Thousands of Georgians live with visual impairment simply because they cannot afford eye surgery. Eighty percent of all blindness is curable, and April is the month of hope for white cane users. Throughout the month, Lions Clubs will be hosting White Cane fundraisers to support the Lions Lighthouse Foundation's eye surgery program. Letter writing campaigns, street-side and store-front bucket drives, beauty pageants, baby derbies, and a number of other creative fundraisers will take place this month. Please keep an eye out for Lions in their yellow vests as they collect for these campaigns!

Our goal this year is to raise \$167,500 through White Cane. In order to reach this goal, and to help as many Georgians as possible regain their ability to see, we will need to work together. If your club hosted a successful fundraiser, please let us know what you did and what made it work! To request White Cane materials, including flyers and bookmarks, please contact us. To learn more about White Cane or to make a donation, please visit us online today at www.lionslighthouse.org.



The Lighthouse in the News

Last Wednesday Fox 5 Atlanta featured the Georgia Lions Lighthouse Foundation's clinic program on Health Watch. The segment highlighted the need for the clinics, and why they are so important for our diabetic and hypertensive clients.

The response the next day was overwhelming. Over 500 people called requesting vision service applications. The incredible response underscores the current need for vision services for the uninsured and underinsured.

To view the segment, go to www.myfoxatlanta.com and search for "Free Eye Clinic."



PDG Roy L. Jones Honored With Named Office

The Douglas Lions Club named an office in the new building in honor of PDG Roy L. Jones's 55 years of service as a Lion. PDG Roy is now retired and takes great pride in mentoring the more than 80 members of the Douglas Lions Club. He continues to serve because he enjoys being part of a vital group that gives back to the community. The club is thrilled to have this opportunity to recognize PDG Roy and his service. They believe it is the combination of the wisdom of their oldest members and the enthusiasm of their youngest members that helps them continue to provide vital services to their community.



Due to the support of individuals and groups like the Douglas Lions Club, the capital campaign is going well! We are over half way to our goal with \$1.6 million raised. One way to help the Lighthouse grow and to honor leaders in your club or community is the naming opportunities. The opportunities start at \$20,000 for an office, and increase for larger rooms or the building itself. To learn more about naming opportunities and our capital campaign, please contact Kyle at 404-325-3630 x 334.

Diabetes Expo Screenings

The Georgia Lions Lighthouse Foundation partnered with the American Diabetes Association, Prevent Blindness Georgia, the Center for the Visually Impaired, Atlanta Metro Lions Club, and the Atlanta Lions Club to provide over 250 vision screenings at the Diabetes Expo on March 27th.

Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness among 20-74 year olds in the United States. Early diagnosis and treatment is the most effective way to prevent vision loss.

More than 75 of the Expo's attendees chose to have a retinal photograph taken, to help detect diabetic eye disease in its earliest stages.

Vision Clinic Coordinator Joins the Lighthouse



Last year at this time the Lighthouse had 13 vision clinics throughout the state. We currently host 20 clinics, and we are in the process of expanding to 22.

Due to the increase in demand and our subsequent expansion, we brought a new vision clinic coordinator on to the Lighthouse team.

Justin Yancey is a recent graduate of the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University. Prior to coming to the Lighthouse, Justin worked at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Emory Eye Center. He is proud to have the opportunity to help Georgians regain their vision and their self-sufficiency.

Lighthouse at the C.A.R.E. Clinic

March 27th was a busy day for the Lighthouse Foundation! In addition to hosting vision screenings at the Diabetes Expo, we also partnered with a number of organizations to provide a free health clinic at the Georgia International Convention Center in Atlanta. The clinic lasted all day, and nearly 1300 uninsured and underinsured Metro Atlantans received exams, blood work, labs, prescriptions, and screenings.

Fifty seven patients were able to see an eye doctor that day. Others who wished to receive a dilated eye exam and glasses were given vouchers to have an exam scheduled later in the year.

We were proud to partner with Communities are Responding Everyday (C.A.R.E.), the National Association of Free Clinics, and the Georgia Free Clinic Network in this event. The turnout underscores the necessity of the Lighthouse Foundation's work. There are thousands of uninsured and underinsured throughout the state who would not have access to quality vision care without the Lighthouse.



Health Care Changes and The Lighthouse Foundation

On March 23rd, a new Health Care Bill was passed into law. Since then, we have received a number of questions about how it will affect your Lighthouse Foundation. While we would be thrilled if every Georgian had comprehensive medical care, we believe that the Lighthouse will continue to be a necessary presence in Georgia for a number of reasons:

1. Most people will be required to have health insurance or will be enrolled in Medicaid, but this coverage will not necessarily include vision services or hearing aids. For example, Medicaid does not cover eyeglasses and only covers eye exams for people with specific chronic conditions. Certain surgeries, like cataract surgery, are not covered.
2. While Medicaid will expand to cover many families at or below 133% of the federal poverty guideline, the Lighthouse will continue to provide eye clinics, glasses, and hearing aids to individuals at or below 200% of the federal poverty guideline.
3. Currently, neither Medicaid nor Medicare cover hearing aids; this will not change with the new law.

For these reasons and more, the vital work of the Lighthouse will still be required. The new building and equipment will give us the capacity and flexibility to continue to deliver on our life-changing mission and meet the evolving needs of Georgians by covering the gaps in coverage that will remain.



Night of Spectacles

Each year the Georgia Lions Lighthouse Foundation recycles over 100,000 pairs of glasses. Some of the glasses are broken or scratched, and can no longer be used to correct vision. Those glasses are given to local design students, who use them to create wearable dresses. The Night of Spectacles is a combination fashion show and silent auction, in which the students get to show off their designs and compete for a \$1,000 scholarship. All proceeds from the event benefit the Lighthouse's vision and hearing programs.

This year's Night of Spectacles falls on Earth Day, April 22nd. It will be held at Mason Murer Fine Art. Tickets are \$100, and VIP attendee packages (which include two tickets to the event) are \$500. All VIP attendees will be listed on event signage and in the evening's program.

For more information about the event, please visit the Night of Spectacles website at www.nightofspectacles.org. To purchase tickets on our secure server, please go to www.lionslighthouse.org/events. Thank you! We hope to see you there!



A Legacy of Sight

Less than half of all adult Americans have a will. Those individuals are giving up their right to decide how their possessions are distributed, and passing that right over to the state. With a bit of advanced planning, you can exercise your rights and impact thousands of lives for generations to come.

The Lighthouse Foundation has a new tool to help you organize information and record your possessions. It helps you provide a clear, precise record of your personal and financial information. It can be used to prepare an estate plan, and it is also a convenient way of organizing information for your loved ones.

If you would like to help your family members or executor leave the legacy you choose, please contact Sarah Epting at 404-325-3630 x 306 or at septing@lionslighthouse.org.

For more information on the planned giving options at the Lighthouse, please visit www.lionslighthouse.org.

The Lions' Den

State Convention: May 28-30

This year's Lions State Convention is May 28-30th in Tifton, GA! We are very excited to return to Tifton after our joint meeting with the Camp last September.

This year's awards will be given at the State Convention. The deadline for awards applications is April 30th. The awards you and your club can apply for include:



The Lighthouse Leo of the Year Award

This award honors and recognizes an individual Leo for outstanding contributions to the Georgia Lions Lighthouse Foundation. To nominate a Leo for the award, the Leo Club sponsor should write a letter to Sarah at the Lighthouse describing why the Leo deserves the recognition.

The Hearing Award

This award is presented to the Lions or Lioness club that collects the most hearing aids for the Lighthouse to support its hearing aid program. Clubs must send Sarah a letter listing the number of hearing aids collected.

The Ken Massingale Award

This award goes to the club that collects the most eyeglasses for the recycling program. Clubs must send Sarah a letter listing the number of glasses collected this year.

The Best Lighthouse Project Award

This award is presented to the Lion or Lioness Club that plans and implements the best project benefitting the Lighthouse. The award criteria are listed on our website at www.lionslighthouse.org/lions/awards.

The Lighthouse Publicity Award

This award is presented to the Lion, Lioness, or Leo Club that best promotes the Lighthouse Foundation and the services we provide. Documentation of activities, including copies of articles, posters, etc. should be submitted along with a letter explaining the project.

Best New Leo Project Award

This award is presented to the Leo Club that plans and implements the best project benefitting the Lighthouse. The award criteria are listed at www.lionslighthouse.org/lions/awards.

For more information about Lighthouse awards, please visit the Lions' section of our website at www.lionslighthouse.org/lions/awards. The website lists additional honors and awards that are available to individuals and Lions Clubs. It also lists the awards' criteria.

Please remember, **award nominations are due April 30th!** If you think your club is deserving of an award, please send a letter to Sarah, and include any documentation listed on the website. You may e-mail your application letter and forms to septing@lionslighthouse.org, or post mail them to 1775 Clairmont Rd; Decatur, GA 30033.

Thank you for all you do to support your Lighthouse!

Ask the Lighthouse

I didn't receive the Beacon last month. What happened?

The Lighthouse publishes a hard copy of the Beacon three or four times a year. The March issue of the Beacon was printed and mailed to your home. If you did not receive our newsletter in the mail, but you would like to, please contact us with your name and mailing address. If you know any one who has e-mail but is not yet on the newsletter e-mail list, please have him or her contact Kim at kfletcher@lionslighthouse.org. Kim will make sure he or she is added to the e-mail list. Thank you!