

T I S S U E S



INSIDE

- Page 2
2008 Poster Contest
- Page 3
Auburn NY Father & Daughter Awareness Project
- Page 4
Agency Highlights
- Director's Message

MARCH: NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH

For Marlene Connolly of West Brighton March is not just another month on her calendar, now that she knows it's **National Eye Donor Month**. Most likely she wouldn't have known this if it were not for the fact that she has received cornea transplants.

She feels lucky, blessed and happier today than she ever has been thanks to the success of her surgery. She realizes it's due not only in part to many dedicated individuals such as her surgeon and the eye bank staff, but mainly because of the generosity of those "wonderful donors" as she puts it, that has made her world brighter—literally!

Marlene's encounter with blindness twice in her life due to corneal disease was "terrifying," she says through tears. "The tears," she explains "are not for what I went through, but for the



joy I have in knowing that someone—through their donation—gave me the chance to see."

Above, Marlene and her three-year-old grandson, Landen, work on his flash cards. "If I didn't have my sight, I wouldn't be able to see if he was giving me the correct answer," she says. "And most of all, I wouldn't be able to see the smile on Landen's face when he gets it right."

Last year more than 200 people in our region suffering from corneal blindness received the gift of sight.

- Over 30,000 Americans receive cornea transplants each year
- Corneal transplantation has a 95% success rate
- The first corneal transplant was performed in 1905

AGENCY FUNDS LOCAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

The agency awarded grants totaling \$40,145 to three researchers from the Rochester and Syracuse NY region. The period of funding is for January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008.

At the University of Rochester Eye Institute principal investigator Richard T. Libby, Ph.D., received \$10,145 for his research project, *Histological Analysis of Human Glaucoma*. His project will look to answer how and why retinal ganglion cells die in glaucoma. Experiments conducted to answer these questions will have an important impact on developing

therapeutic strategies for its treatment.

Another investigator at the Eye Institute, Geunyoung Yoon, Ph.D., received \$20,000 for, *Real-time Observation of in situ Tear Film Dynamics with Optical Coherence Tomography and Wavefront Sensor*. This research will study dry eye disease and its treatment.

(cont'd pg.2)



ORGAN . EYE . TISSUE
DONATION

RESEARCH FUNDING CONTINUED...

SUNY Upstate Medical University's Sudipta Tripathi, Ph.D., received \$10,000 for her fellowship project, *A Novel Role for Th17 Cells in Cyclosporine Resistant Transplant Rejection*. She will study why transplanted organs are rejected despite adequate immunosuppression and provide strategies to prevent resistant rejection, thus prolonging the survival of transplanted organs.

Since 1952 the agency has awarded more than \$1 million in research grants.

Funding for the following projects is made possible by the agency's research restricted fund and by generous contributions from our regional Lions and Lioness Clubs and others.



Did You Know

Signing the back of your driver's license may not be good enough ...

REGISTER TODAY

in the regional and state registry
by calling

1.800.568.4321

HELP US TO CONTINUE OUR MISSION

UNITED WAY DONOR DESIGNATION OPTION

Your contribution to our agency through the donor designation option helps us to provide:

DONOR OPTION

#0476

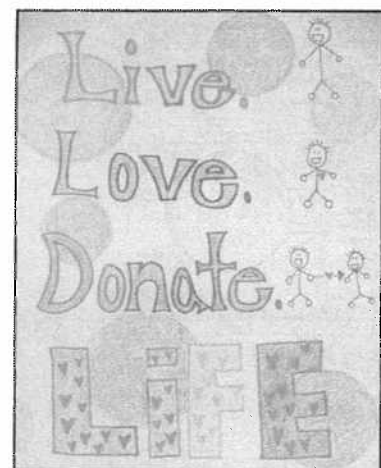
- Community education programs
- Local medical research grants
- Programs for healthcare professionals
- Transplants for patients in our area

Forms are available from your employer, the United Way (585.242.6400), or by calling our office at 1.800.568.4321

DONATE LIFE Poster Contest for Grades 5 - 12

Students are invited to participate in our seventh annual "Donate Life" poster contest. The contest is sponsored by the Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network and Rochester / Finger Lakes Eye & Tissue Bank. For a contest rules brochure call our office at **1.800.568.4321**, or visit www.retb.org to download a brochure and view previous grand prize and honorable mention winners.

Entries must be received by April 1, 2008.



2007 Grand Prize Winner : Stephanie Miller
Our Lady of Mercy
Rochester, NY

Auburn NY Father & Daughter

FISHING FOR A GREAT CAUSE

BY George Fiorille

Thanks to two thoughtful organ donors, my late wife Sharon was able to enjoy life for an additional eight years; had she not received these gifts of life, she would have passed away after enduring a long illness. Even though Sharon is not around anymore, my daughter, Maria and I would like to keep spreading her love and goodness to others by using our energy to bring awareness to others and help promote awareness of and the need for organ and tissue donation.

As the promotional manager for Brass Pro Shops in Auburn, NY, I would like to use my god-given talent of promoting activities in the great outdoors to bring awareness to organ and tis-

sue donation locally, regionally and nationally. On my pro staff Nitro Bass boat, I have installed a partial wrap to promote this topic. The boat will be a "traveling billboard" that will bring awareness to a great cause. The boat will be used at fishing tournaments around NY State and the Northeast, being seen by an unlimited number of people.

I had promised Sharon one day that I would win the Bass Master Classic (World Series of bass fishing) for her to help pay for all of our medical bills endured through her liver disease and two liver transplants. Now, I plan to do that for her memory, and also for all of the people across this great country that are waiting for transplants.



George poses next to his bass boat which proudly displays the DONATE LIFE logo.

Agency Highlights



**Dawn
Sachs**

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Dawn is generally the person answering the phone "Eye and Tissue Bank," and the first person to greet anyone visiting the agency. Her duties include entering all donor cards received into the registry as well as donor and recipient information and other front office duties.



**JoAnn
Perkins**

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

JoAnn's office is located in Syracuse. She is responsible for the planning and administration of all aspects of hospital development activities in the Central and Northern NY regions. She also coordinates the recovery of cardiovascular, skin, ocular and musculoskeletal tissues.



**SUSAN
SOTENDAHL**

MANAGER, FINANCE AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Susan manages the agency's financial records, as well as supervises the maintenance and retention of electronic records. She also provides computer system support.

Agency Mission: Giving others a brighter tomorrow through the recovery and placement of eyes, organs and tissues



ROCHESTER/FINGER LAKES EYE & TISSUE BANK

524 White Spruce Blvd. Rochester. NY . 14623

A nonprofit organ and tissue donation agency serving the Western, Finger Lakes, Northern and Central NY regions as well as North Central PA.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S M E S S A G E

In 2007 Camp Smile of the Webster Lions Club contributed \$7500 to enable R/FLETB to purchase a new specular microscope. Our two-year Capital Campaign was completed with this very generous gift in memory of Lions Kenneth Quinby and Dr. Robert Manning, for their service to the Webster Lions Club and the Rochester community. This microscope will enable us to continue to assure the quality of corneas provided for patients in our service area.

In addition to providing ocular and other tissues, R/FLETB partners with Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network, the federally designated organ procurement organization for our area, to provide public education programs for schools,

civic organizations, religious groups and community events. In 2007, 2158 of you signed legal donor cards for our Regional Donor Pledge Registry. Most also requested registration in the New York State Organ and Tissue Donor Registry administered by the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Health. We hope that in 2008 the NYS registry will complete the process to become a true consent registry as many other states have done. Our public education programs provide information to prepare families to make the donation decision when necessary.

Once again we remind readers of the United Way donation option. All funds donated through United Way are allo-

cated for our professional and public education programs. Our professional education programs train healthcare professionals to appropriately offer the donation option at a very difficult time. We work continuously to improve our response and assist the hospitals in complying with the regulatory process. Federal and state regulatory requirements have increased tremendously in the last three years.

If you would like to schedule a presentation or obtain materials for a group or healthcare facility with which you are affiliated, please contact our office. We look forward to a very busy 2008.

Page 4



Linda K. Fraser

We hope you enjoy your issue of Tissues.

If you wish your name removed from the mailing list, please call the agency office, (585) 272-7890, 1-800-568-4321, e-mail info@rehpb.org