

COME CELEBRATE!

It's time to celebrate the 6th Annual Partners with Vision Benefit Gala and **you are invited!** The date is April 23, 2010, the time is 6:30 – 11:00 p.m. and the location is the Wyndham Lisle/Chicago.

Come for a wonderful evening of dinner, music and stories from people with vision loss and their successful lives.



Everyone can join in the fun. Buy a ticket, bring some friends and buy a table, put an ad in the Gala program booklet, provide raffle or auction items (see page 6) or make a donation.

It all goes to help fulfill Spectrios Institute's mission to help children and adults with vision loss improve the quality of their life to function productively in their community, school,

workplace, and at home. **You can make a difference!**

For a **printable invitation** go to our website (www.spectrios.org) and check out Coming Events!

SPECIAL FEATURES

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NEW BOARD MEMBERS

In January, the Spectrios Institute for Low Vision welcomed two new members to the Board of Directors. These two men bring a wealth of business experience and skill to the Board.

Dale E. Fleming, Sales Engineer, with over 40 years experience representing and selling air conditioning products for a multitude of companies in the commercial/industrial market was elected to the Spectrios Institute Board of Directors.

Born in Ottawa, IL, Fleming graduated from Marseilles High School and LaSalle, Peru, Oglesby Junior College. He went on to earn a degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Illinois in Champaign, IL.

He began his career with Trane Air Conditioning in 1964. In 1968, he became a partner and founder of an Air Conditioning Representative Company. He and his partner later sold it to Brucker Company in 2000, where Fleming is currently employed.

Fleming is a Life Member of ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers). He is a member of Western Trade Association (Golf Association with participants from the Construction Industry) and a member of Glen Oak Country Club in Glen Ellyn. He and his wife, Joan, have two grown children and two grandchildren. He is an All Sports Fan, enjoys golf and tennis and is a travel enthusiast. Fleming's sales experience will be a welcome addition to the Board of Directors of Spectrios Institute for Low Vision.

David Gotsch, Consultant Insurance Service, possesses over 24 years of insurance industry experience on both the carrier and brokerage/consulting sides of the business. A 1981 graduate of Southern Illinois University, Gotsch began his insurance career with Lincoln National in 1984 as an Employee Benefits Manager. During his tenure with Lincoln, he was awarded the National Advisor of the Year in 1987.

In 1990, Gotsch joined United HealthCare of Illinois as Vice President of Sales. He developed and implemented UHCI's first PPO product and was responsible for all HMO, PPO and Medicare Sales, Marketing and Product Development.

In 1996 Gotsch founded DRG Risk Management located in Wheaton, Illinois. DRG serves the small to mid-size marketplace with a special emphasis on hospital and physician groups.

Dave has served on the school board for St. John the Baptist Catholic School in Winfield and as a volunteer at Marianjoy. His wife of 23 years and their four children reside in Winfield, Illinois. His expertise in the field of healthcare and his experiences in the non-profit sector will be plus factors for the Spectrios Board of Directors.

LIST OF EDITORIALS

New parts of The Bright Side newsletter are articles written by Spectrios Institute's staff members and volunteers. Each issue will include several of these articles. We hope you enjoy their special incites. The following editorials can be found in this issue:

- **“View from the Outside”** by Dorothy Troyer, pages 3 - 4
- **“Better Vision”** by Dr. John D. Coalter, page 5
- **“Preparing for our 25th!”** by Karen Thomas, page 9

FOCUS ON STAFF

Dr. Vladimir Yevseyenko is completing a one-year residency program (2009-2010) through the Illinois College of Optometry, Spectrios Institute and Chicago Lighthouse. He is specializing in Low Vision and Ocular Disease and is very humbled about being a part of the Spectrios team. He is a 2009 graduate of Nova Southeastern University School of Optometry, with a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry (2002) from Kansas State University. After completing his residency, Dr. Yevseyenko is planning on joining a private practice type setting in the southern part of the United States.

SPECTRIOS DONORS ARE THE GREATEST!

A HUGE THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS for recognizing the valuable role our visual programs play in giving children and adults with permanent vision loss their lives back. We are grateful to you for supporting our programs with your generous donations, not only during the Annual Appeal, but throughout the year. Your kindness helped us reach the cap of \$7,500 to receive matching funds offered by the Community Memorial Foundation. It was heartwarming to see a steady flow of donations arrive each day during the campaign. This is quite a contrast from a year ago when we would go for days without seeing a donation. We treasure our many new donors and those of you who give faithfully every year.

While our goal was to raise \$50,000 during the appeal, we were delighted with the \$45,000 raised which was \$10,000 more than last year!

Spectrios' donors made this a successful appeal and we want you to know that in the eyes of the Spectrios Board and Staff you are the greatest!

\$45,000 sounds like a lot of money but it goes quickly, especially, when we continue to face increasing operating costs and more individuals require financial assistance to participate in our programs. Please consider donating throughout the year. A steady flow of donations is needed during 2010 to maintain current programs and staff.

CARECREDIT AVAILABLE!

Spectrios Institute is happy to announce that we are working with CareCredit Patient Payment Plans, to provide another payment option to our patients. This option may help some of our patients purchase the devices and technology that will assist them with their visual needs. Call us at 630/690-7115 for more information on this option or check it out at www.carecredit.com.

VIEW FROM THE OUTSIDE

By Dorothy Troyer

On Sunday, January 10th I attended a Support & Learning Group meeting at Spectrios Institute for Low Vision. I do not have low vision and I was not there

as a family member of someone who does. As a newly elected member of the Spectrios Institute Board of Directors I was there just to observe.

Ordinarily I am an optimist, but when I stepped out into the arctic weather of that day, I was sure that the group would be very small. Imagine my surprise when people began to arrive and I stopped counting at 30 people. Some had driven from as far away as the Wisconsin border to attend this meeting.

Leah Gerlach and Melissa Taussig directed the activities. After a warm welcome, introductions and many cups of hot cider, the group was divided into two groups, those with visual impairments and those who were their drivers or family members. I opted to stay with the low vision patients. Everyone was asked to tell their favorite thing to do on a winter day. This was no “whine and cry” group. They reported that they walked, they skied, they played with their kids in the snow, they shopped, and they baked cookies. Simply put, they had fun! The question generated a lot of discussion. They asked each other about finding items in the grocery store, about safety issues in walking on snow covered roads and sidewalks, about the use of canes and guide dogs and they related funny things that happened to them. I found myself smiling at their stories. There was a lot of good natured laughter. These people had problems. They also had solutions.

There was a mix of young and old, men and women. Many of them expressed an interest in doing things to educate the public about low vision. When the meeting was over, they exchanged phone numbers and email addresses. No one rushed out. They lingered and visited and encouraged one another. I was only an observer, but being in this group lifted my spirits. The next Support Group meeting is March 14th. If Leah and Melissa will let me visit again, I’ll be there. I hope you will be too.

NEW WATCHES & CLOCKS



Many people have been asking about low vision watches. Spectrios Institute for Low Vision now has

new large print and talking watches and talking clocks. The pricing is very reasonable and there are several styles and versions to choose from. Stop in and see!



EYE TEC OPEN HOUSES

- **MARCH 6, 2010**

Our March 6th Technology Open House is scheduled between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm.

Spectrios Institute will be showcasing portable Video Magnifiers at its next technology open house. Have you ever wanted something so small that it would fit in a jeans pocket or suit pocket

without getting stuck? Come and see the new Compact Mini, Mano, and Smart Pocket Video Magnifiers!

If you have questions about any type of technology please contact Leah Gerlach, M.S. at 630-690-7115 ext. 24.

- **JUNE 5, 2010**

On June 5th our Technology Open House will kick off our Annual summer low vision technology garage sale. We will offer gently used CCTV's and other low vision equipment available at great discounts.

If you have a gently used CCTV in good condition and would like to donate it to help a person with vision loss in need, please contact Leah Gerlach, M.S. at 630-690-7115 ext. 24.

BETTER DISTANCE VISION

by Dr. John D. Coalter

People with impaired sight have difficulty seeing faces better, print detail on TV, enjoying travel, shopping and participation in special family spectator events. Most low vision patients have tried some form of telescopic device similar to binoculars to improve sharpness of signs and faces, but weaker vision requires more powerful, longer, heavier, and precisely aimed devices. Consider a reevaluation to help determine the best tools and training to help you with your distance and mid-range visual needs. There are many new trends which offer improved opportunities for low vision patients to

“boost” distance and mid-range vision better than ever before.

Ocutech “Sport” (4x or 6x) is a new miniature spectacle-mounted telescope that can be focused from 14” to outdoors. When this balanced and lightweight telescope is just above one’s line of sight, it can be easily dipped into for frequent “looks” at all kinds of objects, print on shelves and signs. It’s always exciting to see people’s facial expressions brighten when they are able to see a loved one’s face again across the room and read much further down the eye chart than has been possible for many years. Some of our patients are using the mid-range capabilities of this hands-free device for seeing at mid-range not only for shopping but for playing cards. As with hearing aids, this little vision amplifier is designed to be light enough to wear all day!

Progression of vision impairment is difficult but one good strategy is to switch from optical fixed power devices to portable electronic devices. Adjustable power and contrast is one of the keys to coping with subtle changes in vision over time. Never give up! Positive attitude is the key.

NEW TECHNOLOGY IN EYE TEC

The “**FarView**”, **QuickLook** “**Touch**”, “**Acrobat**”, and “**Multiview**”. These are various kinds of electronic devices now incorporating video image “zoom” much like what is available when using the close-up capabilities of a camera.



The handheld/portables are the “QuickLook Touch” and the “FarView”.

The “Acrobat”, and “Multiview” are table-top devices using a large flat screen monitor to show whatever a swiveling camera points at. Getting a close-up of print on shelves in the store, walk signs at intersections, faces and monitors in airports, and seeing children in the yard, can be combined with adjustable brightness and contrast to make features stand out more clearly than with spotting telescopes.

Mid-range represents a difficult challenge for low vision patients where a handheld magnifier can not be used to reach upper or lower shelves in the grocery store or signs or tags in the 4-5 foot range in displays, refrigerated food cases, or in museums.

The “Pebble”, Compact “Mini”, “Mano”, and “Ruby”.



These are the latest in pocket electronic magnifiers exceptionally designed for shopping, menus and sorting mail. Though famous for their adjustable power (4-20x) and variable contrast in a size



small enough to put in a pocket – these little marvels also capture images you can adjust for size and brightness from price tags on shelves in the grocery to menus posted outside a restaurant.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Join our growing team of volunteers! We will personalize your volunteer job to your talents and the time you have available!

- Are you a good writer and like to talk to people? Interested in joining the newsletter staff as a reporter?
- Would you like to join our “Stickers & Stuffers” in assembling our newsletter for mailing?
- Help with our annual Gala or Golf events?
- Help with filing and other office related tasks?

There are many volunteer jobs that help Spectrios Institute fulfill our mission. Contact Lynn E. Freyberg, Director of Marketing, 630-690-7115 ext.313 or email lef313@spectrios.org.

FREE DOWNLOADABLE WRITING AIDS

For a selection of large-print writing aids go to www.lowvision.com. These are free and can be downloaded directly from this website. Some of the items available include:

- Large Print Check Register.

- Large Print Register for Diabetics.
- Large Print Checks. Most banks carry low vision checks. They are printed on yellow paper with large black print and tactile lines. The download is a sample check that you can take to your bank to assist in ordering this type of check.

A NEW PARTNERSHIP

Spectrios Institute for Low Vision has a special new partnership with the Dunham Foundation and the Painter's District Council No. 30 to provide low vision examination for low income individuals.

For a flyer about this special program and more information check out our website (www.spectrios.org).

BRIGHT SIDE MAILING

In this day of economic challenges and tight budgets, as a non-profit organization serving people with severe vision loss we are capable of sending this newsletter out as "Free Matter" and save several thousand dollars annually. We hope you will understand our need to help put every penny we can into providing services to our patients. Thank you for your understanding.

PLYMOUTH PLACE

It is exciting to watch our new satellite clinic be so successful. More and more people are finding that coming to our

clinic location at Plymouth Place Senior Living in LaGrange Park is so much easier than traveling to Wheaton, especially if they live in the southern suburbs or if they live along the Burlington Northern train line.

Connie Arends, our Vision Rehabilitation Teacher tells me that everyone is surprised when they see our wonderful space.

If you are thinking of scheduling your annual low vision exam and think Plymouth Place will be easier for you to get to, call our office at 630/690-7115 and talk to our Director of Patient Services and schedule your visit at Plymouth Place Clinic.

PREPARING FOR OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY

By Karen Thomas



It is hard to believe that in one year we will be celebrating our 25th anniversary! Providing low vision rehabilitation to almost 25,000 people of all ages with low vision has been a blessing for all of our staff, and we want to hear from you. As we prepare for our big celebration, we want to be able to share your stories and success. If you would like to share your story about how low vision rehabilitation has changed your life, please contact our Director of Patient Services. Also, if you would like to provide us with a picture please send it along with your story.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO SPECTRIOS PATIENTS

People don't often realize that our Development Department raises thousands of dollars in grant funding annually to assist children and adults who wish to access our services but lack financial resources. Funds are currently available to help new and established patients who have a financial need, assistance with cost of our visual rehabilitation program and will partially subsidize some devices.

Approval for financial assistance must be received prior to making an appointment, even if you are an established patient who has received assistance in the past.

All financial assistance is on a first-come-first-served basis and during these difficult economic times, funds are in great demand.

Contact Diane Levine, Director of Development at 630-690-7115, ext. 12 if you need financial assistance.

GALA RAFFLE AND AUCTION

Raffle items for the Gala are combined into packages, which usually have a value of \$300 to \$500. Popular items are tickets to sporting events, theater performances, and comedy clubs. Gift cards from your favorite restaurants will be appealing to bidders. Be creative. Dance lessons, an overnight stay at a Bed and Breakfast, or a touristy tour

might be nice. Think about the things that you would like to see in a raffle package and then donate an appropriate item. You can count it as a donation at tax time and you will have the satisfaction of knowing you have done something wonderful to improve the lives of children and adults who struggle every day with severe vision loss.

Auction items are a horse of a different color. These items need to be something really special – a weekend at a golf or ski resort, a trip to an exotic location, dinner with a celebrity, the kind of thing you might give your spouse for a birthday or anniversary. Something you can't go to the store and buy. Auction items will be put in the hands of an experienced auctioneer who will get the crowd to bid top dollar. Use your clout with the people in your network to help put together a package the crowd can't refuse. The publicity for you and your friends will be worth it.

As soon as you have decided on the raffle or auction items you can make available, call Diane Levine 630-690-7115 ext. 12 and give her the good news.

DONATE ONLINE

Don't forget, you can now make donations via our website. Go to www.spectrios.org and click on the

“Donate Now” button.

THE LAST WORD

What would a gentle, soft-spoken sculptress, a John Wayne/Rooster Cogburn type of guy and a ground-breaking woman golfer have in common? All three were enthusiastic supporters of the Spectrios mission.

Ginny Newitt was an artist. Everyone she met became a medium for her sculptures – an innocent child, a leathery seaman, a tender mother. “Did her sculptures depict people she knew?” she was often asked. Probably not, but every sculpture portrayed some aspect of the children she had loved, the characters whose stories had touched her, the people she remembered. How appropriate that the Executive Director’s office at Spectrios Institute should be named for Ginny and George Newitt.

Dick Newsome knew first hand the struggle a visually impaired person faces every day. So (in true John Wayne fashion) he fought to improve the quality of life for others who struggled with vision loss. He was a Lion because Lions help those who are visually and hearing impaired. Dick believed in the Spectrios mission. His passion for the visually impaired influenced the Glen Ellyn Lions to make generous contributions to Spectrios and a stream of gold dollars marked his personal contribution toward our Capital Campaign.

Judy Whinfrey left a legacy of excellence in every endeavor she undertook. Her presence at the Spectrios Golf Events were special,

since Judy was something of a golf celebrity, being the first woman to become a certified member of the Chicago Golf Club and the first woman to play in the annual Blue Grey Matches. Enthusiastic, energetic, smart, and funny, her positive attitude and compassionate nature endeared her to everyone who knew her. She served in ways that impacted the lives of people who needed her, especially those who were visually impaired.

Of these three, only Dick was a Spectrios patient. Ginny and Judy were wives of Spectrios Board Members. Last month the Lord called these three good and faithful servants to a higher level of life. We are happy for them, but we miss them.



R. Tracy Williams, O.D.
Executive Director



At Deicke House
219 East Cole Avenue
Wheaton, IL 60187

Formerly Deicke Center for Visual Rehabilitation

2010 COMING EVENTS

Support & Learning Group:

Check out our website for each day's topics.

- March 14th – Support & Learning Group, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. at Deicke House, Wheaton.
- March 28th – Support & Learning Group, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at Plymouth Place, LaGrange Park.
- April 11th – Support & Learning Group, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. at Deicke House, Wheaton.
- May 23rd – Support & Learning Group, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. at Plymouth Place, LaGrange Park.
- June 13th – Support & Learning Group, 2:00- 3:30 p.m. at Deicke House, Wheaton.

For more information contact Melissa Taussig, MA, LCPC, Support Group Facilitator: 630-690-7115 ext. 18 or mft309@spectrios.org.

EYE TEC Open House:

- March 6th – Eye Tec Open House 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- June 5th – Eye Tec Open House 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Orientation to Spectrios:

For anyone interested in learning about what we do and how we can help people with low vision.

- March 6th, 2010: from 9 – 10 a.m.
- June 5th, 2010: from 9 – 10 a.m.

Both the Eye Tec Open House and the Orientation to Spectrios Institute are held at Deicke House, 219 E. Cole Ave., Wheaton, IL 60187

For directions and to register please call: 630-690-7115 or info@spectrios.org