

Perhaps the story I am to tell, will be one of those miracles come true. In February 1998 the Kimberling City Lions Club received a phone call from the Reeds Spring's elementary school nurse asking for assistance. She had a little six year old boy that was in great need of eye care. He had cataracts so severe that he sat no more than 5 inches from the T.V. screen. His learning skills and powers were drastically hampered.

Lion's eyeglass chairman, Marcia Peterson, sat the wheels in motion with full support of the club's membership. The goal was to give this boy, Robbie Ziegler, his sight ----- Easier said than done since we now learn Robbie has a serious blood disorder called malignant hyperthermia. Cataract surgery which has become somewhat routine now days seems almost an impossibility for Robbie. First came the visitations with the parents and their hopes living a productive life and yet the overwhelming fears of losing him during surgery.

Hours, days, and even months of determination went into getting help for Robbie. Doctors from Missouri, Arkansas, and Tennessee were all contacted by the Kimberling City Lions eyeglass chairman and they collectively put their reports, exams, and diagnosis together.

On April 15, 1998 Robbie, his parents, and a couple Kimberling City Lions went to Mid-South Lions Sight and Hearing Service in Memphis, Tn. After more lengthy exams, testing, and evaluating Robbie was scheduled for surgery on his left eye (the worst of the two) on May 13.

When the day came, the one we had been struggling for, the atmosphere was not joyous, but full of Apprehension and fear. Several doctors, technicians, and nurses all prepared for the surgery. Dr. Hyatt from the University of Tennessee had called up on the "cream of the crop" amongst his colleagues (in all

there were 14). Three of the finest anaesthesiologists, one coming from St. Jude's Hospital. The surgery was to start at 6:00 am but was delayed until 9:00 am as the doctors requested additional high tech machines and equipment.

The tension mounted. The scrub nurse spoke to the parents by phone every 15-20 minutes reassuring them the surgery was going well and that Robbie was all right. Six hours later Robbie was hugging his mother and father. Robbie now has 20/30 vision in his left eye and this summer saw his first housefly when it landed on his hamburger. He was amazed. A picnic his parents won't forget as they cried and laughed.

Months have passed and the Ziegler family has run into several other hardships and snags in life. They reluctantly moved back to Louisiana with inlaws to have family support. Unfortunately Robbie still needs surgery on the right eye.

The first of September 1998 Debbie Ziegler in desperation called the Kimberling City Lions again for assistance. Robbie definitely needs the right eye done as it is hindering the corrected eye. Could we recommend any help in Louisiana? Once again the Kimberling City eyeglass chairman goes to work, calling the president of the Springhill, La. Lions Club and explains the situation. Two clubs and two Lions that have never met, but are now drawn together and vow to make Christmas 1998 one the Zieglers will not forget. God willing

On Saturday, November 21, 1998, we participated in a vision screening at Rock Township Lions hall in cooperation with Lenscrafters optical shops. Our thanks to Leona Dockery, General Manager and Coordinator for the Lenscrafter/Lions Program.

Twenty-three people were examined and found to need glasses. Twenty-two were given appointments at the Chesterfield Lenscrafters store for exam and fitting on December 2, 1998. This service provided and paid for by Lenscrafters. One person was sent to Pro-Vision of Arnold for service to be paid for by Rock Township Lions Club.

A publicity session including Governor Marshall and Vice-Governor Erbs was made and this publicity will be distributed by the District Public Relations Lion Al Amann.

No financial aid from the Eye Care Committee was necessary

therefore no case was opened.

More publicity will be distributed when the patients receive their glasses at Lenscrafters Home Town Days.

The Committee also received the following letter of thanks:

Dear Mr. Levy and Lions Eye Care Committee; I am writing to tell you how thankful I am for your help with my eye surgery. Before the surgery I could not even see the eye chart, but now I can read several lines down with that eye, without glasses. It is great to be able to see again. I am enclosing a small donation that perhaps in some small way it will help you to help someone else. Will send more in the future when I can.

God Bless you and your organization. Grateful
Mary Ashworth

Lion P.D. G. Jack Levy

Robbie will have sight in both eyes.

The Kimberling City Lions Club agrees to continue their sponsorship so Robbie may go back to Mid-South and Springhill Lions Club agrees to pay for all the follow-up visits and several pairs of eye-glasses needed in the future. It's a go!

Robbie and his parents once again make the long trip to Mid-South and are greatly pleased with the thorough exams and evaluations, not to mention the reunion with Dr. Hyatt and his

assurance that he will call in the same team of doctors. (Many who are not even scheduled for that time. They are all volunteered hours.)

Robbie was scheduled for surgery Dec. 9th; however, it had to be rescheduled because Robbie had a terrible cold.

As of this printing Robbie is still waiting for his second surgery due to the difficulty of scheduling the team when Robbie is well.

Article by Marcia Peterson



Ed Bober, Editor Emeritus

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