



VISIONARY

Cornea Research Foundation of America - Bringing Vision to Future Generations



Dec 2005

Distinguished Visitor Attends Advanced Cornea Course

How would it feel to be the grandchild of a famous grandparent? We had a unique opportunity to answer that question during October when the Advanced Cornea Course welcomed a distinguished visitor from Innsbruck, Austria, Dr. Mathias Zirm. His grandfather, Dr. Eduard Zirm, was Chief of Medicine of a hospital in what is now the Czech Republic, where he performed the first successful organ transplant. He transplanted the corneal tissue of an 11 year old boy, who had accidentally died, into the eyes of a day laborer blinded in an industrial accident.



Dr. Price and Dr. Zirm

The operation and subsequent healing were difficult because without a microscope, Dr. Zirm was unable to suture the cornea. He had to use sutures from the outside. In spite of these limitations, the cornea remained clear, and the patient was able to see within a few hours post-surgery and retained his vision for the rest of his life.

This ground-breaking surgery took place on December 7, 1905, and the centennial anniversary of the milestone will be recognized worldwide in December. The method Dr. Zirm developed is still the basis today for repairing corneal damage.

Q: How did you decide to become a doctor?

My dad was a chemist, a doctor, and an immunology professor. I admired him as an excellent scientist and physician, and I found his research fascinating.

Q: How does it feel to be the grandson of a famous grandfather?

His was a remarkable achievement in the history of medicine. I am proud of him, of course, and, as a doctor, indebted to him for this triumph. Having a famous grandfather inspired me to want to contribute during my own lifetime.

Q: How did you learn of Dr. Price's work?

I attended a conference in Milan this spring and heard him present a paper he had written describing his research. He and I are somewhat alike in our interests, and it intrigued me to want to come and learn directly from him. He is a good teacher, very well prepared, and I have enjoyed my time here.

Q: Will there be further contact between your clinic and Dr. Price's practice?

Yes, I have invited him to come visit me and my staff and my family when he and his lovely wife, Dr. Marianne Price, return to Europe next year. I look forward to having him come to Europe and to helping spread his methods because they are of great value to patients.

Q: What advice do you have for young doctors entering your field?

In the beginning of a career, you run fast toward a goal that seems far away, and you sometimes leave your family behind. If I have any advice for young doctors I would say this: do it better than I did! I am grateful for my wonderful family and for their support and understanding.

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Open House Draws 120 Interested Attendees

The second, and final, Open House of 2005 held on Sunday, Nov. 13, attracted 120 persons interested in learning more about Fuchs' dystrophy, the subject of two presentations on that day by Dr. Price. In addition, attendees were updated by Marianne Price, Ph.D., on research studies at the Foundation and on how to support the Foundation's mission by Development Director Elaine Voci, Ph.D. Guest speakers included Pat Cowan, a Fuchs' dystrophy patient and recipient of two corneal transplants, and Lloyd Young of the Indiana Lions Eye Bank, who received a certificate of appreciation from Dr. Price for their long-standing support of the Foundation.

Visionary Now Available In Audio Version If you, or someone you know, are unable to read the *Visionary* without magnifying glasses, you will be pleased to know that the newsletter is available on tape. Just stop at the front desk of Price Vision Group, or send an email to info@cornea.org to request a copy of the latest audio issue.

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OUR MISSION & HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

Mission Statement

To be a world-class research and educational organization dedicated to the preservation and restoration of vision.

What We Do

Our mission can be summarized by this acronym: **RISE**.

R stands for Research – We do a minimum of 12 research projects a year; see our website for an updated list of projects.

I stands for Innovation – Dr. Price is a talented entrepreneur who has already been awarded several patents; he is always seeking the best and the newest ways to provide the highest quality vision care.

S stands for Service to Humanity – A servant leader, Dr. Price approaches his work as a God-given gift that he is stewarding on behalf of patients all over the world who will benefit from his expertise, surgical skills, and research.


E stands for Education – The Foundation sponsors an annual Focus on Education series for optometrists in Indiana, and monthly Advanced Cornea Courses in which surgeons from around the world are taught the latest techniques and procedures being pioneered.

Where Our Funding Comes From

1. 38% comes from research study income.
2. 27% comes from seminars, courses, and the golf classic.
3. 17% comes from in-kind contributions.
4. 16% comes from individuals and foundations.

How The Money is Used

- 80% of the Foundation's funds goes toward research and education programs.
- 10% goes toward Fund-raising activities.
- Management and general administration receives the remaining 10%.



**Tuesday,
June 13, 2006**

9th ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC

Bent Tree Golf Club will be the site of the Foundation's fund-raising event; this is a championship course kept in PGA tournament fashion and rated 3.5 stars by *Golf Digest*. Foursomes are already organizing, and sponsorship information is available.

Harry Scheid, member of the Foundation Board, is the Chairman of the golf committee and anticipates a great turnout again this year. Please join us, and play golf for a Higher Purpose!

FROM THE RESEARCH CORNER



This fall the Cornea Research Foundation has embarked on three exciting new studies.

(1) The Top Hat Graft

We're pleased to announce that Dr. Price recently became the first surgeon in the world to pioneer the use of a femtosecond laser to create a "top hat"-shaped full-thickness cornea transplant! The Foundation is tracking the outcomes of this exciting new surgical technique as part of a clinical study.

Previously, full-thickness "standard" transplants were performed by using a device like a cookie-cutter to cut a disc from the patient's eye, and one from a donor cornea, which was then

Marianne Price, Ph.D.

sutured into place. While these transplants are very successful, it can take 1 to 2 years for the cornea to heal sufficiently for suture removal, during which time the patient remains at risk for rupturing the eye if they fall.

With the femtosecond laser, the surgeon can program a "top hat" - shaped cut, which will potentially provide a better seal, healing faster and stronger than a standard graft.

(2) Glaucoma Gold Micro-shunt

The Foundation was recently selected as one of only five sites in the United States to evaluate a new 24-karat gold micro-shunt for treatment of glaucoma. This tiny device reduces excess pressure in the eye, and its novel design should help avoid most of the complications experienced with earlier glaucoma devices.

(3) Fuchs' Dystrophy Genetics Study

The Foundation will participate in a nationwide study funded by the National Eye Institute to identify the genes involved in Fuchs' dystrophy. This progressive condition initially causes patients to experience glare and haze and eventually causes their corneas to swell and even blister. Fuchs' dystrophy is one of the leading causes of corneal transplantation. Finding the genes involved will help lead to earlier diagnosis and new treatments to prevent the progression of the disease.

New Book, Celebration Of Light, To Be Released In Spring

Elaine Voci, editor of the *Visionary* and Development Director for the Foundation, has completed six interviews and is on track to meet the January deadline to submit the work for publication this spring. The book features stories of patients with a variety of conditions, including Fuchs' dystrophy, keratoconus, and cataracts. Meant to offer advice and information, as well as inspiration, the book contains chapter introductions written by Dr. Francis Price, a resource directory, and a glossary of eye terminology. Elaine Voci, author and project manager, is now accepting advance book orders. The book will cost \$28, and all proceeds go directly to the Foundation. To place an advance order, please write Elaine at elainevoci@cornea.org, or call her at 317-814-2993.



Elaine Voci, Ph.D.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

Throughout 2005, the Eye Bank Association of America has commemorated the centennial of the first corneal transplant performed by Eduard Zirm, M.D. Here are some interesting facts about eye donation:

- The first eye bank opened in New York in 1944.
- More people donate eyes than other types of organs.
- There are no patient waiting lists for corneas at the present time in the U.S.
- Over 90% of all corneal transplants are successful in restoring vision.
- Corneal transplants are the most common of the human transplant procedures; more than 600,000 have been performed on patients who range in age from nine days to 107 years.
- Cataracts, poor eyesight, or age do not prevent you from being a donor.
- Eye, tissue, and organ donations are consistent with beliefs and attitudes of all major religions.

Update on Michael Cruz, First Child to Receive Iris Implant in Indiana

Mike had his first iris implant by Dr. Price in January 2005. His second iris implant was in May. When we caught up with Ray Cruz, Mike's father, he told us, "Mike's doing very well and has no complaints at all. His local doctors are also pleased and amazed at the outcome. Both of Mike's eyes now look so real and natural. He has also noticed that he can see a little better and can watch TV from about three to four feet away. Thanks for asking about Mike! Happy holidays to all of you!"



ASK THE DOCTOR



Dr. Francis Price, Jr.

Q: Can you use a LASIK eye for a corneal transplant?

A: Currently, eyes with previous laser refractive surgery are not candidates for corneal transplant surgery unless only the posterior portion of the cornea is used. These eyes can be used for some cases of DSEK if the donor is prepared by a hand dissection instead of the microkeratome. There are some studies underway to try to develop new methods so these eyes can be used. It is also important to realize that even if an eye cannot be used for a corneal transplant, it can still be invaluable for use in either teaching or research. We desperately need eyes to help train doctors in new surgical techniques. There is no substitute for a human donor eye on which to demonstrate surgery; the alternative is for doctors to learn new techniques on someone's eye during surgery. We also need donor eyes to develop new techniques so that eyes with previous laser refractive surgery can someday be used for transplants.

Q: Can you have laser vision correction on cornea transplants?

A: Yes, in most cases. Either LASIK or surface ablations (PRK) can be done. While I initially did LASIK on these eyes, I think PRK may be a better procedure in most eyes with standard corneal transplant. With the newer DSEK surgery, where just the posterior part of the cornea is transplanted, either procedure can work well.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH 26, 2006 - Open House held at Price Vision Group offices; presentation by Dr. Price on New Treatments for Corneal Conditions