

# VISION MATTERS



A newsletter for friends and volunteers of the Vision Is Priceless Council

Fall 2008

## Tori Named Honorary Chair of the 26th Annual BBQ & Boogie

The importance of early vision screening is never more appreciated than by the thousands of children who, through our screening are able to receive the treatment early enough to forever impact their lives. Like many parents Tori's mom and dad would never have guessed that there was any problem with their daughter's eyesight. Children learn quickly to compensate and often do not know that what they are seeing is not how everyone else sees the world. When Vision Is Priceless Council (VIP) came to Riverside Presbyterian Day School two years ago to screen the children, they noticed Tori had little vision, if any, in her right eye. Her parents were contacted and encouraged to take her for a full eye examination. Those few brief hours that VIP visited Riverside Presbyterian Day School were just enough to make a difference for Tori and her family.

When Tori's parents took her for a full exam, the eye care professional sent them immediately to a retina specialist. Within a week, they were sent to Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia and Tori was undergoing surgery to remove the tumor which was identified as malignant. Tori now has a prosthetic eye and has testing done every three months as a precaution. This very rare, but very serious form of cancer is extremely hard to identify and may have otherwise gone undetected.

Today Tori is now starting her fifth grade year at Riverside Presbyterian



Day School. She is thankful for the partnership between VIP and the school that offered the early screening and is enjoying horseback riding and tennis with her friends. She is thrilled to be the honorary chair for this year's **BBQ & Boogie** and looks forward to greeting each of you who have made a difference in her life by supporting VIP.

Thank you for making a difference!

## *The Best Deal in Town!*

**For only \$35 you can attend the most exciting event in town while making a difference in our community!**

*Miller Electric Company  
and  
W.W. Gay Mechanical*

*Invite you to join VIP on  
March 14, 2009*

*At*

*The St. Augustine Rod and Gun  
Club*

*For our  
26th Annual BBQ & Boogie*

*Mark your calendars now!*

*Special Thanks To:*

*Honorary Chair:  
Tori Hickinbotham*

*Western Chairmen:  
Al Kinard, Jr.  
Ronnie Roberts  
Ed Witt, Jr.*

*All our dedicated Cooks  
and the  
Women's Western Committee*

*For information on tickets or  
sponsorships contact  
Stephanie Dollings at  
(904) 308-2020*

*Stephanie@visionispriceless.org*

## Save Your Vision Campaign

This past March, VIP and the Aetna Foundation partnered together to reach those in the underserved communities throughout Duval County.

The grant allowed VIP to:

\*Bring services directly to those in need by setting up vision and glaucoma screening sites in these communities.

\*Increase awareness of the importance of eye care and the resources available in the community through the media.

\*Distribute free bilingual educational materials, which list safety tips, eye disease warning signs and glaucoma and nutritional information

## The Cared Vision Program Assists All Ages

First Coast residents of all ages can find assistance with vision care through our Cared Vision Program.

On his 8th Birthday, Carmen’s grandson had an eye exam with one of our Cared Vision physicians and received a pair of much needed glasses. Carmen, who is raising her grandson, learned through a vision screening that his eyesight was severely limited in one eye, which could hinder his education. Without insurance, and unable to receive government assistance she came to VIP. She was grateful for the kindness and responsiveness of the VIP staff, and Dr. Levenson and his staff, which gave her grandson the best birthday present-the gift of sight!

When Judith’s diabetic mother had a stroke and was suffering from vision loss, she knew care was urgently needed. Her mother had no insurance, nor did she qualify for any government program, so she called VIP. An exam with one of our physicians and a MRI were both provided at no cost to help ensure she would receive the treatment she needed.

## 2008 Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony

VIP’s Annual Meeting was held in June where volunteers, friends and supporters of VIP gathered for a delightful evening to celebrate recent accomplishments and Terence M. McGee, M.D., Chairman, presented the following awards:

**Roger G. Gibson Award**— Tommy Reeves, as the most valuable volunteer.

**Jane M. Wynn Award**– Gail Williams of the SOS Academy, in recognition of excellence in upholding the motto “Vision Is Priceless”.

**Frances B. Kinne Award**– Kim Rigdon from the Low Vision Center for faithful participation in sight saving programs .

**Will H. Wasson Award**—Ann Murphy on behalf of Comcast, for an organization’s faithful participation in sight saving programs.

**Henry G. Motes, Jr. Award**—Sandy Strickland from the Florida Times-Union for her contribution to public awareness of the VIP mission.

**The Chairman’s Award** - The Riverside Hospital Foundation for dedicated service to the cause of saving sight.

**The Dot Mathias Award** - Lisa Chatman for her work to support the Duval County School Vision Screening program.

### Did you know?

During 2007-2008 VIP screened over 35,000 students and 2,800 adults !

The new school year has begun and we are in full swing, having already screened the following schools:

Christian Heritage Academy  
Episcopal High School  
St. Matthew’s Catholic School  
Community Connections Child Care  
and over 32 Head Start Centers



If a picture is worth a thousand words – what is the value of 4,000 eyes being able to see a picture? Priceless of course! **Vision Is Priceless Council** teamed up with **Comcast Cable** to screen 2,000 preschool children in just 45 days.

## **You are the Reason for our Success!**

What does it take to screen tens of thousands of children each year, thousands of adults, provide hundreds of pairs of glasses, coordinate eye exams and educational programs throughout the First Coast? **It takes a community!** VIP's annual fundraising event, The 26th Annual BBQ & Boogie, holiday appeals, grants, and gifts from individuals and organizations provide the operating funds for our organization. Thank you to the generous individuals and organizations whom have already pledged and supported VIP this school year.

Advanced Eye Care  
Alcon Laboratories, Inc.  
Margaret Allen, O.D.  
Baptist Medical Center  
Janet A. Betchkal, M.D.  
Christina Bowman, O.D.  
Lenka Champion, M.D.  
A Child's Place  
Christ Church Episcopal Preschool  
Citi Health & Fitness Center  
Clay Eye Physicians & Surgeons  
Comcast  
Community Health Charities of FL  
Davalt Optical  
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas P. Davis  
Mary-Eliza DelCampo, O.D.  
John P. Donovan, M.D.  
Donald M. Downer, M.D.  
Eye Research Foundation  
Robert Gerson, O.D.  
The Henry and Lucy Gooding Endowment  
David A. Green, O.D.

Clarence M. Harris, M.D.  
Roger Hogan, O.D.  
Gregory Hunter, O.D.  
Kemper Insurance  
Gayle P. Leinwohl, O.D.  
LensCrafters - Beach  
LensCrafters - Orange Park  
LensCrafters - Regency  
LensCrafters - Southside Center  
LensCrafters - Town Center  
Gregory Levenduski, O.D.  
The Levenson Family Charitable Fund  
Jeffrey H. Levenson, M.D.  
Kathryn Logvin, O.D.  
Dianna Lokey, O.D.  
Low Vision Center of Northeast FL  
Dorothy E. Mark, O.D.  
Linda Marks, O.D.  
Mr. and Mrs. John G. Michael  
Miller Electrical Company  
Nemours Children's Clinic  
Nicolitz Eye Consultants

Tiffany Owens, O.D.  
Russell A. Pecoraro, M.D.  
Michael A. Powers, O.D.  
Kenneth D. Rappaport, M.D.  
Alan I. Rauchwarger, O.D.  
John E. Richardson, O.D.  
Mark R. Rosenberg  
SAPNA, Vistakon  
Sawcross, Inc.  
Curtis S. Schmidt, O.D.  
Roy H. Schnauss, M.D.  
Champion Zone-United Way  
Valuvision - Beauclerc / Mandarin  
Valuvision - Callahan  
Valuvision - Regency  
Amanda Weitzen, O.D.  
Jerome Weitzen, O.D.  
Dr. C. Donald Wiggins, D.B.A.  
John D. Wilcox, M.D.  
W.W. Gay Mechanical

## **Welcome Aboard—VIP New Board of Directors Members**



**Courtney Bryan**,  
Teacher, St. John's  
Presbyterian  
Kindergarten

**Why did you choose to support VIP?**

As a teacher for pre-school age children, Courtney truly understands the importance of vision in a child's development. "I am honored to be a part of Vision Is Priceless Council as a new board member. I look forward to working with such caring and dedicated people in helping raise awareness for this wonderful cause."



**Steven B. Greenhut**,  
Attorney,  
Pappas,  
Metcalf,  
Jenks &  
Miller

**Why did you choose to support VIP?**

When a close friend asked Steven to join him on the Board of VIP, Steven stepped up gladly to the call to serve. He is committed to help increase the awareness in the community about VIP and the importance of vision care. He is already serving on the marketing committee to achieve this goal.



**Francine Marabell**, MSN,  
RN, Sr. Mgr  
Developmental  
Health,  
Jacksonville  
Children's  
Commission

**Why did you choose to support VIP?**

"My affiliation with VIP began in early 2003 between the Duval County Health Department and the Jacksonville Children's Commission, I have witnessed first hand what a difference early screening and intervention can make. Many children in the city have benefited from the services of VIP and now I can be part of the VIP family to strengthen that commitment."



**Kenneth Rappart**,  
M.D.  
Ophthalmologist

**Why did you choose to support VIP?**

"I chose to support VIP to help expand access and provide care for specialized adult ophthalmology services. "

***"My eyes are an ocean in which my dreams are reflected." Anonymous***

**VIP OFFICERS &  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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A. Denise McWhorter,

*Adult Program Coordinator*

Marjorie Rothstein, R.N.,

*Children's Program Director*

*Vision Screeners*

Shawna LaMaire

Dena Attaway

Melanie Knox

**VISION**  
**IS PRICELESS COUNCIL**

**Keeping First Coast Eyes Healthy**

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[www.VISIONISPRICELESS.org](http://www.VISIONISPRICELESS.org)

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**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**See Inside Why You Should Save the Date!**

*Vision Is Priceless Council's*

**26th Annual BBQ & Boogie**



**Saturday, March 14, 2009**  
**St. Augustine Rod & Gun Club**

Presented by *Miller Electric Company* and *W.W. Gay Mechanical*