

Alan W. Solway, M.D., Cataract Surgery-Ophthalmology  
32410 W. Five Mile Rd. • Ste. 102 • Livonia, MI 48154 • (313) 522-9630

## A "State of the Practice" Message from Dr. Solway

1993 was a year of tremendous growth for our practice. Last year alone we saw well over 1000 new patients, most of whom were friends and relatives of our existing patients.

As we move quickly through the months of 1994, many patients have expressed concern about the upcoming sweeping changes which have been proposed for the health care system. Everyone knows something is going to happen but no one is quite sure what the new system will be.

One thing you can count on is that as the system changes, we will make every effort possible to participate with any and all new forms of insurance. Over the past three months we have signed up to participate with eight new plans.

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*"We will make every effort possible to participate with any and all new forms of insurance."*

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If you are planning to make any changes, or you or your employer have already made changes, please contact us so that we may keep your health care coverage current in our files. In the meantime, just sit back, enjoy life day-to-day and we'll all adapt to the new health care reforms as soon as the politicians are finished making it more complicated.

Sincerely,

Alan W. Solway, M.D. & Staff

## Passing the Torch... From One Generation to the Next

Back in the 40's if you needed a pair of glasses you often bought them in a jewelry store. After all, glasses like a fine watch or necklace of precious stones required that intricate touch that only a skilled jeweler could provide. In that era it was common for an optometrist to set up an office next to a jewelry store, or in the office itself.

In 1949 there was a jewelry store on Michigan Avenue in Ypsilanti. This is where the budding career of a young optometrist named Paul Solway began. It is also where a lady named Elva Denison found herself working as a clerk in the jewelry store.

Elva was born out in the country, west of Milan in Lenawee County. One day her family made a trip into the city, where she was diagnosed as being nearsighted, astigmatic, and amblyopic. Soon after she received her first pair of glasses by mail at the age of 12.

Now back to '49, Elva was in need of an eye exam, so she conveniently sought young Dr. Paul for help. She became one of his very first patients and remained a loyal patient for over forty years. Over those years his practice continued to steadily grow. As Elva said "he was one of the nicest men you could ever know", and apparently that feeling was shared with many other patients.



Through the years Elva continuously battled with health problems. Cancer...ulcers...thyroidectomy... broken shoulder...you name it Elva's

probably had it with over 24 operations in her life. Ironically, one time she broke her hip right in front of Dr. Paul's office, and then broke it again at the rehab center. Part of the reason for that accident was her eyes were beginning to fail her. She had difficulty reading even the largest of print, and missed seeing the curb when she slipped and fell.

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Now, zoom to 1993. Dr. Paul was retired but had previously referred Elva to his son, Dr. Alan Solway, who was monitoring the progression of cataracts in both of her eyes. During the summer of 1993 Elva had those cataracts successfully removed. She was unbelievably surprised with the results. All of a sudden she could read signs on the storefront across the street from her apartment...enjoy TV and books again...and see the stars in the sky. She quickly called her old friend Dr. Paul, telling him of the great news and thanking him for the referral.

Fifteen years ago some doctors told her she had about three more years to live, but Elva toughed it out and proved them wrong. Today, Elva Denison enjoys the view out the window of her Ypsilanti apartment...recently finished *The Firm* and *Pelican Brief* as she maintains her avid reading pace of a book a day...and frequently visits with Nellie and her many other friends in the senior activity center and dining room.

This story is about two very special people. One is a cheery lady, 90 years young who managed a smile every day despite many calamities in her life. The second is an outstanding compassionate man who is no longer with us since he

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passed away on December 10, 1993. He will be remembered and admired by thousands of thankful patients for whom he cared for.

Before he passed away, Dr. Paul Solway received a call from Elva Denison who told him of how blessed she felt with her new found visual freedom, and of how caring and thorough his son, Dr. Alan had been. Maybe then, after hearing from one of his very first patients, Dr. Paul knew that he had successfully passed on the torch.

## Simply (but costly) The Best

Many of the cataract surgeries performed by Dr. Solway are done at Straith Hospital for Special Surgery. One of the reasons for using Straith is that it is a facility where a large number of cataract surgeries are performed. As a result of that large volume, Straith can justify significant purchases of the most advanced instrumentation available, even in this current age of severe cost containment.

Just recently, a new instrument known as the Alcon Series "Twenty Thousand Legacy" (STTL) was purchased. This machine, which took over five years and \$25 million to develop, cost a mere \$90,000.00. The doctors on staff feel it is well worth the price. They feel it is very important to have the most advanced surgical equipment for their patients.

The STTL utilizes the latest 486-based computer technology to provide surgeons with exacting control while interacting with the patient's eye. The STTL provides the surgeon with more variables in ultrasonic power, enabling more efficient removal of the cataract.



After \$25,000,000.00 and five years in research, \$90,000.00 to purchase, the bottom line is that we are extremely happy to have access to the best technology that allows our patients to see better and faster.

## One Lucky Charm with All the Right Moves

If you were a patient at Straith Hospital for Special Surgery during 1991-92 you were greeted by a pretty, pleasant and smiling young lady at the reception desk.

Now, when you travel to the offices of Dr. Alan Solway, you are again greeted by a pretty, pleasant and smiling person when you are called into the exam room.

Both of those charming, helpful persons are one in the same, namely, Jenne Wilson our featured staff member for this issue of SightLines.

Jenne has traveled frequently in her young life. Born in Michigan, she soon moved south with her family and grew up in DeLand, Florida. Once out of high school, she moved back up north where she landed a part-time position at Straith while working on her Associate in Liberal Arts degree at Oakland Community College.

About a year and a half ago, Jenne accepted a full time position

at Dr. Solway's office. This was a natural since she had always been fascinated with the eye and at one time considered a career in optometry. Now she performs write-ups during exams, orders medications and eyedrops, sets up the initial vision check, and assists with billing and in completing the many insurance forms.

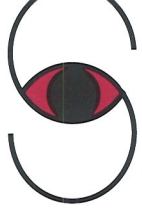
As previously noted, Jenne Wilson is a lady on the move. Last year she moved again...in with her new husband after their early summer wedding. At Madonna College she learned some helpful and compassionate moves learning sign language while attending a deaf education course. And, if you want to see some real quick moves, her purple belt in Karate training will convince you that this petite bundle of energy takes her fitness for the mind and body very seriously.



Jenne Wilson has always been one to unselfishly put the care for others in the forefront. That's why she is continuing courses in this field by studying towards certification as an assistant ophthalmic technician. Jenne is the lucky staff member who removes the patch on the day following surgery. She's the one that shares in the patient's exuberance and expressions of joy when they can once again see colors, read and gain back visual freedom. She's sweet...she listens...she cares. We're also the lucky ones to have the charming Jenne Wilson on our staff.

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## A Different Kind of Expansion

Previous SightLines newsletters have dealt with expansion of the practice...be it size of the office, new equipment or additional services and staff members.

This issue deals with a different kind of expansion... a very precious one to Dr. Solway and his wife Melodie. Namely, the addition of their first child, Andrew Paul Solway born February 8, 1995.

Andrew Paul was born at Beaumont Hospital, weighing in at 6 pounds, seven ounces and 19 inches at 4:35 am. Initial concern with a long first labor and a fluctuating heart rate each time a contraction occurred necessitated a C-section, but both mother and child endured successfully.

Dr. Solway would like to apologize to all those patients whose surgery was scheduled that day. Eleven cases had to be postponed until the following Friday. At the same time he was overwhelmed by the kind thoughtfulness of all those same patients whose schedules were disrupted.

Two days after Andrew Paul was born the staff threw a party complete with balloons, a sheet cake, baby bottles, gifts and an "It's A Boy" theme. We believe that Dr. Solway is still floating on "cloud nine," enjoying the new expansion, that being the role of a father to young Andrew Paul.



## On The Road Again



Every patient who visits our offices is initially greeted by our cheerful and efficient receptionist Susan Langley.

Sue has been with us for nearly 2-1/2 years, as our receptionist as well as pitching in answering phones, filing, organizing appointments, and assisting with the myriad of computer work required in a busy, modern ophthalmology practice.

Prior to joining us, Sue was working for a family practice physician group in Garden City, and before that she was involved in retailing at Twelve Oaks Mall in the Sears automotive department. This extensive experience working with customers and patients has been an invaluable asset to our staff.

One of the joys of her position is that she gets to hear all the tidbits of conversation that are shared among the waiting room visitors. Most inspiring are the days following surgery when she hears the enthusiasm of those patients who once again have their vision restored.

She also enjoys the small but close knit friendships that she has cultivated here at Dr. Solway's practice. As Dr. Solway extends such care and comfort to each and every patient, it inspires all the staff members to work as a precision team to carry that passion throughout the patients' entire visit.

In her life away from the office, Sue is anything but a couch potato. She keeps busy with crafting, bowling, step aerobics and reading mystery novels in the winter months. Come the summer though, Sue and her husband strap on the leathers and take off on weekend jaunts on their Harley softtail motorcycle. No, she's not a motorcycle mama, they just enjoy the fresh air and being

outdoors as they take weekend trips to Battle Creek, Chesaning, and Chelsea.

This summer, Sue and her husband will be on the road again with a planned trip to Gatlinburg, Tennessee. We just hope they don't ride off into the sunset on that Harley, because both patients and staff alike appreciate the caring, comforting efficiency that Sue Langley has trademarked.

## "Country Roads, Take Me Home"

As the old sage, "sometimes you have to go far to get something of value" has proven to be true many times over, such is the case with Virginia Brumfield our featured patient.

Virginia lives in Crum, West Virginia. This is coal mining country, across the Tug River from the Kentucky hills and surrounded by little known towns like Steptown, Beauty and Cove Gap. The nearest town of any size is Huntington, some 50 miles north.

Twenty five years ago, when Virginia was still a teenager, she had cataract surgery in both eyes. Ever since then, she has worn thick, "coke-bottle bottom" glasses. This left her very self-conscious, shy, looking older than her age, and lacking self esteem. She was virtually blind without them, and was frequently breaking the frames.

In the summer of 1994 while visiting her sister, she met Dr. Solway and began quizzing him about secondary implants, the inert plastic lens that is currently implanted into cataract surgery patients to restore their visual acuity once the cataract has been removed. She had always been told by local specialists that her past surgery prevented implantation.

Dr. Solway found the eye architecture too distorted with too much scar tissue in the right eye from the earlier, old-fashion method of cataract extraction, but the left eye could accept the implant. However, she would have to use a contact lens in the right eye to balance the prescription between both eyes. After the surgery, she had

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nearly 20/20 uncorrected vision from the beginning.

Throughout Virginia's family tree there was no history of early development of cataracts. Yet, late last year, she found that her fourteen year old son, Steven had cataracts in both eyes. Although he had been seeing the local, elderly ophthalmologist in West Virginia, there were no signs of cataracts until September 1994. He then had to sit at the front of the classroom to see the blackboard, saw his grades slipping, and became somewhat of an outcast in the peer pressure laden halls of high school in the 90's.

A first visit to the University of West Virginia indicated apprehension of an implant at his young age so she packed up the car and drove the eight and a half hour, 400 mile trip to Livonia.

After consulting with a Detroit area pediatric ophthalmologist, Dr. Solway concluded that Steven could have an implant the same conventional way that an adult would be done. The surgery on the right eye was done without complications, however, Steven wears an invisible bifocal on that side for reading. This summer after school is out Steven will return to Dr. Solway to have the left eye surgery performed.

Since his surgery, Steven has made the honor roll, enjoys shooting hoops with his fellow freshmen basketball players and enjoying the hand-eye coordination challenges of the popular Sega TV game...all activities that he avoided prior to his lens implant from Dr. Solway.

And Virginia...she was overjoyed with her new found visual freedom. Her self-esteem rose, she looks younger and as an accomplished outdoorswoman she's once again enjoyed the fishing, biking and railbugging along the country roads of West Virginia.

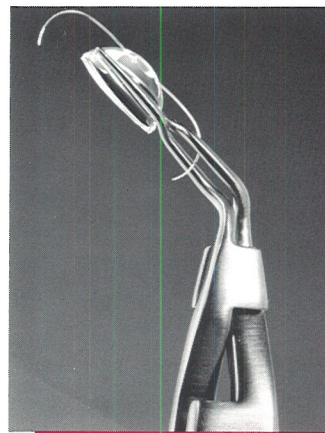
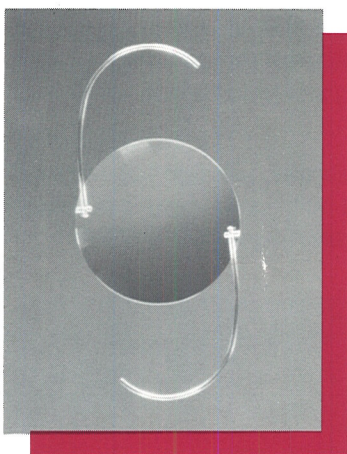
## **ACRYSOF LENS® delivers unprecedented surgical confidence and visual acuity.**

Dr. Solway has recently been using a brand new, foldable style intraocular lens for all surgical implants. Just released January 1995, the ACRYSOF®, manufactured by Alcon Surgical, is made of a soft, foldable acrylic material and is regarded as superior to the older style implants made out of silicone.

This lens may be inserted through a 3.5mm incision, only one-eighth of an inch wide! In most cases, that size incision is so narrow that it does not require even one stitch to close it.

Clinical evaluations of ACRYSOF®, conducted over a one year period with nearly 600 patients, produced 20/40 or better visual acuity on over 99.8% of the cases with no preoperative pathologies. Patients were extremely satisfied with the quality of vision the ACRYSOF® lens provided.

The unique properties of the ACRYSOF® material allow the foldable lens to open gradually in the eye. This slow, very controlled opening provides a greater degree of surgical confidence, unlike other lenses which can be difficult to handle and open faster than 3-5 seconds at eye temperature.



Along with the lens, Dr. Solway also uses the new implantation forceps. These are made of titanium which adds durability and strength, are thinner for smaller incisions and minimize lens scratching.

The ACRYSOF® lens...just one more application to use in our commitment to remain at the leading edge of technology and advancements in patient care at the practice of Dr. Alan W. Solway.

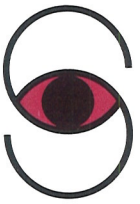
## **Guest Lecturer**

During 1994 Dr. Solway delivered two lectures at Beaumont Hospital, where he was a former resident. Beaumont Hospital has a staff of over sixty ophthalmologists and a complete residency training program.

The first lecture dealt with current cataract surgical techniques and was presented to 35 ophthalmologists on the Beaumont staff. The second lecture was to all of the area residents, including those from three other residency programs. This two hour format was sponsored by Alcon Surgical, a leading supplier of equipment and materials used in cataract surgery.

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## DR. SOLWAY SPEAKS AT STANFORD

Dr. Solway was extended an invitation by the faculty of the Department of Ophthalmology at Stanford University to be a guest lecturer at their annual meeting.

This meeting is designed to update area ophthalmologists on the latest techniques relating to cataract surgical procedures and Intraocular Lens Implants.

***“There is a tremendous demand by doctors to learn those surgical techniques which allow patients to see clearly immediately after their surgery.”***

Dr. Solway's featured lecture will cover incision size and construction, specific closure techniques (once the cataract has been removed and an intraocular lens has been implanted), and techniques of posterior chamber nucleus emulsification (removal of a cataract in the back, central part of the lens capsule which is distinguished by reduced vision in bright light and is frequently found in patients in the forty to sixty age group).

One of the other guest lecturers is Dr. Robert Osher of Cincinnati,



Ohio. Dr. Osher is the editor of the highly respected Video Journal of Ophthalmology, and is one of the most sought after lecturers in the country on ophthalmic procedures.

In other news, Dr. Solway was recently appointed to serve as the head of the Public Health Committee for the Michigan Ophthalmologic Society. The appointment was made by Dr. John Cowden, President of the Michigan Ophthalmologic Society. This committee is involved with setting policy guidelines and developing standards for vision screening throughout the Michigan public school system.

## Featured Staff Member

You can call her Chris, or you can call her Trish... or Tina, but no matter what you call her we are speaking of Christine Frye, our featured staff member for this issue of SightLines.

Christine is a valuable member of our patient service team. She handles receptionist duties, scheduling, billing and vendor relations. She has been a member of our staff for just over one year. Prior to joining Dr. Solway, Christine was with Garden City Professional Group for three years handling similar responsibilities.

Although she sometimes believes she would have pursued a career in engineering, Christine has found a special satisfaction in the intimate setting of this specialized medical practice. She enjoys the comradery of this close-knit staff and the opportunity to work with Dr. Solway. “He is a good person to work for. He really cares about people and it shows every day as he tries to help each and every patient achieve their peak in visual acuity.” Working with a doctor who is a specialist in cataract surgical techniques has

allowed Christine to experience working daily with older people, and she has found a special compassion within that she never knew existed.



As charming and refreshing as she is during business hours, Christine continues her enthusiasm in her after-hours activities. She has attended billing and medical terminology courses, participates faithfully in Jazzercise fitness, is a hardy Red Wing follower and enjoys viewing classic cars. Whenever she has the chance, Christine is off on a venture to a faraway land. She has been to Hawaii, Grand Cayman Islands, Mexico, Alaska, and virtually every state in the nation.

As we continually expand our practice, it is rewarding to have a versatile member like Christine on our team to serve the needs of our patients with warmth, dedication and compassion.

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## Q & A

**Q:** *After I have had cataract surgery, are my personal and leisure time activities curtailed?*

**A:** No, not at all. Driving is allowed after the first 24 hours following surgery. You may wash your hair, or have permanents at any time as you normally are accustomed to. You may bend over to pick up things, to put your shoes on, or to climb staircases. We would suggest lifting of items in excess of 25 pounds be avoided for two weeks (longer if you can get away with it!). Walking, gardening, bicycling, snowblowing may all be done at any time, while bowling, golfing and snow shoveling should be avoided for only two weeks. Do not swim for two weeks, then make sure you wear protective eyewear while swimming.

## SETTING SAIL ON A DISCOVERY IN SIGHT

Every day of his life, the first thing Gene Hrycaj did was reach to the nightstand next to his bed for his glasses.

Gene was very nearsighted and ever since he was five years old, he wore glasses. Thick glasses, the ones schoolyard kids cruelly called "coke-bottle bottoms". However, Gene accepted his lot in life and lived with his myopic vision, cringing every time he visited his eye doctor to receive yet another complex lenses prescription.

Interestingly, Gene's career path settled in the world of mortgage financing, which requires a great deal of paperwork and reading of fine print. When he was in his early thirty's, Gene Hrycaj was informed that he had a cataract in his right eye. As he traversed among a myriad of eye doctors seeking an opinion on the cataract, he came to one alarming conclusion...that it was a complex and complicated procedure to undertake and that he would be incapacitated for a

long, long time. This was not an appealing alternative, since Gene was a young father intent on providing for his family and struggling to build a career, so he did what most people do, he procrastinated and did nothing about his growing visual impairment.

Now, fast-forward to the nineties. Gene is in his early forties and the President and co-founder of Charter Financial Corporation, a thriving mortgage lending concern. One day, he drifted across the hall to chat with Dr. Solway with whom he shared office space in the same Livonia building. He explained to Dr. Solway that he was really having difficulty reading numbers, and in his business he did a lot of "numbers crunching".

Upon examining Gene, Dr. Solway was amazed at the results. Even with, what Dr. Solway described as, the thickest glasses he had ever seen, Gene couldn't see the "big E" on the eye chart. His vision with glasses reading was 20/400, 22 steps away from normal vision, due in part to a cataract that looked like the ones he normally sees in eighty year olds.

Dr. Solway gave Gene a glimmer of hope though as he suggested that through the modern microsurgical techniques that he performs, the cataract could be removed with relative ease, and Gene could then expect significantly improved visual acuity. Shortly thereafter, Gene Hrycaj set sail on a visual adventure and underwent cataract surgery in his right eye in May, 1992.

The day after his surgery, Dr. Solway examined Gene and could only describe the results as phenomenal! He was able to see at 20/40 uncorrected without glasses. To Gene, the results were much more rewarding. For the first time in his life he could get up in the morning without grappling for his glasses...For the first time in his life he could awake at night and see what time it was, instead of first putting on his glasses and holding his watch right up to his face...For the first time in his life he didn't have to worry about where he laid down his glasses, how many times a day he'd have to clean them, or where would he get his next pair of prescription sunglasses...And for the first time in his life he didn't have trouble reading the traffic and street signs that he drove by. Yes, the day after his surgery, Gene Hrycaj was back at his desk, crunching numbers as usual, but with an intraocular lens implant in his right eye in place of the "coke-bottle bottom" glasses.

Just recently (as we were going to press) Gene had the cataract in his left eye removed, and we anticipate the results to be as successful.

Gene's company, Charter Financial Corporation, has adopted a sailing ship for their logo and Discover Mortgage Financing At Its Best as their slogan. For Gene Hrycaj though, the miracle of modern microsurgical techniques, as practiced in the experienced hands of Dr. Solway, has enabled him to set sail to discover the rebirth of sight.

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