

YOUR GIFTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

As a result of COVID-19, 86-year-old San Diego businessman Tom Fetter had gone three years since his customary eye exam at the Shiley Eye Institute (SEI). An SEI optometrist immediately noticed a problem when Fetter had difficulty reading the eye chart with his left eye and referred him to see retina specialist, **Eric Nudleman, MD, PhD**, Associate Professor of Ophthalmology. Fetter had been completely unaware of the problem, as his right eye was compensating for the left. Dr. Nudleman diagnosed Fetter with wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Fetter was immediately concerned, as one of his long-term employees had retired and was now almost blind from AMD.

On Fetter's first appointment in March 2021, after having his vision and intraocular eye pressure checked, he was dilated then directed to the Imaging Department for photos of his retina. As he approached, he saw patients sitting in the hall waiting in line. After getting

his photos taken, he asked Ophthalmic Photographer, Chris Oeinck, "why are there so many patients waiting?" Oeinck responded that unfortunately, SEI had only one optical coherence tomography (OCT) device and one Optos machine, both of which are needed to screen over 100 patients per day.

Each of these retinal imaging devices are non-invasive evaluation machines which help ophthalmologists diagnose and treat a variety of retinal diseases. The OCT uses light waves to take cross section pictures of the retina, allowing doctors to evaluate details of the retinal anatomy. The Optos machine takes ultra-wide images using low powered red, green, blue and infrared laser waves, simultaneously providing panoramic views of the inside of the eye. A second set of machines had been on the wish list for several years.

On his next visit in April to see Dr. Nudleman, Fetter asked for detailed

information and a possible delivery date for the OCT machine. When confirmed, he wrote a check for \$109,470 and the machine was ordered.

In June, Oeinck mentioned that an additional Optos machine was needed in order to fully service the patient flow and would cost \$172,395. Fetter agreed to provide \$100,000 to initiate this purchase as long as the Department was able to fund the difference. The Optos machine was ordered as well. Both of the new machines were installed and are now fully operational.

Fetter now receives monthly injections given by Dr. Nudleman to treat his AMD. Dr. Nudleman's laboratory work focuses on developmental angiogenesis and future less invasive treatments for retinal degenerations. He also collaborates with **Napoleone Ferrara, MD**, Distinguished Professor of Ophthalmology and Pathology, in their UC San Diego laboratory. With support

Dr. Nudleman stated, "We are so grateful and honored that you care so much about our patients at Shiley. These devices are crucial in diagnosing and treating AMD and other retinal degenerations. Thank you so very much from all of us here at Shiley."



From L to R: Jane Fetter, Chris Oeinck, Eric Nudleman, MD, PhD and Thompson Fetter.

from the National Institutes of Health and private funding, they are developing an enhanced compound that will remain effective much longer than the currently available options (injections).

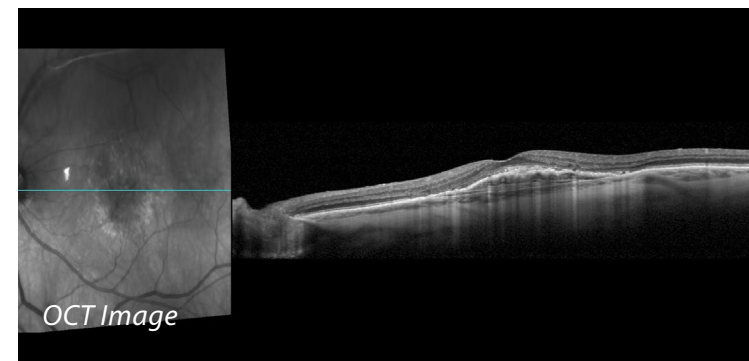
Both Jane and Tom say that they have never made a donation which has been as appreciated as this. Tom comments "Vision is so important for everyone's well-being that extraordinary efforts are warranted. My AMD is being kept from progressing, and with this retinal photography I can see the results. The additional machines allow more patients to be evaluated every day. I would urge everyone not to put off regular eye exams. Living in San Diego is fortunate

as we have access to the highest quality medical research and healthcare in the world. The impact is important and the gratitude is overwhelming."

These donations from Jane and Thompson Fetter affect thousands of SEI patients each year in the retina clinic. If you are interested in making a difference with a donation to the Shiley Eye Institute and Viterbi Family Department of Ophthalmology, please contact Karen Anisko Ryan at kanisko@health.ucsd.edu or 858-534-8017.



Optos Image



OCT Image