

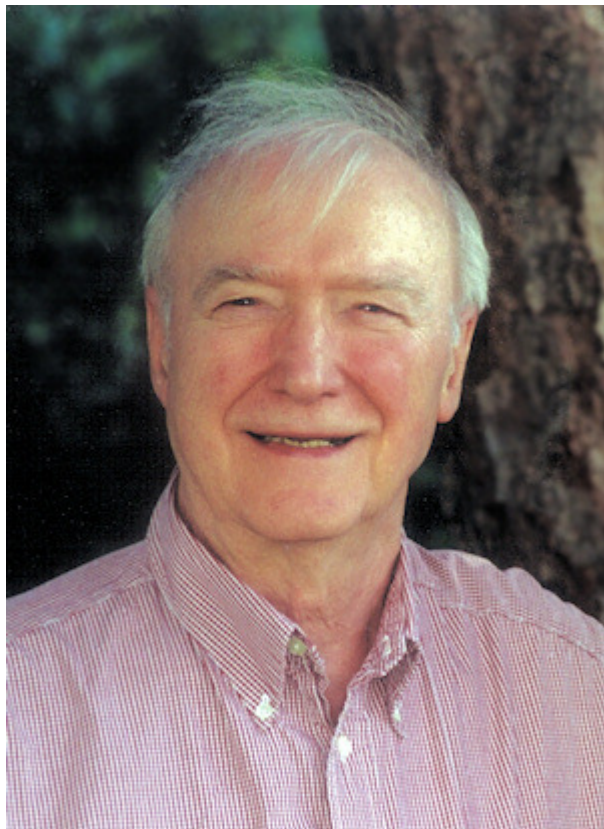


The Magnifier

Special Memorial Issue #75 December 21st, 2009

Ed Aleksandrovich - A Man For All Eyes

Edmund J. Aleksandrovich, 94, Founder and Chairman of the Board of the Macular Degeneration Foundation, passed away quietly in his sleep at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, December 19, 2009. Ed is survived by his son Edmund Michael Aleks and family, his daughter Patricia Johnson and family, grandson Dr. Norman Aleks and his former wife Elizabeth Marcell.



Edmund J. Aleksandrovich
AKA: Ed Aleks 1915 - 2009

Macular Degeneration Foundation

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www.eyesight.org

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Ed leaves behind an extraordinary legacy, one of self-sacrifice, perseverance and courage that is unmatched in recent times.

16 years ago Ed founded the Macular Degeneration Foundation with all the resources he could muster at the time. It was an enormously difficult moment in his life. Ed, though suffering from worsening symptoms of macular degeneration, was a highly successful electrical engineer who had plowed a lifetime of savings and resources into a project to install cell phone networks in Kuwait. Saddam Hussein's invasion of that tiny country and his complete devastation of its infrastructure and banking system rendered Ed virtually destitute.

But instead of wallowing in self-pity he came back to the United States and moved into a small apartment in Palm Beach, Florida where he chose to dedicate the rest of his life to helping the millions of people around the world who had been similarly smitten by the strange and devastating disease that was then commonly called senile macular degeneration.

He would work tirelessly day and night with meager resources to change this perception, lobby for increased funding for macular degeneration research and stimulate more vigorous efforts by medical researchers to develop much-needed potential solutions. The Foundation would relocate to San Jose, California, where Ed had previously co-founded and run Videologic - the company that invented slow-motion video replay from magnetic tape.

I remember first meeting Ed in 1995. It was on the set of 20/20, ABC television's flagship magazine program hosted by Barbara Walters. A former Navy intelligence officer in World War 2, Ed was a tall, immaculate dressed, poised man with a ready smile and twinkling blue eyes that masked the frustrating legal blindness induced by macular degeneration.

Yet despite his personal struggles Ed's focus was always on the big picture - helping others. [On the 20/20 program](#), he told his story together with those of some of the other sufferers whom he had spent countless hours counseling over the telephone. The direct and moving way he spoke connected with millions in the US and around the world.

It was this ability to connect with people from all walks of life that was to prove the bedrock for the efforts of the Macular Degeneration Foundation to increase federal funding by the National Institutes of Health for macular degeneration research and then to encourage leading eye-research luminaries to dedicate more time and effort to advance our knowledge of this disease and accelerating the search for a cure.

Ed worked the phones tirelessly. Despite his visual impairment, with the use of extreme magnifiers, Ed personally typed, edited, printed and mailed thousands of copies of the first ever publication resource for patients with macular degeneration in the United States - The Magnifier.

As an internal medicine physician, I had received minimal exposure to the disease called macular degeneration. I was shocked to learn that it had been relegated to the realm of "the incurable", before any serious scientific effort had been undertaken to determine its cause or potential cure.

Ed's passion and persistence in pursuing the truth about this disease convinced me to team up with him and the Foundation.

It has been a truly extraordinary journey.

Today the Foundation reaches and teaches millions of people all around the world via its rapidly updated, top-rated web site - www.eyesight.org.

The Foundation funds and promotes research that is advancing our knowledge about macular degeneration and bringing forward the day when we will have truly powerful weapons in our arsenal to fight this disease.

The Foundation has worked to educate the pharmaceutical industry about the importance of this disease and help them to prioritize research focused on the areas of greatest need. The currently available improved treatments for wet macular degeneration are important testimony to the Foundation's efforts in this regard.

But much more remains to be done. Ed's vision for a breakthrough cost-effective treatment for dry

macular degeneration remains unfulfilled.

The Foundation has provided seed money for very exciting stem-cell research conducted by leading researchers at the University of California.

Right now, we're finally in a position to conduct research that can and will deliver the results we seek - improved vision, retinal rescue and reversal of disease.

We need your help to make Ed's wish come true - for your sake and for the millions of others stricken by macular degeneration and their families.

The Foundation has established the Macular Degeneration Foundation, Inc., Dr. Edmund J. Aleksandrovich Memorial Research Fund in his honor - a fund that will focus exclusively on promoting and advancing research towards an expedited cure for dry macular degeneration - the form that affects 90% of sufferers. We urgently need to raise at least \$5 million to fund the next round of stem cell research at UCD and other leading institutes.

Your help, no matter how modest, will help get what Ed wanted for all of us - a cure in our time.

David Seftel, M.D., M.B.A,
Director of Research Development
Macular Degeneration Foundation

Donations for the Dr. Edmund J. Aleksandrovich Memorial Research Fund can be made out to:

The Macular Degeneration Foundation, Inc., Dr. Edmund J. Aleksandrovich Memorial Research Fund --- P.O. Box 531313, Henderson, Nevada 89053 or link to the Foundation's [Donation page](#) to use a credit card.

CONTACTING MDF

To speak to a support representative directly, you may call 1-888-633-3937. If you reach our voice mail, please speak slowly and distinctly.

MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS:

Please make checks payable to Macular Degeneration Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 531313, Henderson, Nevada 89053, or you may use your credit card on our web site <http://www.eyesight.org>. Your contributions make our services available as a support system for macular degeneration patients in the following ways:

1. We provide toll-free lines for personal contact assistance.
 2. We mail brochures and other printed materials upon request.
 3. We support an award-winning web site that provides the latest up-to-date information.
 4. We fund research proposal grants to provide therapies for both the wet and dry form of AMD.
- Contributions marked "research" are used 100% for research.

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MDF was founded in 1992 by Edmund J. Aleksandrovich Ph.D (a victim of macular degeneration). It provides MD patients and their families with the information necessary to understand the disease, the latest news concerning ways to cope with the disease, and supports the efforts of researchers to find a cure.