



### Check it out!

Ed Waldecker, Grand Knight of the St. Francis Council No. 4401 Knights of Columbus in Farmington Hills, presents a check to Sylvia Kloc, executive director of ARC Northwest

Communities at the local K of C Hall last month. The check was one of 11 given by the St. Francis Council to support services to the mentally retarded in the community.

## In a dog's eye

### Vet removes cataracts, restores pets' vision

By Darrell Clem  
staff writer

At age 8, Buster's career seemed over. It appeared he would have to quit his job with the Ice Capades because he was losing his eyesight.

Blame it on cataracts.

Poor Buster, right?

Wrong.

Thanks to a revolutionary new surgical procedure, Buster, an 8-year-old miniature poodle, had the cataracts removed from his eyes and was back on the ice the day after he checked out of the veterinary clinic.

SEE BUSTER SKATE. It's a happy ending fit for "Lassie."

Buster is among the 14 dogs who've been brought to Union Lake veterinarian Robert Redisch for the cataract surgery practiced by only a handful of veterinarians nationwide.

It's expensive. Try \$1,000. But when you can buy sight, hey, that's nothing to bark at.

Just ask Smokey, a 12-year-old terrier mix who developed cataracts because of diabetes. Two months ago Smokey had cataracts removed from his right eye. Last week he

came back for surgery on his left eye.

Smokey had been virtually blind. He stumbled into walls. Now he can see again.

THE NEW SURGERY, called phaco-emulsification, restores a dog's vision to near perfect in most cases. It's identical to cataract surgery for humans.

Redisch, a 43-year-old West Bloomfield resident, estimates the success rate at 80 percent. Some pet owners have told him that their dogs behave like puppies again when they return home.

Redisch first performed the surgery 14 months ago at his clinic, the Union Lake Veterinary Hospital on Cooley Lake Road, west of Hiller. He receives help from business partner Chuck Plein and other assistants.

"It's a real team effort," Redisch said.

Although the method also works on cats, Redisch hasn't yet had any feline patients.

The new technique is a marked improvement over the old method, which often left pets with blurred vision and post-operative complications. It begins with a small incision, after which Redisch uses a small probe to break up particles in the eye.

After the particles are suctioned off, a new lens is implanted, and then tiny, dissolvable sutures are used to close the incision. The surgery can take 40 minutes to three hours to complete.

ALTHOUGH THE PET usually goes home the next day, Redisch prescribes drugs to combat inflammation and infection for about 30 days. The healing process is much more rapid with the new technique; the eye heals in about seven days.

"It's a fairly revolutionary method," he said.

Dogs and cats can develop cataracts as early as six months after birth, though the problem is much more common in older animals.

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