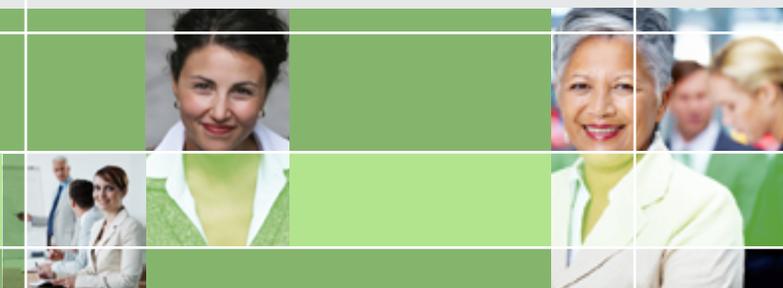


OPHTHALMIC WOMAN 
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Ophthalmic Women Leaders
leadership | advancement | community



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Partnering for Growth and Success

Warm greetings, OWL colleagues!

Ushering in 2014 has been a time for many of us to make resolutions, set goals, and create dreams for a happy and satisfying year ahead. It is no different for OWL. In February, the OWL board met for a planning retreat. We looked closely at our purpose as an organization and held robust discussions about why we exist.

In the organization's second decade of service to the women in ophthalmology, we take seriously our governance role as a board to develop OWL in ways to partner with the variety of stakeholders who are involved in OWL.

As OWL's new president, I want to focus on developing partnerships with a variety of stakeholders: members, potential members, those who support and sponsor us financially, and a host of other people and companies that are not yet part of OWL. (See sidebar)

I want to challenge us to focus on three "Es" that impact our partnerships as OWL moves into its next level of maturity as an organization.

Enhancing and expanding those programs and initiatives that enable OWL to positively impact the ophthalmology space, especially for women

Engaging current members and prospective members in meaningful ways in OWL to maximize benefits to each individual, but also make the collective organization stronger

Energizing our base of financial support to achieve growth in our programs and ensure our sustainability as an organization.

It is an exciting time for OWL. Let us build on the success of our past, explore opportunities for the future, and commit to *enhancing*, *engaging*, and *energizing* ourselves and each other to build strong partnerships that have positive and lasting impact.

Marsha D. Link, PhD
President, Ophthalmic Women Leaders

Developing Partnerships

In order to develop strong, effective, and long-lasting partnerships, there are a number of criteria that are critical to foster. Among them are:

- Creating a foundation of trust and respect between the partners
- Designing outcomes that meet the needs of all partners
- Establishing a process for thoughtful and effective communication
- Being willing to collaborate and compromise, especially when there are differences of opinions among the partners
- Making an effort to continuously improve so that individually and collectively the partners are better off because of their affiliation

Many of us can cite examples where these dimensions *are* or *are not* present; we also know that outcomes differ, depending on the presence or absence of them.

Healthy organizations are those that can successfully create and sustain partnerships that are mutually beneficial. ■



Asking for Help



From FEAR to OPPORTUNITY

By Molly Schar

Have you ever walked out of a meeting where you accepted an assignment you have no idea how to accomplish? Maybe even having frantically jotted down a bunch of names and terms you don't recognize, while nodding and smiling in a way you hope came across as confident?

Oh, good. I thought for a second I might have been alone there.

In many organizational cultures, admitting ignorance is unacceptable. You want to impress your bosses and your peers, your clients, and your team members. "I don't know" feels like saying "I can't do my job."

For women, it can be a double whammy, because so many of us suffer from constantly feeling like a fraud. We may be doing a good job, but we live with the fear that someone will figure out that we're not actually qualified in some way. In these moments of doubt, we're counseled to "fake it till you make it." This might propel us through the situations, but it also reinforces the idea that we're just pretending to be competent.

Being in a position of needing to ask for help can be embarrassing or, even its more debilitating cousin, shameful. It can make us feel like we're exposing a vulnerability and will therefore be seen as weak by others.

There are a variety of other reasons why people are reluctant to ask for help.¹

- In an effort to impress others, we want to take full credit for our work. If we involve others in the process, we risk diluting the impact of our individual contributions.
- It certainly can be easier and faster to work on our own. We don't have to argue or advocate for our positions, and we don't have to make compromises or adjust our plans.
- We've had negative experiences in the past when we've asked for help – we haven't gotten cooperation or we've felt attacked for not being able to do it ourselves.
- We simply don't know how to ask for help. Perhaps we operate in an organizational culture that makes it difficult, or we just can't find the words.

Changing our mindset

Fortunately, by shifting from a mindset of fear to a mindset of opportunity, we can grow as leaders by turning asking for help into an advantage.

In a recent address to *Inc.*'s Leadership Forum, author/researcher Brené Brown asserted that rather than being a weakness, vulnerability is a measure of courage. Acts of bravery are rooted in being vulnerable. Courage cannot co-exist with comfort.

Vulnerability, she said, is "the absolute heartbeat of innovation and creativity."²

Though it's probably neither wise nor appropriate to stand in the middle of the office and announce to everyone that you need help, going to a supervisor, a trusted colleague, or a subject matter expert can demonstrate your commitment to doing your job well. *Continued on next page*

Asking for Help *continued*

Do some preliminary digging, so you don't skip over an obvious (or "Google-able") solution and so you can go into the conversations with informed questions.

It's important for leaders – regardless of your spot on the organizational chart – to be able to gather and synthesize ideas. If you make asking for input the rule rather than the exception, you will be seen as a collaborative consensus-builder, and your work output will be stronger.

Asking others for guidance can help you build relationships. Most people are honored to be consulted, because it is a compliment that you value their judgment and opinions. This could lead to a coaching or mentoring relationship, or an opportunity for cross-training or project partnership. Be on the lookout for opportunities to build on your interactions.

Instead of:

"I have no idea what you're talking about."

"I don't know where to start."

"I'm not sure if it's what you want, but here's what I came up with."

Feeling overwhelmed

Try this:

"I'd love to get some background from you since this is a new area for me."

"Can you help me understand the best way to tackle this?"

"After consulting with several other members of the team, this emerged as the best course of action."

"I need help."

Being honest and open about needing help can increase your likeability. This kind of vulnerability will make you seem more approachable, lets people in, and builds trust by making others feel like they can be vulnerable with you.

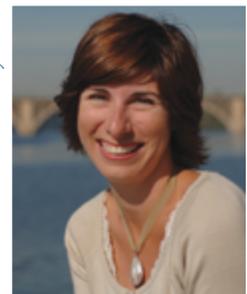
The next time you feel like you need help, take a deep breath and think about how you can turn an uncomfortable situation into an opportunity. With some practice, you may just find that asking for help has become part of your leadership style. ■

Related references

1. HBR Blog Network. [You Can't Do It All By Yourself](#). Ron Ashkenas, Jan. 24, 2012.
2. Inc. [Why the Best Leaders are Vulnerable](#). Kimberly Weisel, June 11, 2013.

Molly Schar is the executive director of Ophthalmic Women Leaders, Washington, DC.

Molly Schar



DID YOU KNOW? OWL's Mentoring & Coaching Program facilitates both short-term situation/issue-specific coaching as well as longer-term mentoring relationships. These confidential conversations are a great way to get help or guidance at various points in your career. Learn more at www.owlsite.org/coaching-mentoring.



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Member Profile: Christina Psalms

By *Adrianne Resek*

Christina Psalms has spent her entire career in sales and marketing, which is exactly what she studied at Xavier University of Louisiana.

As a venerable expert in sales and marketing, Christina Psalms could tell you, “It’s all about the relationships, stupid.” (Except she’s far too kind, and well, that might jeopardize the relationship!)

Christina’s key talent has always been her relationship-building skills.

“I like to build long-term relationships and really cultivate them,” Christina says. “This allows me to deliver an accurate message for the customer, to identify opportunities for them, and then to capitalize on them.

“Relationship building is a very vague art that requires you to focus on the other person, your customer,” she says. “You must find out as much as you can about the person you are speaking with and show genuine interest in them.”

Forming relationships with those around her has allowed Christina to benefit from many mentors

over the years. “The person I am today is based a lot on trying to model myself after successful people,” Christina reflects. “As I witnessed others with good relationships and a loyal customer base, I sought to follow their example.”

Path to success

Christina’s relationship-building skills have been key to her current position as director of business development for SightLife, an organization that is focused solely on eliminating corneal blindness around the world. Christina oversees the development and growth of the corneal surgeons in the United States, which helps to build up the capacity of eye banking globally.

In addition to relationships, presentation skills have been essential in Christina’s professional endeavors.

“Knowing how to deliver an accurate message for a customer is critical,” she says. “It is necessary to learn how to deliver a message so that it is not taken out of context. It helps to be positive and always think of the perceptions of your audience before you begin speaking. Especially if you are a woman!”

Inspiration abounds

Christina became involved with OWL after meeting now-board president Marsha Link and being very impressed by her. “Just by speaking to Marsha, she inspires you,” Christina says. “She is such a great advocate and mentor, and that quality extends throughout the OWL membership.

“The caliber of women in the organization kind of blows your mind,” Christina adds. “OWL gives women from every aspect of ophthalmology a voice to share ideas, be supportive, and find mentors at the executive suite level. It is not frequent that someone starting out in an industry has exposure to that quality of mentors.”

Christina’s advice for other OWL members, apart from forming good relationships, is always to be flexible and forward thinking.

She warns, “You can be at the top of your game one year, but if you are not thinking forward you will be left behind the next year. You have to keep your skill set current, be in a constant state of learning and always be open to new ideas.” ■

Adrianne Resek is a medical writer based in Mesa, AZ.



Partnering for the Common Good

By Michelle Dalton, ELS

Working with the Himalayan Cataract Project has been a 'life-changing experience' for OWL co-founder Adrienne Graves.

The term "partnership" can be loosely defined as two people joining together to serve a common cause. When **Adrienne L. Graves, PhD**, heard **Geoff Tabin, MD**, speak about the Himalayan Cataract Project (HCP) years ago, she knew she had to partner with him and his cause.

"HCP works to eradicate preventable and curable blindness through high-quality ophthalmic care, education, and the establishment of a world-class eye-care infrastructure," according to the organization's website (www.cureblindness.org). Dr. Tabin – who co-founded HCP with **Sanduk Ruit, MD** – had gone to the region to climb Mount Everest when he was at Harvard Medical School and quickly realized people in that region had a very high prevalence of cataract at a relatively early age, Dr. Graves says.

"Part of that could be genetics, part of it is UV exposure," she says. "He combined his interest in ophthalmology and climbing, and together with Dr. Ruit, founded HCP to support the Tilganga Eye Centre in Kathmandu, Nepal – established by Dr. Ruit in 1994."

HCP was instrumental in Tilganga's expansion to a full tertiary eye hospital with more than \$10 million invested in the effort, including support from USAID and partners from Australia. (For more on the two men, Dr. Graves highly recommends the recently released biography *Second Suns*).

Dr. Ruit developed an extracapsular technique that uses a very small incision, eliminating the need for stitches, Dr. Graves notes. *Continued on next page*



Photos courtesy of Adrienne L. Graves, PhD

Common Good *continued*



“Obviously, it would be nearly impossible to transport phaco machines up the mountainside to perform cataract surgery,” Dr. Graves says. “So Dr. Ruit developed techniques where you don’t need the most sophisticated equipment for the very dense cataracts often encountered in that region.”

compared with the incredible joy that patients experience when their sight is restored in rural areas such as Jiri, Nepal. The teams from Tilganga are highly revered throughout Nepal for their incredible commitment to providing high-quality care in remote and hard-to-reach areas, she adds.

Women’s Cataract Camp

To further the partnership on a personal level, Dr. Graves has worked with Akorn (where she is a member of the board) to provide medications needed by HCP and its partners. She is hoping that other ophthalmic companies will step up and offset medication, consumable, and equipment costs as Akorn has done with medication.

HCP currently works with partners in Asia (Nepal, Bhutan, India, China/Tibet) and in Sub-Saharan Africa (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, South Sudan, and with the Millennium Villages Project) with a strong focus on training local providers and enhancing their ability to provide high-quality eye care.

Dr. Graves is spearheading a woman’s cataract outreach event in Nepal or in another HCP program site as a fundraiser and to promote awareness for eradicating needless blindness.

“Women in Ophthalmology is going to be involved, and I hope OWL will be as well,” she says. “We’re going to bring together women surgeons from all over, and will hopefully plan something fun that’s female-oriented after our mission,” she explains. “You see the pictures and photos and it’s hard not to want to be involved. You see the transformation in people’s lives and it’s remarkable. It’s really compelling to get involved.” *Continued on next page*

At the time, Dr. Graves was chief executive officer of Santen and began working with HCP to donate materials through Santen’s IOL division as well as donating medications needed during the postoperative period.

“The more I worked with Drs. Tabin and Ruit, the more I wanted to get involved,” she says, noting she recently returned from an HCP outreach cataract event in Nepal. “Even if you’re not a surgeon – and I’m not – there’s a lot to do. I joke that I have ‘no discernable skills,’ but lay volunteers help prep the patients and keep the surgeries on schedule.”

Dr. Tabin was joined by **Alan Crandall, MD**, and his son, **David Crandall, MD**, from the United States, and Dr. Ruit was joined by **Reeta Gurung, MD**, Tilganga’s CEO.

“Dr. Gurung is Dr. Ruit’s heir apparent, and so talented surgically,” Dr. Graves says.

In Nepal, a blind person cannot contribute economically to society, Dr. Graves relates.

“Travel in the mountains and hills can be treacherous, so usually a child has to lead them around, so now this child isn’t going to school,” she says.

Though cataract surgeons in the United States are accustomed to the “wow” factor, Dr. Graves says, it’s nothing



Common Good *continued*



The ASCRS Foundation (Dr. Graves sits on the board) is partnering with HCP in Ethiopia to begin addressing its problems from within – by improving physician education and ultimately putting more surgeons in the areas where they’re most needed, the foundation states. It has worked in Ethiopia since 2005, but can serve only a small portion of the blind at its Robert Sinskey Eye Institute.

Addis Ababa, leaving sparse ophthalmic care in the country’s numerous rural areas. Through a generous matching grant offer, former ASCRS President **David F. Chang, MD**, will match all donations to the HCP initiative up to a total of \$250,000. Dr. Chang currently donates all his speaker fees and consulting fees to HCP.

“The commitment is not to a building, but to the people of the area,” Dr. Graves says. “We want to increase our reach. Dr. Chang has done an amazing job of making the ASCRS membership more aware of HCP and its needs. I hope OWL can help make everyone involved in ophthalmology aware of HCP and how we can help.” ■

Interested in partnering or volunteering with the woman’s cataract outreach event?

CONTACT

Adrienne L. Graves, PhD, for more information at agraves8667@gmail.com

“Ethiopia presents a special challenge – only 80 ophthalmologists serve a population of 85 million,” ASCRS says. Many of those ophthalmologists are centered in the capital of

Adrienne L. Graves, PhD, is a co-founder of OWL, and the previous chief executive officer of Santen. She serves on the Boards of Aerpio, Akorn, CXLO, Encore Vision, and TearLab. She is also a director on the following Boards: American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS) Foundation, Glaucoma Research Foundation, American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) Foundation (Emeritus), Himalayan Cataract Project, Pan-American Ophthalmology Foundation, and KeepYourSight Foundation.

Michelle Dalton, ELS, is founder of Dalton & Associates, Reading, PA.

Michelle Dalton, ELS



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Visit www.owlsite.org for information and to register for these OWL events:

In Boston April 26 to 28

- Annual Awards Reception featuring an intriguing panel discussion and great networking (4/28)
- Member meetings on mentoring and body language (4/26 and 27)
- Executive Roundtable breakfasts for corporate professionals and small businesses owners (4/27 and 28)

In Orlando May 5 and 6

- “Roost” gathering (5/5)
- Women’s advancement luncheon (5/6)

Virtual Coffee Breaks March 27, April 10, May 14

- Get to know other OWL members through this fun online relationship-building activity

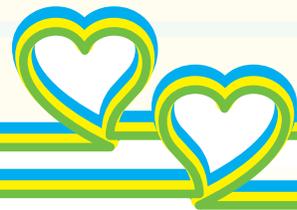
Energizing Webinars March 19, April 16, May 20

- Topics include thinking big about career and life goals, improving KOL advocacy and engagement, and updates on the ophthalmic space

Ophthalmic Partners

For these couples, work, life and love are on the same path

By Jan Beiting



Some say ophthalmology is a bit like Hotel California: Check in anytime you like, but you can never leave. The doctors in this tightknit world – and many of the businesspeople who develop, market, and sell the products and services they use – tend to be smart, highly driven, type-A personalities who devote long hours to their work, travel a lot, and suffer fools badly. What better place to look for love?

Crossing paths

“Work is where most of us spend a great deal of time, so it isn’t surprising one might find a partner there,” says **Giulia Newton**, currently Abbott Medical Optics’ Head of Commercial Operations for Canada & Latin America.



Giulia & Schalon Newton

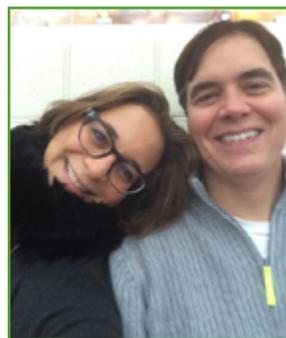
Twenty years ago she was interviewed by her future husband, **Schalon Newton, DM**, for a position at Allergan (She got the job). They dated while working for Allergan, always in different divisions (he in pharmaceuticals and she in surgical) and covering different geographic territories, before finally marrying and taking roles that brought them both to California. “At some point you decide that having that person in your life is a priority, frankly, and you take the steps to make it happen,” says Schalon.

Sometimes that means drawing a deliberate line of separation. **Michael Crocetta** and **Jody Christensen Crocetta’s** paths had crossed occasionally at tradeshows and Jody, the owner of C2 Design, had done some graphic design work for Mike. “I believe some of my best marketing material



Michael & Jody Crocetta

resulted from our collaboration,” says Mike, now Executive Director of Marketing at Marco Ophthalmics. But these days, he doesn’t contract any work to his wife’s company because he wants to avoid even the appearance of impropriety.



Georgette Pascale & Dr. Robert Noecker

Robert Noecker, MD, a glaucoma specialist, and **Georgette Pascale**, public relations maven and Principal of Pascale Communications, both had well-established careers in ophthalmology when they met at an ASCRS meeting in Philadelphia.

“We had a professional relationship for quite some time – and then it turned into more than that,” says Rob.

Georgette says that because they are both passionate about their work, they would likely have established separate identities no matter what fields they were in. And in fact, sometimes their work lives intersect less than one might think. “It is nice to be able to bounce ideas off one another, but there are weeks when we each have no idea what the other has been doing – other than that the kids made it to school and back safely,” Rob says.

Distinct identities

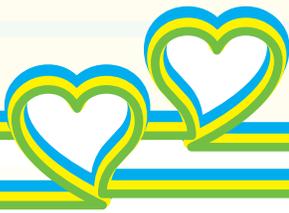
Richard Lindstrom, MD, and **Jaci Lindstrom** met more than 20 years ago when, as the person responsible for



Dr. Richard & Jaci Lindstrom

3M’s eye care business in the Asia Pacific region, Jaci was tasked with organizing a speaking tour in Asia for Dick, then the company’s medical director. In the years since, Jaci says she’s made a special effort to carve out her own professional identity, including stints as

Continued on next page



Executive Director of IIC and President of OWL, and a SightLife board director. Now an elected city council member, she confesses to a certain glee when people greet Dick at a local function. “Invariably they say something like, ‘Oh, so you are Jaci’s husband – and what do you do?’” For his part, Dick Lindstrom says it has been an asset to have a spouse in the ophthalmic world. “Many synergies have occurred for both of us,” he believes.

LaVon and **David Kellner**, President and Executive VP, respectively, of Ethis Communications, became a business team after they married. They like to think of themselves as two separate pillars of their company. “We are so different,” says David. “I’m content, she’s sales; I work with words, she works with people; we have radically different personalities. That said, what we offer as a team is immeasurably greater than what we could offer as individuals.”

Working together in the same small business has its challenges, David says. Whatever happens at work affects them both. Sometimes that means they can celebrate together when business is good; at other times, a current of work-related anxiety runs through their home life, as well.

In larger companies, changes at work may affect each spouse in dramatically different ways. When Allergan spun off its surgical business, Giulia Newton found professional opportunity in the new company (now Abbott Medical Optics), while husband Schalon found himself suddenly unemployed – a middle management victim of restructuring. He went on to pursue a PhD in management, exploring the effects of restructuring on loyalty and turnover intentions. Rather than the negative impact he expected, the data showed that restructuring often brings new opportunities, just as it had for Giulia.

Bringing work home

Most acknowledge that, if nothing else, it helps to have a spouse who understands the time demands of their career in ophthalmology. “I think any and all common ground within a marriage is beneficial,” says Jody

Christensen Crocetta. Her husband agrees: “It is a benefit and pleasure to be able to speak the same language and understand common industry drivers and challenges,” Mike says.

Ophthalmic couples often help to expand each other’s networks. “We have each met some great people in our field through each other,” says Rob Noecker.

But most of the time, work stays at the office or the surgery center and life at home goes on just as it does for those without a dual career in ophthalmology. “Having kids really focuses you on other things when you get home,” says Giulia Newton. “You switch roles when you walk in the front door anyway, and you become just ‘mom’ and ‘dad.’”

Traveling together

There are special challenges when mom and dad have to travel to the same meeting. LaVon and David Kellner try to stagger their time away from daughter Chloe as much as possible. Others rely on live-in help, grandparents, and lots of calendar coordination. “It takes a village – or maybe a universe,” Georgette Pascale says of managing care for their three children. She and Rob have a network of dependable sitters and family members they rely on when travel schedules overlap.

And contrary to the expectations of those outside the industry, when spouses travel to the same meeting, it isn’t exactly a vacation together. Many see each other only for a few precious hours of sleep between dinners that end at midnight and breakfast events that begin at 6:00 a.m. That doesn’t bother Georgette. “Home is for home, and travel is work,” she says. “If I get to see Rob in passing, or grab a lunch, that’s a nice bonus!” ■

Jan Beiting is principal of Wordsmith Consulting and immediate past president of Ophthalmic Women Leaders.

Jan Beiting



Career Path: Finding Success in Partnerships

By Brad McCorkle

Being a part of a cohesive team is a tremendous motivator for me. I've always appreciated the idea that together we accomplish more than we can as individuals.

I coach girls' high school basketball as a hobby. The concept that "we" is more important than "me" is one of three foundational principles of our program. If you aren't willing to make personal sacrifices for the good of the team, then you'll need to find a new team.

Prior to starting a company, I'd always thought of entrepreneurs as brazen individualists who strike out on their own. To some extent, I know that's true. Although I left a large, successful company to start my own business, one of the reasons I did so was because I believed the eye-care industry lacked synergy. More teamwork – leveraging the unique strengths of professionals and organizations in order to knit together more powerful solutions – was what I had in mind.

When we created Local Eye Site (LES) in 2008, I could see that fragmentation and territorial infighting were stumbling blocks for the eye-care industry. Though I understand that some battles are worth fighting, I wanted to execute on a business model that pulled together associations, publications, and organizations across all sectors of our industry for the purpose of providing a more powerful recruiting solution.

The idea was to take the strengths of our partners to reach a career-minded audience of professionals and combine that with our online recruitment technology. Working together – each doing what we're best at and sharing the fruits of that partnership – ultimately allows us to provide a more powerful solution for our industry.

Our first partnership was with the American Society of Ophthalmic Registered Nurses (ASORN) in 2009. I still have the press release hanging on the wall in my office, and LES still "powers" the ASORN Career Center today. ASORN's visionary leadership recognized early that these kinds of partnerships could be good for its members who needed to recruit eye-care professionals, as well as the association itself.

Today, more than 30 associations, publications, websites, and organizations – including the Association of Technical Personnel in Ophthalmology (ATPO), Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO), *Review of Ophthalmology* magazine, and OWL – have all partnered with Local Eye Site to create what we call the "Power Network."

I encourage you to look both inside your organization as well as externally for groups and individuals that possess unique and potentially complementary strengths. How might you work together to create innovative synergy?

I'm thankful for every partner and team member that has contributed and entrusted their brand by partnering with Local Eye Site. We share a vision for solutions that create a better way through cooperation. ■

Brad McCorkle is founder of Local Eye Site.

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Brad McCorkle



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