

# ~ Community Page ~

## World Sight Day - Oct. 13th

### High Plains Lions Club helps raise awareness on sight

The High Plains Lions club is joining Lions Clubs world wide in participating in Lions World Sight Day. This day, the second Thursday of October, is a day when all 44,600 clubs in 189 countries make an effort to raise awareness about sight related issues.

It is estimated that 40 million people around the world are blind. The World Health Organization has estimated that the number of blind people in the world could double in the next 25 years. In the United States, approximately 750,000 people are blind and an additional 50,000 more will become blind each year. The leading cause of blindness in America and most other developed countries is glaucoma, and diabetes.

The four Lions Clubs of Thomas County, Colby High Plains, Gem, Rexford and Brewster Clubs, will be participating in sight activities. They will or all ready have participated in Lions Candy Day. Money from the sale of the rolls of candy goes toward sight projects. All the clubs participate in collecting glasses for recycling. The collection of glasses for recycling is an all year project, with collection boxes in many locations. The High Plains Club has collection boxes in seven locations in Colby. They are located at the Colby Bowl and Fun

Center, Colby Photo, Morrison and Wahlmeier Optometric; office, Pioneer Memorial Library, Colby United Methodist Church, Prairie Senior Living Complex, and Senior Progress Center. Everyone is urged to recycle their used glasses by dropping them off at one of the collection boxes or by handing them to a Lions member. All the clubs participate in financing and scheduling the Lions Mobil Screening Bus. All lions clubs provides assistance to local visual needs.

Lion Darrel Follis is the High Plains Club Sight Chairman. In addition to recycling used glasses, the club helps many local people in need of visual aid. Lion Follis takes the local applications and the assessment is done by the local optometrists. Every year High Plains Lions helps a number of local people with their visual needs. The club also collects and recycles hearing aids. Lion Elmer Lawver is the hearing awareness chairman for the club as well as the district.

Last year High Plains Lions collected over 700 pair of glasses. They were sent along with the 150,000 pair of glasses collected by Kansas Lions to people in need. Co-chairman Lion Mark Doyen of Norwich and Co-chairman Larry Epperson of Atchinson haul the

150,000 pairs to one of the prisons in Kansas. Usually most of them go to Winfield, where the prisoners wash and sort them to prescription and to size. They individually label and bag them. Four hundred of like kind are boxed. The boxes are crated with a mixture of 5,000 usable glasses for the recycle distribution center in Midland Texas. They may be taken to Oklahoma City for Feed the Children organization or VOSH to distribute to those in need. VOSH is Volunteer Optometrists service for Humanitarianism. VOSH goes to places in need and spends about five to six days in testing and handing out recycled glasses. The group will give out approximately all 5,000 pair of glasses in addition to treating other visual problems. Lion Doyen said, "because all of this preparation and distribution is done by volunteers and prisoners, the cost is only about five cents a pair. The cost is for the bag, label and box." Lion Doyen further commented that, "Kansas and Kansas Lions should be proud of the accomplishments of recycling glasses. We could be helping even more than 500,000 visually impaired people per year, if we could collect more used glasses. "We estimate we are only collecting about one-third or re-usable glasses." He also



Lions Club members go through the glasses people have donating. Those pictured from L-R: Lions Roger Hale, Hazel Estes, Malinda Morton, Mary Hurtt, Larry Koon, President Sheryl Brenn, Elmer Lawver and Malou Platon.

added that sun glasses are in need, especially for the equator countries.

Lions clubs also provides the visually impaired in many other ways. Lions members and clubs

serve communities around the world in many ways besides the visually impaired.



### Drs. Morrison & Wahlmeier

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**By: Jeff Morrison, OD**

- 100 million Americans are visually disabled without corrective lenses (70 million are myopic)
- 80 million people suffer from potentially blinding eye disease
- 33,700,000 visits are made to doctors for eye care each year
- 11,400,000 people have severe visual conditions not correctible by glasses
- 6,400,000 new cases of eye disease occur each year
- 2,800,000 people are visually handicapped from color blindness
- 1,100,000 people are legally blind
- 650,000 people are hospitalized each year for eye injury or disease.

**CATARACT**

- 5,500,000 people have vision obstructed by cataract
- 3,700,000 visits are made to doctors' offices each year because of cataracts
- 1,350,000 cataract extractions are performed each year
- 400,000 new cases of cataract develop each year.

**GLAUCOMA**

- 60 million Americans are at risk for developing glaucoma
- 10 million people have above-normal intraocular pressure that may lead to glaucoma.
- 3 million glaucoma-related office visits are made to doctors each year
- 2 million people are visually impaired by glaucoma; 1,000,000 more have the disease but don't know it
- 120,000 people are presently blind from glaucoma
- 5,500 people become blind each year from the disease

This is a controllable disease, but needs to be identified by a few simple and non-invasive tests. New computerized analysis of retinal and optic nerve health aid in very early detection before vision becomes lost, so treatment can control nerve health for the patients' lifetime more easily. New medications for treatment and surgical or laser alternatives are available than ever before for patients with glaucoma.

**AGE-RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION (AMD)**

- 13 million people have signs of macular degeneration.
- 6,300,000 people are projected to develop AMD in 2030, compared to 1.7 million in 1995
- 1,200,000 people are in the later stages of macular degeneration
- 230,000 people are blind from macular degeneration.

New drug treatments for macular degeneration have been developed for the bleeding type (or wet) and are very effective at an early stage - get your eyes examined to make sure only dry if present. New

diagnostic computerized testing of retinal health and function have been developed and utilized by increasing numbers of eye doctors.

#### RETINAL DISEASE

- 16 million diabetics are prime targets for blinding disorders
- 7 million diabetics suffer from diabetic retinopathy
- 700,000 diabetics are presently at risk of blindness
- 100,000 people have retinitis pigmentosa (RP), a family of progressive inherited diseases that cause deterioration of the retina and blindness
- 65,000 diabetics each year develop proliferative diabetic retinopathy, the most sight-threatening stage
- 25,000 new cases of blindness are caused annually by complications of diabetes
- 25,000 cases of retinal detachment are treated each year

**Blindness and Visual Impairment**

More than 1 million Americans 40 and over are blind from eye disease. An additional 2.3 million Americans are visually impaired - from a report by the National Eye Institute & Prevent Blindness America, March 2002

Seventeen percent of Americans who are 45 or older report some type of vision impairment even when wearing eyeglasses or contact lenses. This percentage rises with age, to 26% of people age 75 and older - The Lighthouse, Inc., 1995

Every five seconds, a person goes blind; every minute, a child goes blind. One hundred million people will lose their sight unnecessarily by 2020 if nothing is done - American Academy of Ophthalmology (AA), Sept. 2003

About 45 million people worldwide are blind, while 135 million have impaired vision. - AAO, Sept. 2003

More than 1.5 million children worldwide are blind because of vitamin A deficiency, other deficiencies, or measles infection. - AAO, Sept. 2003

#### CATARACTS

Cataracts are the cause of nearly 50 percent of blindness worldwide. - AAO, Sept. 2003

Cataracts affect more than 20 million Americans. - AAO, March 2004

Based on a study of nearly 3,000 people on the island of Barbados, black people are almost twice as likely as whites to develop cataracts. Reasons are unknown, but researchers speculate that higher rates of diabetes, hypertension and

## Eye Statistics For Lions Sight Day

obesity, all of which increase risk for cataracts, may be involved. - study published by Dr. M. Cristina Leske of the University Medical Center at Stony Brook in N.Y., published in Ophthalmology, March 2004

Cataract surgery is no longer just no-stitch, but typically 'no shot'. The procedure is done with topical numbing drops and takes approximately 8-9 minutes.

#### DIABETES

Seven million Americans have vision problems that are related to diabetes. - from a 2002 National Eye Institute report called "Vision Problems in the U.S."

About 20 percent of the more than 13 million type 2 diabetics in the U.S. show signs of retinopathy at the time their diabetes is diagnosed. - American Diabetes Association

Nearly all patients who have type I diabetes for about 20 years will have evidence of diabetic retinopathy. American Diabetes Association

Hispanics have three times the risk of developing type-2 diabetes as Caucasians, with a higher risk of complications. Twenty-five percent of blacks between 65 and 74 have diabetes. About 6.3% of people in the United States have diabetes. - AAO, April 2004

The longer someone has diabetes, the more likely he is to have retinopathy. And diabetics are 25 times more likely to lose vision than those who don't have diabetes. But with early treatment, 95% of people with significant diabetic retinopathy can avoid substantial vision loss. - AAO, April 2004

#### GLAUCOMA

More than one million Americans are at risk for going blind from glaucoma, but they don't know it because symptoms aren't evident until vision loss begins. Glaucoma affects more than two million Americans; it is the second leading cause of blindness in the U.S. African-Americans have a higher incidence of the disease, and it tends to appear at an earlier age than in other groups. - AAO, Dec. 1999

#### MACULAR DEGENERATION

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of legal blindness for people over 50 in the Western world. About 25-30 million are affected worldwide, and this figure is projected to triple in 25 years. - AMD Alliance International

Macular degeneration affects about 13 million Americans, with

200,000 cases of the more serious "wet" form diagnosed each year. Yet more than two-thirds of Americans are unfamiliar with macular degeneration. - Novartis Ophthalmics, 2002

#### EYE EXAMS

In a random sample of Medicare beneficiaries age 65 or older between 1991 and 1999, only 70 to 90 percent of those with glaucoma had yearly eye exams, 65 to 80 percent of those with macular degeneration had them, and 50 to 60 percent of those with diabetes had them. - from a study by Paul P. Lee, MD, JD of Duke University et al., published in Ophthalmology, March 2004

Up to 25 percent of school-age children may have vision problems that can affect learning, but only 14 percent of children receive a comprehensive eye exam before starting school. Nearly 10 million kids have undetected vision problems. - College of Optometrists in Vision Development, August 2004

#### EYE INJURIES

In May 2005 the American Academy of Ophthalmology conducted the "Eye Injury Snapshot Project," which collected reports of eye injuries from doctors nationwide during one week

More than 9,000 fireworks-related injuries are seen each year in emergency rooms, with nearly half being injuries to the head. Almost 30 percent of these are eye injuries, with a quarter leading to permanent loss of vision or even blindness. - U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, as reported by the American Academy of Ophthalmology in June 2004

Each business day, more than 2,000 U. S. workers experience job-related eye injuries, with 10 to 20 percent of them disabling because of temporary or permanent vision loss. Ninety percent of the injuries could be prevented with protective eyewear. - Prevent Blindness America, Feb. 2004

In 2000, more than 42,000 eye injuries from sports and recreation were reported in the United States, with more than 70 percent of them involving people younger than age 25. Protective eyewear could reduce the risk of significant eye injury during sports by at least 90 percent. - American Academy of Ophthalmology and American Academy of Pediatrics, March 2004

U.S. emergency rooms reported

that eye injuries caused by paintball rose from about 545 in 1998 to more than 1,200 in 2000. It is estimated that more than 40 percent of the injuries occurred in children.

In light of these sight threatening statistics, modern technological advances in diagnostic instruments and medical treatments aid in prolonging one's vision dramatically. Do not put it off — get your eyes examined yearly as preventative medicine.



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