

The Spectacle



A Publication of the Opticians Association of Virginia

FALL 2016

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This my favorite time of year. The kids are back in school and most of us return to our familiar routines. The days are crisp and the nights a little longer. Routines bring us a certain amount of calmness, and after a turbulent summer and contentious election season, calmness in any form is greatly appreciated.

OAV held its very first Super Sunday Fall conference in Roanoke on November 6th. By all measures, it was a great success. "Time flies when you're having fun" was my feeling as members commented on the quality of the education presented by our speakers Samantha Toth and Diane Drake. Our silent auction, which included VA Tech football game tickets put a bit over \$500 in our general fund. A great big thanks to everyone who begged, pleaded and ultimately supplied the awesome auction items.

A very special thanks to

Robert Flippin for taking one for the team! You can see the video on our Facebook page!

The Board of Directors met on Saturday November 5 and among many items discussed, they have decided to again hold the Eye Ball in conjunction with our Spring Conference in Richmond on May 6-7. Save those dates! The education will be top-shelf and the Eye Ball will be at least as much fun as the first one! Virginia's opticians know how to throw a party! Eye Ball 2017 will honor our past, salute our present and highlight our future! I know every optician in Virginia will want to be a part of the celebration.

This Spring Conference is also an election conference. The Nominating Committee will be building a slate of officers for the next 2 year term. If you are interested in becoming a more active participant

in the nuts and bolts of steering the OAV please let us know. There are open seats at the Regional Director level just waiting for your enthusiastic attention.

OAV is the only organization in Virginia dedicated to preserving and expanding the skillful practice of opticianry. With your help and support we will continue to provide continuing education, networking opportunities and the close friendships that make us proud to be Virginia's Licensed Opticians.

Please visit our website www.vaopticians.org and our Facebook page Opticians Association of Virginia for more information on the who, what, and where for 2017!

I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season!

See you on the road!

Judy

Save The Date

The Opticians Association of Virginia presents

A Celebration of Licensed Opticianry in Virginia

Commemorating Honored Guests as Opticians Emeritus and Awarding Optician of the Year

The Eye Ball

Saturday May 6, 2017

Richmond, Virginia

Invitation to Follow

Inside this issue:

2016 Partners	2
Optervative study—Are Online Rx's here to stay?	3
NAO Hall of Fame Award	6
Community Service Spotlight	7

THE SPECTACLE

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Visit our website for contact information of your local Account Executive.



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Judy Canty
judy.canty@gmail.com

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

Yolanda Jackson
danz4ya@gmail.com

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Darla All
Usandalex@verizon.net

TREASURER

Tom Kirkland
eyeman55@gmail.com

SECRETARY

Ann Grubbs
annieblewis@comcast.net

CAPITAL DIRECTORS

Karen Bridgewater
kbridgewater0425@gmail.com
Leah Redden
leahredden@me.com

CENTRAL DIRECTORS

Jeremy Clamon
kurrjur@yahoo.com
Robert Flippin
rflip4u@comcast.net

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jmorante89@gmail.com

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drob3@cox.net
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Junerogers2011@yahoo.com

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ilogggerr@yahoo.com

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Kristi Green
kgreen@reynolds.edu

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oav@vaopticians.org

OPTERNATIVE STUDY—ARE ONLINE RX'S HERE TO STAY?

In January 2016, the Opticians Association of Massachusetts (OAM) conducted an informal investigation into Opternative.com, an online refraction service available to the general public. The goals were to determine if the service could be an effective system for consumers to obtain a usable Rx for their glasses and determine the accuracy and efficacy of such a system, as well as gaining more information about how the service works. With a test group of just 6 individuals - all opticians with more knowledge and awareness than the average consumer - the OAM admits that while the results are far from scientific, they did adhere to the scientific process as best they could.

Leaving their preconceptions at the door the team set out to duplicate, as closely as possible, the consumer experience along with its potential challenges and pleasant or unpleasant surprises.

Opternative emphasizes that their service is not a replacement for a comprehensive eye health exam. Their doctors recommend that all patients between 18 and 50 years old receive a comprehensive eye health exam at least once every two years. To use the service, Opternative sets the following restrictions:

- must be between 18 - 50 years old (Recently changed from 40 years old)
- no bifocals or progressive lenses - sphere power not to exceed - 6.00 to

+2.50 - cylinder power not to exceed +or - 2.50

- health questionnaire to be completed and passed
- most recent comprehensive eye exam be within the last 2 years
- upon completion of the exam, you are required to enter your current Rx or they offer to contact your doctor for it

Opternative's exam is given using your own equipment. A monitor, either laptop or desktop, is needed. The service walks you through calibration of the monitor using a credit card placed directly on the screen and then resizing the image of a box on the screen so they match. This insures the image size results will be proper regardless of the type

and size of the monitor used. Opternative advises a darkened room, 12 feet of floor space and 25 minutes to complete the exam. The distance to stand from the screen is determined by entering the user's shoe size. Removing your shoes, you are provided the proper numbers of steps to mark off and stand to complete the exam using an Apple or Android cell phone as an interface device.

On conclusion of the exam, an Opternative ophthalmologist evaluates the results and the Rx is sent to the participant. Each individual on the team had a different type of RX requirement: - I with hyperopia, I with mild myopia

(- 1.00 range), 2 with medium myopia (- 3.50 w/cyl range), I only wears rest lens at the computer, I has Rx need for only I eye. Each team member also had a quick refraction with an OD within 24 hours of the Opternative exam in order to compare Rx's.

The team drew interesting conclusions. They noted the Opternative exam is well thought out and the results were relatively close to the current wearing Rx. At the end of the testing, Opternative requires the current Rx be forwarded to them before they send the results of their exam. The exam is taken without glasses and with no knowledge of your current Rx. They seem to eliminate many potential issues by limiting the age range/Rx range and through their screening health questions.

The issue many of us think about is the eye health aspect. They do make it clear that Opternative is not a replacement for a regular eye exam. You need to confirm that you've had a complete eye exam within 2 years. The worry is the possibility of the consumer not being honest and using this on-line visual evaluation as a replacement. As we know, most people go to the eye doctor for a new Rx evaluation and many feel their eye health is fine, dismissing its importance. Of course there is room for abuse as there is with anything. Optometric associations in some states have lobbied, and received

legislative approval, for restrictions of the use of Opternative for public health reasons.

The OAM team was not out to trick Opternative or be unfair in the selection of the Team members. At the time, one of the study team members was beyond the age limit, but in order to test the limits of Opternative, and whether or not an average consumer would be able to misrepresent during the process the person misrepresented their date of birth. This person currently wears SV lenses only and has no need of any near point Rx so the team thought it would be an interesting exercise. On conclusion of the exam, the person was told that there were inconsistencies in their exam and therefore Opternative was not able to give an Rx, and refunded the \$40 exam fee. The participant called Opternative and spoke to a customer service person asking what the inconsistencies were, and offered to take the

exam again but was told that it wouldn't change and the retake was refused. The team gave them credit for this.

Another team member was asked to take the exam again by Opternative which they did

and they received an Rx after the 2nd take. The others received their Rx within 24 hours.

The test is not quick, and the word "grueling" was used by a

(Continued on page 4)

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"The worry is the possibility of the consumer not being honest and using this on-line visual evaluation as a replacement."

THE SPECTACLE

NAO HALL OF FAME AWARD

Grady Culbreth, LDO, FNAO has been in the optical business for over 40 years. Early in her career, she managed optical consultants for eight years before joining Carl Zeiss Optical, where she worked for 15 years as Director of New Business for US & Director of AR.

She has spoken nationally at optical events and lectures on a variety of optical topics, including lens treatments, premium lenses, and dispens-

ing tips. Throughout her career, Mrs. Culbreth has presented over 100 lectures.

Over the years, Mrs. Culbreth has achieved many honors and awards. She is currently the Chairman of the Advisory Board at J. Sargeant Reynolds School of Opticianry, and has served as a member of the Virginia Society to Prevent Blindness, the American Association of Ophthalmology, and the Vision Council of America. She is the Past President

for the AR Council of America (where she is a continuing Board Member), the Optical Women's Association, and the National Academy of Opticianry. After her term as the NAO President, Mrs. Culbreth has contributed vastly to our mission to promote education.

The OAV is proud to have a fellow Virginian honored in such a manner and congratulates Grady on this exceptional accomplishment.



Grady Culbreth, LDO, FNAO

CONTINUED: OPTERNATIVE

(Continued from page 3)

participant, although the other team members felt it was easy. The time it took to do the test, and the detail gave an impression of thoroughness to several team members as opposed to a common complaint we all hear from patients of how quick and rushed they felt in a Doctor's office exam. Food for thought.

In February 2016 Opternative announced that they received \$6 million to expand its online exam. Also in February a new startup company won a healthcare contest for a new smart phone app that provides "...a complete and accurate measurement for the refractive error of the eye for eyeglasses and contact lenses prescriptions." Although they will not appeal to everyone there will be a portion of the market that will be interested and that will grow as technol-

ogy improves.

These online exams will likely not go away. This is a battle for OD's and MD's yet the natural extension of an online exam is the purchase of glasses online. It is likely that a person utilizing the online exam format will also be likely to purchase their eyewear online as well. In fact, Opternative seems to have a 'relationship' with Made Eyewear with Made giving 20% off with an Opternative Rx . This not necessarily a fight for opticians now but it's truly a reminder of how quickly things are changing.

**Looking for a job?
Need to hire
someone?
Visit the OAV's
Career Center on our
website to find your
next opportunity!
www.vaopticians.org**

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY UPDATE

OPTICAL TEAMS NEEDED FOR VA-RAM

Volunteers are needed for next year's Remote Area Medical mission events! We also have an opportunity to help with the Special Olympics in June. Details on all of these activities are below. If you are interested in representing OAV and participating in an event or need more information, please use the email information below to contact Kristi Green or Darla All.

RAM Clinic Dates:

March 22	Mini 1 day clinic in Wise
March 23	Mini 1 day clinic in Clintwood
May 5-7	Smyth County
June 24-26	Emporia
July 21-23	Wise (largest event)
Sept. 9-10	Lee County (still TBD but most likely will take place)
Oct. 6-7	Grundy
Nov. 4-5	Warsaw



To register as a volunteer for RAM, simply go to their website at www.ramusa.org

Special Olympics Vision Program

University of Richmond (Typically the 1st or 2nd Saturday in June each year, exact date for 2017 to be determined)

Darla All, 2nd Vice President all.lady@comcast.net

Kristi Green, Past President kgreen@reynolds.edu





Advancing Virginia's Opticians

14 N 8th Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Phone: 866-734-9251
Fax: 877-800-1103
E-mail: oav@vaopticians.org
www.vaopticians.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 14, 2016

Board for Opticians Meeting—Richmond, VA

March 22, 2017

RAM Mini 1 day clinic—Wise, VA

March 23, 2017

RAM Mini 1 day clinic—Clintwood, VA

March 30-April 2, 2017

Vision Expo East—New York, NY

April 12, 2017

Board for Opticians Meeting—Richmond, VA

May 5-7, 2017

RAM Mission—Smyth County, VA

May 6-7, 2017

Spring Convention—Richmond, VA

June 24-26, 2017

RAM Mission—Emporia, VA

July 12, 2017

Board for Opticians Meeting—Richmond, VA

SAVE THE DATE!

Spring Convention

Holiday Inn Airport, Richmond, VA

May 6-7, 2017



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<http://www.facebook.com/vaopticians>
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upcoming conventions and events

www.VAOpticians.org