

The Spectacle



A Publication of the Opticians Association of Virginia

SPRING 2016

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi Everyone,

I'm writing this in NYC at Vision Expo East and I've already met three Virginia Opticians who attended the Spring Conference and the Eye Ball. All of them were still talking about the weekend in Richmond. All three are ready to do it all again!

I cannot thank all the committee members, from the Education committee to the Sponsorship committee to the Eye Ball committee, everyone gave 100% of their available time to ensure that the weekend was a resounding success.

Best of all were the reactions of our honorees. The sense of pride in their profession and the acknowledgment of their

work in paving the way for us all was visible in every face.

Now it's time to focus on our Fall Symposium in Roanoke. It will be our first ever Super Sunday. 8 hours of world class education all on one day in one location. Please let your colleagues know that we are trying a Sunday program to help so many of us who cannot get away from work on a busy Saturday. More information on the location and program will be posted on our website www.vaopticians.org.

If you're interested in using your optician powers for good, please contact Kristie Green at Reynolds Community College. She needs your

help with several RAM missions throughout the rest of the year.

Also, we have a couple of vacant Regional Director positions. Let us know if you're interested in a bigger role with our Board of Directors.

OAV is still growing. We want every licensed optician in Virginia to become an active member. We know that we are stronger when we are united. What could our association do with 1900+ members? We could move mountains! Please help us move mountains!

See you all in the Fall if not before!

Judy

FTC ISSUES WARNING LETTERS REGARDING THE AGENCY'S CONTACT LENS RULE

Federal Trade Commission staff has sent 45 letters to contact lens prescribers and 10 to contact lens sellers warning them of potential violations of the agency's Contact Lens Rule, which is intended to facilitate the ability of consumers to comparison shop for contact lenses while ensuring that sales occur only in accordance with a valid prescription.

Under the Rule, prescribers fitting patients for contact lenses are required to give them their prescription at the end of the fitting. Prescribers also are prohibited from charging additional fees for releasing the prescription and from obligating a patient ei-

ther to buy contact lenses from them, or to sign a waiver, before releasing a prescription.

Sellers may provide contact lenses to consumers only after either obtaining a copy of a valid prescription or, alternatively, verifying the prescription with the prescriber. Sellers may not dispense lenses using an expired prescription, and may only substitute lenses under certain conditions, as specified in the Rule.

The letters warn the prescribers and sellers that violations of the Rule may result in legal action, including civil penalties of up to \$16,000 per violation. Along with the letters,

staff also provided copies of the Rule, as well as guidance on prescribers' and sellers' obligations under the Rule: The Contact Lens Rule: A Guide for Prescribers and Sellers and Complying with the Contact Lens Rule.

In 2003, Congress enacted the Fairness to Contact Lens Consumers Act, which requires prescribers to release contact lens prescriptions to patients, and requires sellers of contact lenses to verify prescriptions with prescribers. In July 2004, the Commission issued the Contact Lens Rule to implement the Act.

Visit www.ftc.gov for more information.

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THE SPECTACLE

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PICTURES FROM THE EYE BALL



THE SPECTACLE

OPEN LETTER TO VIRGINIA'S OPTICIANS

Dear Licensed Opticians,

I write this message to you while having lunch at my desk. You see, I still need to answer the phone and let people in. That's because I'm a receptionist at an often understaffed office.

This role is new to me. It's underwhelming actually, being a receptionist when I was once a licensed professional. When I was once valued for my knowledge, attention to detail and passion for my trade. People used to respect my position and the care I put into every detail of my job.

I never imagined that I would go from making a generous living to pulling minimum wage. Yet, here I am. Why? What did I do to fall so far? It's simple. I moved to a non-licensed state.

Would you like to know how much an Optician, an ABO Certified Speaker and I must say, a pretty awesome lab technician makes in a non-licensed state? It's about the same as the girl working the drive through at McDonalds. Actually, the clerk at the gas station makes more.

Do yourself a favor. Fight for your license. Oh, for those of you think there's no chance of losing it, you're wrong. Currently at least four states are taking deregulation for several non-critical medical fields. You can thank so many poorly informed publications and studies for that. You can bet every state is watching.

Right now there are a handful of Opticians in your state dedicating their free time to this cause. Quit sitting on the side lines and do something. Anything. Be a better optician. Take that shit seriously.

For twenty years I watched the complacency of Virginia's opticians. I heard the annoyance in their responses when other Opticians would plea for support. I wonder how annoyed those people will be once deregulation is here.

Don't kid yourself into thinking that your employer will keep paying you what you're worth either. Worth is subjective. When 2000 licensed opticians become hundreds of thousands of potential low cost employees you will see the power of the dollar.

Fight for your license. Fight for stricter standards. Fight to make continuing education mandatory for licensure. Look

around at your coworkers and ask yourself how it would be if they were replaced by unskilled workers. Now imagine being paid \$10 an hour to train each of those workers. How will their skill level affect every aspect of your job? How will it affect the final product that the patient walks out with? Can you feel your stress level rise as your job satisfaction declines?

Open your eyes. Open your mouth. YOU HAVE VALUE. Your license is the measure of your worth. Fight for it.

Sincerely,

Deborah Benner, LDO
ABOC

"Don't kid yourself into thinking your employer will pay you what you are worth..."



HOYA Sensity: new light reactive lenses for all season performance

New HOYA Sensity takes light reactive lenses to the next level:

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HOYA
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WARNING: CALIFORNIA IS AT IT AGAIN.

Prop 65 may result in the ban of polycarbonate lenses...

Or make them too risky to sell.

By Robert Flippin

“BPA is found in thousands of items including drinking bottles, food can liners, thermal receipts and polycarbonate lenses.”

The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 commonly referred to as Prop 65 added Bisphenol A (BPA) to the list of more than 800 known compounds that may cause cancer, birth defects or other reproductive harm. BPA was included on the list 11 May 2015 and companies are scrambling to meet the May 2016 deadline to determine if their products sold in California contain BPA.

BPA is found in thousands of items including drinking bottles, food can liners, thermal receipts and you guessed it, polycarbonate lenses. Lens manufacturers as well as many

WARNING

DETECTABLE AMOUNTS OF CHEMICALS KNOWN TO THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA TO CAUSE CANCER, BIRTH DEFECTS OR OTHER REPRODUCTIVE HARM MAY BE FOUND IN AND AROUND THIS FACILITY.

CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE SECTION 25249.5

other industries have been holding out hope that California would set safe harbor levels for BPA essentially exempting many uses of the chemical where exposure is minimal. To date Prop 65 warnings apply to all products containing even trace amounts of Bisphenol A.

If the ruling is allowed to stand with no safe levels accepted, optical companies in California will be forced to make changes. For those continuing the sale of polycarbonate lenses warning labels will have to be posted and provided to customers as well as all swarf from processing lenses will have to be handled and disposed of in accordance

with hazardous material regulations. To make matters worse, following the guidelines will not exempt one from the possibility of legal action because under Prop 65 a person does not have to be directly injured to bring action against a company using harmful compounds.

So as we all await the outcome, thanks again California for screwing things up for the rest of us. By the way, apparently under Prop 65 it is okay to hug a tree but if a termite passes gas you may die of cancer. Sawdust is listed among the 800 plus harmful compounds.

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VISION EASE

THE SPECTACLE



Debby Robertson receives the Optician of the Year award for 2015

BOARD MEMBER PROFILE—DEBBY ROBERTSON

Debby Bauer-Robertson, ABO,NCLE is currently serving as a Tidewater Director on the Board of the Opticians Association of Virginia. She also served as President from 2007-2009. She has been an OAV member since 1988. She was also license in 1988, after working in optical since 1972. Originally from Cattaraugus, NY, Debby moved to Norfolk in 1971 and now lives in Williamsburg.

She is the Vice Chair of the Virginia State Board of Hearing Aid Specialists and Opticians. She has been serving on the Board

since 2012. Debby was recently awarded the Optician of Year by the OAV.

She tell us that if she had \$30,000 to donate to the OAV, it would be help legislation to make continuing education mandatory for opticians in Virginia. She strongly supports CE because "How else do you learn?"

Debby favorite saying is "You can never have enough glasses!" and her

advice to opticians is "It's never a sale. It's fashion, it's vision, it's fun!"

"It's never a sale. It's fashion, it's vision, it's fun!"

AOA FILES COMPLAINT AGAINST OPERTERNATIVE

In a letter dated April 04, 2016 the American Optometric Association has filed a formal complaint to the Food and Drug Administration to stop Operternative from providing online refractions.

The AOA claims that Operternative uses subjective methodology, unproven refractive methods and the device has not been approved prior to commercialization. Other issues raised in the letter are

questions as to the accuracy of refractions and the potential harm to the patient from improper prescriptions. The AOA is also concerned about the possibility of general eye health issues and conditions such as glaucoma being overlooked because a refraction only exam is not a substitute for an eye health examination.

Operternative was founded on the premise that eyeglass and contact lens prescriptions

should be affordable. The exam process utilizes a patient's own smart phone and computer, takes less than 25 minutes and is available in 32 states. Prescriptions are available electronically in less than 24 hours and it should be noted both an Ophthalmologist and Optometrist serve as advisors or on the board of directors.

"The AOA claims that Operternative uses subjective methodology..."

**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 SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2016

Volunteers are needed for this year's RAM events (especially Lee and Grundy!), 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.

Remote Area Medical (RAM)

Team Smyth - Smyth County, VA

April 29-May 1

Team Wise - Wise County, VA

July 22-24

Team Lee - Lee County, VA

September 10-11

Team Grundy - Grundy, VA

October 1-2

Special Olympics Vision Program

University of Richmond, Richmond, VA June 11th

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

Kristi Green, Past President kgreen@reynolds.edu



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UPCOMING EVENTS

July 22-24

RAM Mission—Wise County, VA

August 17, 2016

Board for Opticians Meeting—Richmond, VA

September 10-11

RAM Mission—Lee County, VA

October 1-2

RAM Mission—Grundy, VA

November 6, 2016

OAV Fall Super Sunday Symposium—Roanoke, VA

December 14, 2016

Board for Opticians Meeting—Richmond, VA

May 6-7, 2017

Spring Convention—Richmond, VA

SAVE THE DATE!

Fall Sunday Symposium

Roanoke, VA

Sunday, November 6, 2016



We're on Facebook—search for OAV or
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upcoming conventions and events

www.VAOpticians.org