

The Spectacle



A Publication of the Opticians Association of Virginia

SUMMER 2016

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi Everyone!

We are officially in the "dog days of summer", defined as a period of lethargy, inactivity and indolence. Perhaps in some other profession, but certainly not in ours. We're already in full Back-to-School mode. We're busy and it's not going to stop for a couple of months...at least.

Your OAV Board of Directors is busy as well. Thanks to the hard work of Leah Exline and Jackie O'Keefe, our Fall Symposium is packed with world class speakers and includes topics of interest to all of us. It's also our first ever "Super Sunday" with 8 hours of ABO-NCLE education in one day. So mark your calendars for Sunday November 6th. Meet with us in Roanoke for an incredible intense day of education and networking!

The Spring Convention is already in the works, so stay tuned for more information by checking in on our website, www.vaopticians.org regularly.

We have also presented "Am I Legal" in Lynchburg and in Richmond. This is a one hour presentation that addresses some of the most common questions asked about the practice of Opticianry in Virginia. If you'd like to have that presentation in your area, please contact your Regional Director to help make it happen. When we know what the rules are, it's so much easier to push our profession forward.

OAV continues to support the RAM Missions held around the state. If volunteering makes your heart sing; if you want to make a real difference in lives please contact Kristi Green at J. Sargent Reynolds Community College in Richmond. Every licensed optician should experience the pure joy of helping people see well, sometimes for the first time.

I'd also like to congratulate June Rogers Suggs, Theresa Leeper and Melissa Gill on their appointments to the

State Board for Hearing Aids and Opticians, as well as Ed DeGennaro for his re-appointment. At the same time, we thank Debby Bauer-Robertson, Jon Bright and Robert Flippin for their outstanding leadership during their terms on the Board.

So my friends, you have two or three things to accomplish before the end of the year:

1. Survive Back-to-School,
2. Help your Regional Director plan an "Am I Legal" night out, and
3. Be in Roanoke for our Fall Symposium "Super Sunday" on November 6th.

There are more than 1900 licensed opticians in Virginia. We have the strength to move mountains!

See you soon!

Judy Canty

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2016

OAV Fall Sunday
SYMPOSIUM

November 6, 2016 • Roanoke, VA

THE SPECTACLE

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HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE...REMAKES?

By Judy Canty

Remakes are a fact of life. They are profit killers. They play havoc with customer service. They will make you old before your time.

The bigger question is "Can they be prevented?" The real-life answer is "For the most part, yes."

The key to solving remake problems is...education, education and more education; education for the optical staff, education for the prescribing doctor and education for the patient.

First, education for the optical staff. Remember, there is a difference between excellent marketing and real education.

It's sometimes difficult to separate one from the other, but the more time spent on evaluating the information, the more apparent the differences become. It's one thing to promote an anti-reflective treatment

claiming a 50% increase in light transmittance and quite another to find that the actual transmittance is only increased by .5%. That's good marketing, but not good education. The optical staff needs to understand what they are advising their patients to choose and what real-life benefits those patients will experience. Miss the mark and it becomes a remake and has eroded some of the trust patients have in the practice. 50% more light or 30% wider fields of vision may mean one thing to an ECP and quite another to a patient when justifying a hefty price tag. Take advantage of as many educational opportunities as

possible, in trade publications, online and at live events like the Vision Expos, state association meetings and lab/manufacturer sponsored programs. There is always something new on the horizon as our industry changes and technologies advance. Ignorance is not bliss nor is it an excuse for questionable advice.

Second, education for the prescribing doctor. ODs and MDs spend many years and lots of money learning the art and science of their respective professions. It is difficult, if not impossible, for them to keep abreast of the

"It is vitally important that every staff member be at least conversant in the latest technologies"

changes in lens and frame technologies. They often rely heavily on manufacturer's reps for the latest information. Most of the time, that's a good thing. Unfortunately, sometimes it's

not. Again, there's a big difference between good marketing and real education and most prescribers don't have the time to discern the differences. Regular staff meetings, where new products and services can be presented and discussed are an important part of the education process. It is vitally important that every staff member be at least conversant in the latest technologies and able to direct patient inquiries to the right staff member. The most powerful recommendation comes from the exam room. Patient trust is built on appropriate recommendations and solutions to visual needs based on conversations in the exam

room and a confident "hand off" from prescriber to optical staff. A hard sell in the exam room or an inappropriate recommendation may result in "buyer's remorse" and a remake or worse yet, a refund.

Third, education for the patient. Patients, more often than not, hear what they want to hear. More often than not, warranty information is not what they want to hear, or choose to remember. Billie Taylor, a licensed Optician (now retired) at the office of Gordon Jennings OD in Wytheville, VA shared her remake policies with me. She carefully explains to every patient that the eyewear selected is a custom crafted item and as such cannot be remade for any reason other than a manufacturing defect, doctor's change or limited warranty coverage. "I tell them that they can take the frame home and let friends and family see what's been selected, but once the glasses are made, the patient owns them." The remake percentage at Dr Jennings' practice is very low and their patient satisfaction is extremely high. Patients are accustomed to a high degree of professionalism, honesty and a firm and fair remake policy. That level of patient trust requires hard work and a commitment to quality, honesty and value.

"Patient trust is built on appropriate recommendations and solutions to visual needs"

Also consider using current digital measuring devices which allow the patient to email photos of frame choices

to friends and family right from the dispensing table.

Some big box retailers offer a "30-day no fault if you change your mind warranty". That's a difficult offer to compete with, but not impossible. The advantage to the private, independent practice is the personal relationship that develops with every patient. That 30-day no-fault warranty implies that the customer is not going to be happy with their first choice and is expected to return.

Remake policies and warranties should be simple and reviewed with every patient during the eyewear or contact lens selection process. If possible, the policies should appear on receipts and other similar office forms.

Last, but not least, creating a remake/warranty policy.

Keep it simple. Most of the practices I work with limit warranties to 1 year from date of purchase and doctors changes to 30 days from date of purchase, regardless of any manufacturer's warranty and/or return policies. Manufacturer's policies are built around their bottom line and yours should be as well. We are all in business to make a profit, not to give away free eyewear.

Put it in writing. Warranties and remake policies need to be explained more than

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THE SPECTACLE



7:00 a.m.	Registration Opens & Continental Breakfast serviced
8:00 – 8:50 a.m.	Beyond Clear – Five Latest Innovations in Photochromic Lens Technology - Samantha Toth - ABO Despite incredible advances in technology and availability, many eye care professionals still perceive the performance of photochromic lenses as they did 5, 10, or even 15 years ago. Advances in visible light activation, variable polarization, production processes, and testing methods have led to an expansion in photochromic availability in lens materials, designs, and colors as well as unique performance capabilities unheard of just a few years ago. To provide the best care, it is important for eyecare professionals to close this gap by learning the five latest innovations in photochromic lens technology.
9:00 – 9:50 a.m.	Using Creativity to Differentiate Yourself From “Me Too” Practices – Samantha Toth – ABO/NCLE Differentiating your practice is all about creativity. Will you sit back and rely on your past success, or are you willing to take a hard look at your practice and find creative ways to differentiate yourself from your competition? This course provides proof that creativity produces growth. It dissects each point of patient interaction with the staff, and illustrates how practices can differentiate from their competition and other “me too” practices to create truly remarkable patient experiences. Great for owners, managers, and your entire staff to attend.
10:00 – 10:50 a.m.	The Future of Social Media: What’s Now & What’s New - Samantha Toth – ABO/NCLE You’ve heard of Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, but how about Latergramme, LinkedIn, and Periscope? Using social media is a daily habit for many individuals regardless of age, and the benefits go far beyond its “friend-making” and “tweet-worthy” features. Bring your smart phone, tablet, or laptop for hands-on, indispensable tips for using various social media networks to connect with and influence patients, as well as increase revenues. Great for marketing managers, practice owners and anyone engaged in social media efforts.
11:00 - 11:50 a.m. noon	Responding to Online Patient Reviews – Samantha Toth – ABO/NCLE Learn how great practices respond to the good, the bad and the funny reviews on their Yelp, Facebook, and other social media pages. Sometimes the best way to learn is by hearing from your peers. This course will highlight several great review responses from business owners across the country both in optical, and outside our industry. We’ll show you how to tackle negative reviews, promote more positive reviews, and provide strategy on how to drive more patients online to leave reviews. This course is ideal for a novice all the way to an expert at social media.
Noon	Lunch and Membership Meeting – Vendor meet and greet
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.	Fitting the Presbyope - Multiple Fitting Options – Diane Drake – ABO/NCLE – 2 hours Presbyopia to some people may appear to be a curse, while to others it appears to be an emergence into bigger and better things. To the eyecare professional, it can be a challenge or it can be an opportunity to enhance their professional status by meeting the demands of not only the older population and the baby boomers, but very soon... "generation X." This course will introduce the participant to the needs of the presbyope and various ways of meeting those needs in both contact lenses and spectacles with "Multiple Fitting Options."
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.	Optical Triage for the Optical Practice – Diane Drake – ABO/NCLE – 2 hours Sometimes the only communication that an optical practice has with emergencies is the telephone. Sometimes a person walks in with an obvious emergency, and sometimes the chief complaint is not as clearly stated as we would like. Knowing when an emergency exists and how to handle it is important in the overall ocular outcome for the patient, and is sometimes critical in dealing with liability for the optical practice. This course will discuss some of the emergencies that we encounter and how to handle them, and when to refer them. Some of the problems may be contact lens related, and some may not. Discussions will include how to handle “telephone triage”, as well as how to identify signs and symptoms of some ocular emergencies. Communication will be emphasized.
5:00 p.m.	Classes End

REASONS TO ATTEND OAV SUPER SUNDAY—ROANOKE, VA

The OAV is offering the Fall Symposium on Sunday for the first time ever. Don't miss this opportunity to join OAV for this unique event in the field of optical education.

EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

Eight hours of quality education that is ABO approved and seven hours of NCLE approved education presented by nationally known guest speakers offer value for all learning styles. The education covered during the conference includes best practices, data-driven insights, and trends that give you a competitive advantage in an increasingly competitive world.

You do not have to hold an ABO or NCLE certification to attend. The classes are relevant to all opticians and optical professionals.

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Meet with opticians from around Virginia and make new connections in just one day. Visiting with our partners and attending sessions, meetings, and networking events give you access to colleagues and opticians from all settings.

POSITION YOURSELF AS AN EXPERT

Being active in the industry, can help you develop a reputation as an expert to your

peers and your patients. Those who are engaged and educated over the long term are often asked to speak at the events and to write articles for industry publications. Gain exposure to new ideas and new products to develop yourself as an expert in your practice and field.

CONVENIENT DAY

Sunday Symposium gives you an opportunity to attend classes without needing to take time off work. Increase your knowledge base and meet new friends in a relaxed setting.

“The education covered during the conference includes best practices, data-driven insights, and trends”

Sheraton Roanoke Hotel and Conference Center
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Reserve room by **October 6, 2016**
 to get the **OAV special rate of \$89 per night**
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BOARD MEMBER PROFILE—ROBERT FLIPPIN

Name: Robert Flippin

Current Position on OAV Board: Central Director

Previous optical accomplishments:

Past President of OAV, State Board Member, Optician of the Year 2004

Where do you work: Owner, Thorp & Flippin Optical, Lynchburg, VA

How long have you been an Optician? 26 Years

"The OAV is for all opticians!"

Who or what influenced your decision to become an optician? Family Optical since 1902

What do you think will change in opticianry in the next 5 years? I hope to see more States share the NCSORB National Computerized Practical Examination so we can move toward the portability of license.

What do you wish other opticians knew about OAV? That the OAV works for all Opticians, not just private practice.

CONTINUED: REMAKES

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once. Make them part of your office paperwork and review it with every purchase. Provide a written copy with every receipt. Don't assume that every patient understands; ask for confirmation of that understanding.

Be Flexible, but firm. Leave room for that hard case, the child with no glasses or the elderly patient who fell and broke theirs. But the "glasses turned dog-chew" twice in two months, not a chance. Eyewear abusers need to be someone else's problem.

There is always an online discussion somewhere about warranties and remakes and I'd like to share one that appeared on OptiBoard.com a few years ago and remains solid advice.

"I offer the same I

year, I time no charge replacement for both frames and premium lenses to patients, even though the vendor and lab warranties to me are greater.

The manufacturer warranties are extended to the purchasing optical, not the patients, and we offer to patients whatever we want to do good business. If I truly "pass on" the full manufacturer warranty, then what the patient would have to do is pay in full for new lenses or frames, return the old, pay shipping, wait 30-60 days for reimbursement, and hope that the warranty is honored. But that's not what happens. Since we do all the warranty work, there is nothing wrong with limiting the end user warranty.

Limiting it lets me be more flexible and generous too. If I have a sad case where the lenses are scratched more than once in a year, I can replace them if I

What type of lenses do these sunglasses have?
Op Sport has polarized lenses with flash mirror coatings. The lenses are very thin and lightweight and provide 100% UVA/UVB protection.

What are the benefits of polarized lenses?
Regular sun lenses only reduce brightness. Polarized lenses reduce brightness and uncomfortable glare, as well as increase color contrast and visual detail.

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like...I pretty much never have to say no to any reasonable case, but I always have the prerogative to decline patients looking to abuse my generosity...It is important to me that my patient(s) know and appreciate that I am doing the service of warranting and replacing their eyewear, not the manufacturers. After I have satisfied a patient, what happens between me and my vendors is my business..."
DanLiv, OptiBoard 2-25-2011.

Makes sense to me.

Every practice must have a remake policy that is understandable, reasonable and enforceable.

It should be understandable, not only by your patients, but

also by your staff. Everyone onboard should understand the impact remakes have on practice profitability and how that profitability affects each of them.

Remakes are not free. While your lab may offer a "free" remake, in reality they may only be reimbursed for the lens blanks, not the time and money it takes to actually produce the lenses. Those costs will have to be recouped through higher prices on other work.

Educate to reduce remakes and remember that the only "freebie" in our industry is well-intentioned advice.

COMMUNITY SERVICE SPOTLIGHT

RAM MISSION—LEE COUNTY—SEPT 10 & 11

Remote Area Medical provides medical care through mobile clinics in underserved, isolated, or impoverished communities. Most clinics provide general medical, dental, vision, preventive care, and education. Our third RAM Virginia Lee County event is rapidly approaching September 10 and 11. Opticians are desperately needed to help fabricate and dispense eyewear. Volunteering during a RAM mission is a rewarding and powerful experience. Accommodations will be arranged for volunteers – they are only responsible for transportation to the event. E-mail Kristi Green at kgreen@reynolds.edu or vickiweiss@ramusa.org to find out more. You can also register at volunteer.ramusa.org.



RAM Virginia patients go YEARS without a new eye prescription, something that so many take for granted. RAM provides the exam, prescription and new eye wear at no cost to those in need across the state of Virginia. Here is a patient selecting new glasses from thousands of attractive options at one of our clinics.



RAM volunteers manage the eyeglasses table at the Buena Vista clinic.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

September 10-11

RAM Mission—Lee County, VA

September 14-17

Vision Expo West—Las Vegas, NV

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

March 30-April 2, 2017

Vision Expo East—New York, NY

May 6-7, 2017

Spring Convention—Richmond, VA

SAVE THE DATE!

Spring Convention

Richmond, VA

May 6-7, 2017



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