President’s Letter

HAPPY! HAPPY! HAPPY!  
(For all you duck dynasty fans out there).

It appears summer has finally arrived. I love all the warmth & sunshine that summer brings. Hope everyone finds some time to take a few moments to stop and enjoy the beauty summer has to offer like swimming, going to the park, baseball games, cookouts with family and friends. I am sure the list can go on and on.

We, as a board, have been busy planning our Fall Convention to include a variety of classes that should peak everyone’s interest and make you want to attend this year’s convention in September. We have been utilizing all the feedback we have received to improve attendance at Convention and to stay up with the latest and greatest in technology so everyone will learn something they didn’t know before attending.

I’m keeping this short and sweet so I, too, can enjoy my family and all the fun summer has to offer. Taking a moment out of my day to: STOP & SMELL the flowers.

Looking forward to seeing everyone soon!

Brook Hutson, ABOC
Para President 2013

NOA Paraoptometric Section Seeks Nominations for Para of the Year

The NOA Para Section is seeking nominations for the 2013 paraoptometric of the year award, sponsored by Rite-Style Optical. The award is given annually to the optometric assistant or technician who has made outstanding and worthwhile contributions to the profession of optometry, their office, and the general public.

Nominations are confidential and can be made by any NOA optometrist, fellow staff member, or paraoptometric. Nominations must be accompanied with a letter of nomination and/or a nomination form completed. Nominees from previous years are encouraged to be nominated again. Nominations must be received by the NOA office on or prior to August 22, 2013.
**NOA Para Past President, Jill Luebbert to Serve On AOA Paraoptometric Council**

Jill J. Luebbert of West Point, NE, was elected to the position of Trustee on the American Optometric Association’s (AOA) Paraoptometric Section at the 116th Annual AOA Congress and 43rd Annual AOSA Conference: Optometry’s Meeting on June 26, 2013.

Jill is a certified paraoptometric and optician. She has been active on the state and national level, serving in several capacities. She is also currently serving on the Nebraska Paraoptometric Section Council as Ex-Officio member. Jill is a national speaker, regular contributing author to Vision Care Product News, and consultant for the Edge (a practice software company). She is employed at Eye Site in Fremont.

**AOA Debuts New AOA.org**

In June, the AOA launched a new website to better serve its members and the profession. The new site features responsive design, an enhanced Dr. Locator, and single sign-on for many AOA features. The new site keeps the same URL, www.aoa.org.

“We proactively engaged our members as the site was under development to ensure that the navigation would be user-friendly, and that we were reflecting the progress AOA has made as an organization since the first site was launched in 2003,” said AOA President Ron Hopping, O.D., MPH.

According to AOA Executive Director Barry Barresi, O.D. Ph.D., the launch is the first phase of a series of upgrades and enhancements that give members the online access they need to resources essential for professional development and current best practices in practice management.

“It was a priority to incorporate responsive design, which automatically formats content for any device, including desktop, tablet, or smartphone. This is essential for how all of us are living our lives now,” Dr. Barresi said.

Even more convenience has been added by providing single sign-on for several popular services including EyeLearn™ online continuing education resources, Optometry’s Career Center®, and AOAExcel™.

In the coming months, sections of the site will continue to be developed. Ongoing enhancements for the AOA’s online store, branded as AOA Marketplace, will include an expanded product selection and an improved customer experience. The area of the site dedicated to providing the public and patients with information about common eye conditions will be updated in the future as well.

**NOA Web Site Will Remain the Same - For Now**

The Nebraska Optometric Association has used the AOA “Condo Site” program for our web site for the last several years. That means that our site has appeared with essentially the same format and information as AOA’s, with some state-level customization.

As you can imagine, the re-launch of a web site the size of AOA’s takes a considerable amount of time and resources to research, plan and implement. The next stage will be to evaluate the Condo program and the State affiliate web pages. Knowing the web site change was coming to AOA, the NOA Board has chosen to hold off on making any significant changes to our web site. We know that the site needs to be updated and revamped, and plan to now evaluate whether to stay with the AOA Condo program or revise our site on our own.

We appreciate your patience as we consider all of the implications for our members, and work with AOA on the process. In the meantime, please explore http://www.aoa.org/ and see all of the improvements AOA has made to better serve its members.
Para Member Spotlight

LaRee Ahlers, NRP, CPOT

LaRee Ahlers is the pre-testing tech/optician for Eye Physicians Fullerton. The doctor in her office is Dr. Jeff Saum. She has been with Eye Physicians for 20 years in Fullerton and 7 years prior in Lincoln.

LaRee has only missed the NOA convention three times in the last 27 years!

What she likes most about her job is dispensing the new glasses or teaching the patient how to get their contacts in, and seeing the smile on their face as they walk out the door.

She also enjoys pathology and assisting with eye injuries. LaRee finds it challenging working with the patients when they want something for nothing: “They always get the best service we can offer and total eye healthcare, but we can’t offer them the same product as a paying patient and I hate it but it is the way that the government has it set up. I also hate it that it is getting even worse and the cuts are even deeper than ever before. I’d like every patient to have the newest frame style and all the amenities we can offer but it just doesn’t work that way. I’m also getting quite slow in adapting to the new “paperless” systems. I still like holding a chart in my hands and looking back at the patients’s history. Call me old fashioned - I don’t care."

LaRee enjoys spending time with her family and music. In the summer she spends time getting ready for 4-H and her new hobby is golf. Her favorite book to ready is Glass Castle.

Enter Your School Vision Evaluation Data

By Dr. Jeff Klein, NFCV Board Member

The Nebraska Foundation for Children’s Vision (NFCV) and NOA are once again asking for our members help in collecting data on school vision evaluations in Nebraska. Our goal is to collect enough data to gain supporting evidence that the school evaluation law in Nebraska should be enhanced.

Please take the time to help us with this project. Details on entering the information can be found here: http://tinyurl.com/l2jxm4c.

This information can help us ensure that the children of Nebraska have healthy vision for a lifetime.

Para Certification Examination Schedule

The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification (CPC) has announced the schedule for the 2013 regional examinations as well as the potential dates and locations for the Certified Paraoptometric Technician (CPOT™) Practical Examination. The CPO™, CPOA™, CPOT™, and CPOC™ examinations are administered during an established two-week testing period four times yearly, Monday through Saturday excluding holidays, at computer-based testing facilities managed by PSI, in addition to a paper/pencil administration annually conducted at Optometry’s Meeting® in June.

2013 Testing Dates
August 2013 Testing Period
Application Deadline: 7/13/2013
Testing Begins: 8/10/2013
Testing Ends: 8/24/2013

November 2013 Testing Period
Application Deadline: 10/5/2013
Testing Begins: 11/2/2013
Testing Ends: 11/16/2013

Practical Exam Testing Dates - TBD

The CPOT Practical Testing is in the midst of being revised and will not be offered again in 2013. Hopefully they will begin testing again in early 2014. Many changes in the works!

Instructions for finding a PSI testing location

- To find a testing site, select this link www.ptcny.com/cbt/sites.htm
- Click on “Certification/Professional Associations” link
- Select the sponsor of the examination you are taking from list (Commission on Paraoptometric Certification/CPC)
- Click on “Test Centers” under Information Links section on right.
- Select the sponsor of the examination again (Commission on Paraoptometric Certification/CPC)
- Fill out the form to see up to 20 Testing Centers matching your specified criteria.

To see “Testing Software Demo”

- Go to http://www.psiexams.com/
- Click on “Certification/Professional Associations” link
- Select the Sponsor of examination you are taking from list.
- Click on “Testing Software Demo” under Information Links section on right.
- Select “Software Demo” in the window.
- Press “Start Online Demo Test” button.
The AOA Paraoptometric Section is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year.

The section has gone through many transformations, but one thing that has not changed is its mission to education paraoptometrics across the country.

Did you know? During the 81st Annual AOA meeting, the House of Delegates approved the formation of the Paraoptometric Section. The first council president, Carol Schartner, CPOT, said, “That first year was a busy one. We were developing a Constitution and By-laws, a dues structure, committees, and most of all, recruiting members.” If you have a story to share about being a PS member, contact us at PS@aoa.org. We’d love to share it with our other PS members!

Paraoptometric Skill Builder® on AOA.org

The AOA Paraoptometric Section offers the Paraoptometric Skill Builder® program that provides online training for new and/or experienced optometric staff. The Beginner Level 1 course is designed for the “new to the field of paraoptometry.” The Intermediate Level 2 course builds upon acquired knowledge from the Beginner Level 1 course. No matter what level of experience or knowledge, the Paraoptometric Skill Builder® offers you an easy, convenient, and fun learning experience.

To learn more about the Paraoptometric Skill Builder at www.aoa.org/paraoptometrics/continuing-education/find-ce/paraoptometric-skill-builder.

The Paraoptometric Skill Builder® program is sponsored through an unrestricted education grant from Essilor and Vistakon.

Save the Date!

The 2013 NOA Fall Convention will be held on September 27-29, 2013 at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney, Nebraska. Registration information will be sent in a few weeks, but you can make your hotel reservations now. You will find hotel information listed below. All three hotels and adjacent to the Younes Conference Center.

Nebraska Optometry’s Meeting

Annual Fall Convention

September 27-29, 2013
Younes Conference Center
Kearney, NE

Hotel Reservation Information:

Deadline for NOA Convention Group Rate: August 30, 2013

Fairfield Inn
510 Talmadge Rd
Kearney, NE
308.236.4200
$100.95

Hampton Inn
118 3rd Avenue
Kearney, NE
308.234.3400
$90.95

Wingate by Wyndham
108 3rd Avenue
Kearney, NE
308.237.4400
$85.95

Any news you would like to share in our next Quarterly?
If so, please contact
Kathryn Keithley at 402.274.3218 or ktdid_120@hotmail.com