



NORTHERN PLAINS EYE  
FOUNDATION  
Summer 2008

# The Eye Opener

## SPREAD SOME JOY AROUND

*Enhancing  
eye health  
through  
education,  
research and  
community service  
for people of the  
Northern Plains.*



### DIRECTORS

Dr. John Barlow  
Kent Brugger  
Pat Burchill  
Cathie Calhoon  
Kathy Conlon  
Dr. Monte S. Dirks  
Dan Dryden  
Dr. Sidney Goss  
Cris Mathews  
Chuck McLain  
Dr. Jo Prang  
Dr. Erwin Reimann  
Dr. Chet Roberts  
Gary Thompson  
Dr. Lynn Tucker  
Dr. Paul L. Wright  
Sharon Zeller  
Dr. Paul Zimmerman

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kathleen Kovarik  
RN, MN

### STAFF

Carolyn Ness  
Sue Jimmerson  
Monae Johnson



623 Quincy St.  
Suite 101  
P.O. Box 5568  
Rapid City, SD 57709-5568  
Phone: 605.716.6733  
Fax: 605.721.4633  
www.npef.org

"Be a cheerful giver". "It is better to give than to receive". Perhaps you grew up, like I did, being taught with expressions like these. Most likely you can access memories of giving from the heart that brought you great joy. If so, you'll find it interesting to know that science is finally confirming what you have known for years.

In a recent Associated Press article, the headlines proclaimed, "**Scientists: It's better to give than receive**". The article highlights lead researcher Elizabeth W. Dunn, an assistant professor of psychology at the University of British Columbia, who conducted research along with researchers at Harvard University, to see whether or not the way that people spent their money positively impacted their overall happiness. Previous studies had shown that having more money can increase happiness. Dunn "wasn't surprised that doing something for others made people happy. But she was struck by how big the effect was and that how people spent money was more important than how much money they had". Remarking on the results of her research, Dunn concludes, "This work suggests that even making small alterations in how we spend money on a daily basis can make a difference in happiness."

Financial management guru Suze Orman also lauds generosity. In her book, "**Women and Money**" (2007), Orman says, "True generosity goes far beyond what you give to others. In giving there is a power, an understanding that you are just the vessel that wealth or energy flows through. You allow money to come in through your hands and out through your heart. To be empowered to give, to be moved to give straight from the heart, is a feeling that all the money in the world could never buy" (page 50).

With the ideas of generosity and the happiness it generates in mind, I'd like to share with you a recent experience of mine, precipitated by a staff member's generous heart. I was having a very long work-day with no end in sight, when I took my first "break" of the day at 4:00 p.m. to pick up the office mail and finally get some lunch at a popular fast food "emporium". As I sorted through the mail from our post office box, I was heartened by two donations that the

Foundation received—one for \$500 and one for \$5—both very much appreciated. Reflecting on the beautiful, giving nature of our benefactors, another example of generosity shared by my co-worker, Cheryl Bettmeng, came to mind.

Cheryl's technique for spontaneous giving is simple, but incredibly effective! When going through a drive-through restaurant, she will be inspired to pay for the car right behind her, anonymously. When she spoke of how much fun she had with this, I knew I should try it myself. And today seemed like the perfect time.

At the drive-up window, I tried to explain to the teenage boy what I wanted to do. This alone was challenging. He had a hard time believing that I wanted to pay the bill for a total stranger. Then, the next challenge that came along was to manage a quick get-away, as the idea is to keep your giving anonymous. Looking in my rear-view mirror, as I was waiting for my "healthy" quarter pounder with cheese, I could see the teenager leaning out his window, talking to the woman in the car and pointing to my car ahead. I grabbed my bag from the 2nd window, and screamed off into the sunset. What a blast! I laughed and grinned all the way back to work, and was astounded at how joyful such a small act of kindness proved to be.

Giving enlarges us. Here in South Dakota and the Midwest people are known to be particularly generous, giving at a level far above other states with much higher per capita incomes. Maybe it is because we are close to the earth, and, as farmers and gardeners, thus understand this quote attributed to Francis Bacon: "**Money is like manure; of very little use except to be spread.**" So, however you decide to give, enjoy yourself as you spread a little joy around.



### What's Inside...

Meet our New Staff.....	2
NPEF Out and About.....	3
Student Awards.....	6
Resources.....	7

## IN FOCUS: BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

The buzz word of the moment is “Change”, and people seem eager to hop on that bandwagon. Here at the Northern Plains Eye Foundation, we are certainly open to change, and moving in new directions, but we do this, hopefully, with a wisdom that integrates the best of the past into our plans for the future.

You’ll notice a few new things in this newsletter. First of all, the Board of Directors changed our mission statement to typify the new direction of the Foundation—“*Enhancing eye health for people of the Northern Plains*”. We are privileged, in our region, to have a non-profit organization like NPEF focused on a more proactive, preventative approach in fulfilling our motto—*Vision for a Lifetime*. Like the American Heart Association or the American Cancer Society, we can emphasize prevention (eye health and safety), as well as being a resource center for those with eye conditions/diseases.

Our staff is growing to accommodate our expanded mission, and we happily welcome **Associate Director Carolyn Ness** and **Development Coordinator Monae Johnson** to our team. Our greater outreach to the general public is apparent in the feature on page 3, **NPEF Out and About**, which highlights our recent educational exhibits and support for the SDOS convention. On pages 4-5 you will see that the generosity of our donors over the years has made it possible for the Foundation to support budding scholars through our **Science Fair Awards and Health-Care Education Scholarships**.

Finally, we invite you to take a look at our website: [www.npef.org](http://www.npef.org), and see some of the new features that we are developing. We hope that you find it more user-friendly, and that you’ll take advantage of the new PayPal feature that allows for on-line giving. Try it and “spread a little joy”!

## NPEF WELCOMES NEW STAFF AS WE GROW

Join me in wishing a warm welcome to two new members of the NPEF team—**Monae Johnson and Carolyn Ness**. Monae is the new **Development Coordinator**, and she began with NPEF in January. Carolyn joins the Foundation as the new **Associate Director**, and started in her new role in late April. Both Carolyn and Monae bring wonderful enthusiasm, creativity, team-spirit and dedication to their Foundation jobs. Monae currently works 24 hours per week, and Carolyn works 30 hours per week. Stop by the office or call and welcome them to their new positions.



**Monae Johnson**, a Rapid City native, moved back to Rapid City recently. She had lived in Pierre for 9 years and worked for Chris Nelson, Secretary of State. While in Pierre, she helped her husband, Alan, start their own business, Mid-Dakota Diesel, LLC and continues as the Vice President in charge of marketing and bookkeeping.

Mrs. Johnson is in charge of donor development, a new position at the Foundation. Monae will lead in the areas of special events, fundraising and public relations. With her outgoing personality, Monae is a natural for this position. And, as a member of Rapid City Women’s Network, Zonta Club of the Black Hills, Rapid City Downtown Lion’s Club and a Rapid City Chamber Ambassador, she is already connected for the networking part of her new role.

Monae is the mother of 5 children: Anthony, 2007 graduate of SDSM&T; Adam, 2008 graduate of United States Military Academy at West Point; Alecia, newly married and a junior at USD; and 5 year old twins, Shawn and Shawntel. If her children aren’t keeping her busy, she loves to fish and hunt. Her trophy is a 6x6 bull elk that she shot October 1, 2001.



**Carolyn Ness**, a native of Wisconsin, joined NPEF in late April as the new Associate Director. Carolyn will take on both the office management and the financial coordination in the office. She fit in immediately with our current team, and dove right into her new position with the yearly audit!

Carolyn’s background prepares her well for her new responsibilities at NPEF. She graduated from Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL, with a BA in Music in 1981, and then hired on as the College Housing Coordinator, arranging housing for 2000 undergrads and grads in dorms, apartments and houses. While working at the college she pursued additional science classes, working toward a degree in nutrition. In 1993 she left the college and her studies to move to Rapid City, and for the last 14 years was employed at Prudential Kahler REALTORS, first as bookkeeper, and then as receptionist, until coming on board at the Northern Plains Eye Foundation.

Outside of work, Carolyn mentors a couple of young women and has been active at Bethel Assembly of God in the areas of music, teaching adult Sunday School and coordinating the bus that picks up neighborhood kids who attend Wednesday night clubs.

Finally join me in wishing **Cheryl Bettmeng** (who had been our part-time Accounts Coordinator) well as she begins her new job as the Executive Vice President at the Black Hills Homebuilder’s Association! And our appreciation also goes out to **Renee Dalhke** who worked hourly for the Foundation this last year. We are fortunate to have such outstanding staff to help move the Foundation forward!

# NPEF OUT AND ABOUT

## HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES FAIR 9

at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center  
May 3, 2008



## SOUTH DAKOTA OPTOMETRIC SOCIETY SPRING MEETING

at Cedar Shores in Chamberlain  
April 17 & 18, 2008



## SDSM&T "MATTERS OF THE HEART" HEALTH AND WELLNESS EXPO

at The Surbeck Center in Rapid City  
Feb 28, 2008



*Sue with one of our 2007 scholarship winners - Jerika Ihnen*



*Monae talking to a student as he tries on one of our eye disease simulator goggles.*



## PORTRAIT OF A CONTINUING SCHOLAR

**Elise In't Veld is the first person to receive NPEF's scholarships for 4 years in a row.**

She continues to impress the NPEF Scholarship judges with her outstanding academic achievement and myriad extracurricular and health-care related activities and goals! In recognition of her accomplishments, strong sense of purpose, and dedication to her goal for the past 3 years, the judges have named her the recipient of our top \$1500 Continuing Health-Care Education scholarship award for the 2008-2009 school year.

In't Veld was first chosen as an NPEF scholarship winner in 2005 while completing her senior year at Belle Fourche High School. In her application, she clearly stated her desire for a degree in Biology/Pre-Med, with a goal of becoming an Ophthalmologist. She emphasized that she has been interested in this profession since she was in the 7th grade and was willing to work hard to achieve this goal and make a difference in people's lives. That fall she entered South Dakota State University.

Her resolve to become an Ophthalmologist was strengthened during her subsequent years at SDSU, and her potential became more evident as she maintained a 4.0 GPA while taking challenging science and math classes each year. She also sought out eye-care related job shadow opportunities, worked as a caregiver at an Assisted Living facility, and was a member of SDSU's

pre-professional club for students pursuing medical careers.

In't Veld's knowledge, maturity and strong sense of responsibility have been recognized and rewarded by SDSU faculty. As a sophomore, she served as an intern in the anatomy lab for 15 hours a week, helping student learn from the various models and cadavers. As a junior in the fall of 2007, she was selected to lead a team of five members and thirty-eight interns for the anatomy program's dissection of two new cadavers. Last December, her help was enlisted by a nutrition professor to help perform mouse necropsies for a study which continued into this spring. Over the last 3 years, she was also accepted into 3 honor societies and received several special SDSU scholarships.

This spring Elise tutored students in a difficult human physiology class as well as enrolling in an Emergency Medical Technician-Basic course. And, in her "spare time" while taking Organic Chemistry, Immunology, and Physics, In't Veld began her studies for the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)! This summer, her plans include volunteering at both the Brookings and Avera McKennan (Sioux Falls) Hospitals and shadowing another eye-care professional.

NPEF is impressed with Elise In't Veld's accomplishments and confident that she will attain her goal of "helping patients improve and maintain one of their most valued possessions, sight" as an Ophthalmologist.

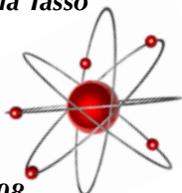
## SCIENCE FAIR WINNERS REWARDED



**2008**

**Team Project Winners**

**Shontel Mousseau & Saadia Tasso**



**2008**

**Science Fair Winners**

**Cody Gravel  
Rebecca Michelson  
Alexis Krivosnik**



To encourage high school students in western SD in science, Northern Plains Eye Foundation awarded \$500 in prize money at the 53rd High Plains Regional Science and Engineering Fair (hosted by SD School of Mines and Technology). \$100 prizes in Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences, Behavioral/Social Sciences, and Team Science Project were given to First Place Senior Division winners in each category. This year twenty-five students competed at the Senior Division level in the 4 categories.

**Winners of NPEF's Science Fair awards included:**

Alexis Krivosnik, Sturgis Brown HS, "Isolating Antimicrobial Compounds in GSE", Cody Gravel, Edgemont HS, "Electroplating Metals", Rebecca Michelson, Sturgis Brown HS, "Visual or Auditory Memory", Shontel Mousseau and Saadia Tasso, Pine Ridge HS, "Density Solves a Mystery"

NPEF plans to promote eye-related science fair projects next year, and expand our involvement by furnishing prizes for middle school student projects also. If you are interested in contributing to awards like these, just check the "Education/Community Service" box on your donation envelope.

EDUCATION



RESEARCH



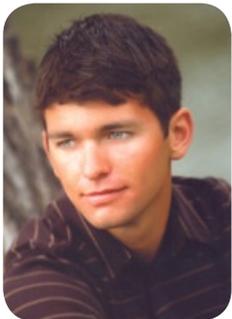
SERVICE

# NPEF AWARDS \$10,500 TO OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

This is the 4th year the Northern Plains Eye Foundation has awarded scholarships for students pursuing college health-care studies. This spring NPEF judges chose six high-achieving high school seniors from a record-setting field of 120 applicants from four states. In addition, three dedicated former NPEF winners claimed our "Continuing Scholar" awards to aid their progress in health-care related fields of study. Scholarship criteria included academic merit, involvement in health-care related activities or studies, leadership, school activities and community service.

For the 2008-09 academic year, the NPEF Board of Directors increased the total award amount to \$10,500 in recognition of the importance of our educational mission and the need for future health-care and eye-care professionals. Special thanks to two sponsors who aided NPEF with funds for the Continuing Health-Care Education Scholarships: Rapid City Downtown Lions Club and Black Hills Regional Eye Institute. If you are interested in sponsoring a scholarship for 2009-2010, or endowing a scholarship, please call Kathleen Kovarik at (605) 716-6733 or email at [kkovarik@npef.org](mailto:kkovarik@npef.org).

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SIX HIGH SCHOOL RECIPIENTS



**Thomas Brockhoff**  
\$1500  
Winner HS (SD)  
U of NE/Lincoln  
Pre-Med/  
Ophthalmology



**Kristin Kramlich**  
\$1500  
Eureka HS (SD)  
U of SD  
Biology/Pre-Optometry



**Joanna Rodenborn**  
\$1000  
Brandon Valley HS (SD)  
U of ND  
Nursing



**Nicholas Stukel**  
\$1000  
Gregory HS (SD)  
Augustana College  
Pre-Med/Chemistry



**Robert Placek**  
\$1000  
Alliance HS (NE)  
Creighton University  
Chemistry/Pre-Med



**Whitney Weber**  
\$1000  
Washington HS (SD)  
U of MN, Twin Cities  
Biology/Pre-Med

## CONGRATULATIONS TO NPEF'S THREE CONTINUING SCHOLARS:



**Elise In't Veld**  
4th Year Winner  
\$1500  
Belle Fourche, SD  
SD State University  
Biology/  
Ophthalmology



**Rachele Schrader**  
2nd Year Winner  
\$1000  
Colome, SD  
SD State University  
Biology/Ocular  
Oncology  
Sponsored by:  
Rapid City Downtown  
Lion's Club



**Jerika Ihnen**  
2nd Year Winner  
\$1000  
Tea, SD  
SD School of Mines  
& Technology  
Chemistry/Health  
focus/Eye-care  
Sponsored by:  
Black Hills Regional  
Eye Institute

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Dr. John Barlow**  
Rapid City



**Kent Brugger**  
Rapid City



**Pat Burchill**  
Rapid City



**Cathie Calhoun**  
Rapid City



**Kathy Conlon**  
Rapid City



**Dr. Monte S. Dirks**  
Rapid City



**Dan Dryden**  
Rapid City



**Dr. Sidney Goss**  
Deadwood



**Cris Mathews**  
Rapid City



**Chuck McLain**  
Rapid City



**Dr. Jo Prang**  
Rapid City



**Dr. Erwin Reimann**  
Rapid City



**Dr. Chet Roberts**  
Rapid City



**Gary Thompson**  
Morrison, CO



**Dr. Lynn Tucker**  
Rapid City



**Dr. Paul L. Wright**  
Rapid City



**Sharon Zeller**  
Rapid City



**Dr. Paul Zimmerman**  
Rapid City

# SPOTLIGHT ON RESOURCES

## "Prevent Blindness America" Proves Proactive

This year marks the **100th birthday of Prevent Blindness America**, the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Like NPEF, PBA takes a proactive stance to preserve eye health. Here are just a few of the excellent resources available through this organization:

### Vision Screening Information, for Both Children and Adults

#### Low Vision Assistance Resources

#### Financial Assistance Information Sheet

#### How Pregnancy Affects Your Vision

#### Preventing Eye Injuries at Home, Play & Work

#### Refractive Surgery – Things to Consider

#### Computers and Your Eyes

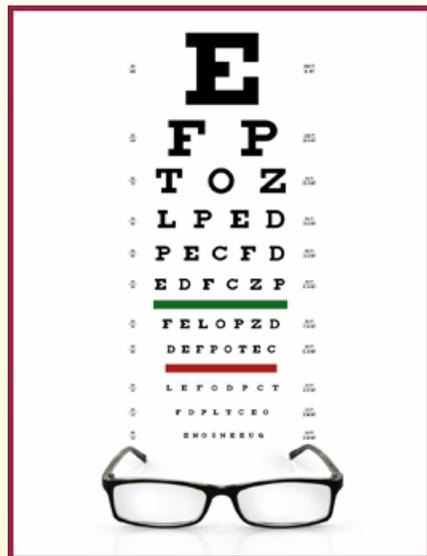
Summer is a time to focus on preventive eye care, by wearing sunglasses. Prevent Blindness America has information about why sunglasses are necessary, what types of sunglasses are best, types and colors of lenses, who is at particular risk of sun related eye problems, and the need for children to wear sunglasses. In a nutshell, experts recommend sunglasses that block 99-100% of both UV-A & UV-B rays. Wearing a wide-brimmed hat along with your sunglasses helps block sunlight from overhead.

With Independence Day celebrations coming up soon, PBA also has excellent resources in this area. Take their **"Fireworks Eye Injury Safety Quiz"** and see if you'd know what to do if your

child sustained a fireworks-related eye injury. Peruse PBA's **"Facts About Fireworks Injuries"** and learn about surprising statistics such as sparkler-related injuries in children. Keep your Fourth of July celebration safe and fun by trying a firework free approach suggested in **"Safe Summer Celebrations"**. (NPEF staff would be happy to mail any of these articles to you if you don't have internet access).

Finally, Prevent Blindness America has the only national program that trains and certifies people around the country to conduct screenings in adults and children, in order to help detect vision problems. Though it is not a substitute for a professional eye exam, it can help identify those at risk for eye disease, and point them in a direction to get the help they need.

Contact Prevent Blindness America by phone at 1-800-331-2020 or by internet, [www.preventblindness.org](http://www.preventblindness.org). Their office headquarters is located in Chicago, IL.



## VISION DAY

### 48th Annual Rapid City Optometric Society Vision Day

### JULY 10

### **\*\*Free Vision Screenings\*\***

The Rapid City Optometric Society invites you to participate in **VISION DAY, THURSDAY, JULY 10TH**. On VISION DAY, members of the Rapid City Optometric Society will provide free vision screenings to students entering 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades. The screenings are not a substitute for a complete visual examination, but will detect any major visual problems that the students may have. Appointments are necessary. Please call any of the Optometrists listed below to schedule your appointment.

**ERIC PORISCH, OD**  
605 St. Joseph St.  
341-5644

**DWAYNE ICE, OD**  
825 Columbus St, Ste E  
343-4703

**SCOTT ELLENDER, OF**  
1601 Mt. Rushmore Rd., Ste 5  
348-7401

**BRAD MORIARTY, OD**  
1601 Mt. Rushmore Rd, Ste 5  
348-7401

**RANDALL EDWARDS, OD**  
501 Kansas City St.  
348-2323

**PAULINE WEICHLER, OD**  
Baken Park Shopping Ctr. Ste14  
718-7550

**GAYLENE KUDRNA, OD**  
810 Mt. View Rd.  
342-0777

**FALON YOUNG, OD**  
810 Mt. View Rd.  
342-0777

*"Vision is the dominant factor in human development." - Gesell*

**VISION DAY is a public service sponsored by the Rapid City Optometric Society**



NORTHERN PLAINS EYE  
FOUNDATION

623 Quincy St., Suite 101  
P.O. Box 5568  
Rapid City, SD 57709-5568

NON-PROFIT  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
RAPID CITY SD  
PERMIT #618

605.716.6733 • email: [vision@npef.org](mailto:vision@npef.org) • [www.npef.org](http://www.npef.org)



**COMING ATTRACTIONS**

**SUMMER EYE SAFETY EXHIBIT**  
Storybook Island – Rapid City  
July 1st from 10am – 1pm (Theater area)

**Citywide VISION SCREENING INITIATIVE \***  
Rapid City - Sept/Oct 2008  
\*details to be released soon



NORTHERN PLAINS EYE  
FOUNDATION