



NORTHERN PLAINS EYE
FOUNDATION

Winter 2012

The Eye Opener

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



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The holiday season, more than any other time during the year, is a time when we believe in miracles – that something wonderful is about to happen. This past year, many wonderful things happened to the Northern Plains Eye Foundation (NPEF), and we were able to bring wonderful things to many with whom we share this beautiful part of the country.

Our Foundation is blessed with wonderful leadership in our eighteen member Board of Directors, and supported by a large, generous and caring group of eye care professionals who provide the time, talent and resources to allow us to serve our community. We live in a community filled with wonderful and charitable individuals, businesses and organizations that donate to our Foundation, as well as numerous other causes that work to build a better tomorrow for all of us, and assist those less fortunate, so they, too, can still believe something wonderful will happen.

Earlier this month, NPEF awarded its Christmas Gift of Sight to two individuals struggling with loss of their vision. They had exhausted their resources and felt as though they had nowhere to turn. When sharing the news of the Christmas Gift of Sight award with one of the recipients, the man struggled with his emotions, and through tears said, "I never thought there was any hope of getting help. This is really hard for me to believe. I can't find the words to tell you how wonderful this is." It is touching to know this small gift not only helps those granted the Christmas Gift of Sight to regain their vision and independence, but it also inspires these individuals and their loved ones to believe something wonderful can happen.

A past year's Christmas Gift of Sight recipient stated it this way, "I have never been so touched

by anything in my life. I promise to utilize this wonderful gift to prove hope exists for others. This has reaffirmed my belief in people and the spirit of giving."

Always believe. There are also many small day-to-day examples of wonderful things happening through NPEF's programs. Recently, a child receiving his first vision screening, through the Northern Plains Eye Foundation Western South Dakota Lions Children's Vision Screening Initiative (CVSI), stared in wonder while his screening was administered via flashing digital images and

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"chirping" sounds as the video photo screening device captured and analyzed the image of his eye. When his screening was completed, as he left the screening room, NPEF staff and our partner Lions Club volunteers received a smiling, "Thank you," followed by, "That was awesome. I gotta do this again." The wonderful thing is, this simple process could save a child's sight.

And, there are the stories relayed by student recipients of NPEF's Health-Care Education Scholarships, one of whom stated, "My

goal is to one day return to South Dakota as an optometrist. Every dream needs to begin with a first step. Mine was supported by NPEF's Health-Care Education Scholarship program."

"Always believe that something wonderful is about to happen." It is a philosophy we should embrace every day of our lives. We hope you do, today, throughout the New Year, and well beyond!

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EYE TO EYE: THE DIRECTOR'S VIEW



group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Since Dan joined our small Board of Directors in 2006, our Foundation has seen a lot of changes, and come a long way in making a positive impact in the community we serve. In his three years as Chairman of the Board, Dan saw the potential Northern Plains Eye Foundation had to improve our community. He committed, and diligently led the charge, to develop new flagship community service programs that strive to insure eye-related problems in our children continue to be detected and treated through free vision screenings, workplace eye injuries are prevented through free educational

As one of Northern Plains Eye Foundation's long-time Board of Directors, **Dan Dryden**, steps down this month, after serving our Foundation for over six years, it makes me think of a quote I read a while back. The quote by Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small

presentations, and we share the gift of sight with those in our community who are less fortunate. And, furthermore, he inspired his colleagues on our Foundation Board and our Foundation staff team to believe and personally invest in our Foundation as key stakeholders, so that together we could achieve our goals.

On behalf of the Northern Plains Eye Foundation Board of Directors and staff, I would like to personally thank you, Dan, for the very important role you played in support of our Foundation's mission through the donation of your invaluable time, talents and expertise. Your enthusiasm and leadership will be truly missed.

As we say goodbye to 2012, on behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of Northern Plains Eye Foundation, may your holidays be bright and your New Year be filled with health, happiness and prosperity.



Executive Director
Northern Plains Eye Foundation

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS



Corrie Stephens

Northern Plains Eye Foundation is pleased to welcome two new members to its Board of Directors.

Corrie Stephens is a Vice President, Business Banking, with Great Western Bank in Rapid City. He assists businesses in Rapid City and the surrounding areas with financing and cash flow management.

Corrie is a native of Rapid City. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of South Dakota.

He has been in the banking industry for over sixteen years, and started working for Great Western Bank in Rapid City in 2006. Prior to returning to Rapid City, while living and working in Alliance, Nebraska, Corrie met his wife, Angie. Angie is an X-Ray Technician at Dakota Radiology. Corrie and Angie have two daughters, Alissa and Macy.

Corrie is also an active member of the Rapid City Downtown Lions Club, a member of the Leadership Rapid City Class of 2009 and the Day of Excellence, and serves as a volunteer for Junior Achievement. In his free time, Corrie enjoys hunting, fishing, and spending time with his family.



Luke Pulscher

Luke Pulscher is a Financial Advisor and the Managing Director for Northwestern Mutual of the Black Hills. Luke has been representing Northwestern Mutual since 2003. In addition to Luke's leadership duties he specializes in insurance and investment planning for individuals and businesses, with an emphasis on retirement income planning.

Luke currently serves on the board of directors for the Mammoth Site of Hot Springs. He is also an active member of Harmony Lodge 110 in Hot Springs, and volunteers his time to help with the Hot Springs Wrestling program. Luke and his wife, Carmen, have lived in the Hot Springs area for over fifteen years and are raising three children, Wyatt, Taylor and Senay. Luke, Carmen and their family enjoy all the great outdoor activities our area has to offer – hunting, fishing, hiking and riding horses are just a few of the things you will find them doing. Luke also competes at a national level in the sport of armwrestling with many national and world placings.

We welcome both Corrie and Luke to our talented Board team!

WARNING: PROTECT YOUR EYES THIS WINTER

In early December, daytime TV talk show host and reporter, Anderson Cooper, went temporarily blind after shooting a *60 Minutes* segment on the water on an overcast day. Cooper described waking up in the middle of the night feeling like his eyes were on fire. He was temporarily blinded for 36 hours. Cooper later learned ultraviolet (UV) light bouncing off water had burned his retina.

The fact is, in addition to our skin, our eyes can also become "sunburned" from UV rays, a condition known as photokeratitis. "We apply sunscreen to our skin, but then leave our eyes completely exposed," noted Marsha Humphreys, Manager/Optician, Your Eyes Only Optical at Slingsby & Wright Eye Care. The painful condition may result in temporary loss of vision for a few days, as well as lasting damage, as UV damage is cumulative. It has been linked to eye problems later in life including tumors, cataracts and macular degeneration, an eye disease which currently has no cure.

According to Prevent Blindness America, the nation's oldest volunteer eye health and safety organization, even when individuals wear sunglasses, only 50 percent of men and 33 percent of women make it a priority to have the right sunglasses when enjoying outdoor recreational activities.

"People think we need only be concerned about UV in the summer at

the lake," Humphreys said. "The fact is, surfaces like snow greatly increase UV radiation." Humphreys stated adults and children alike should always wear sunglasses that block 100 percent of UV-A and UV-B rays. Sunglasses without UV protection may shade the eyes, but actually cause the pupils to dilate, allowing in even more harmful rays. "In our world of convenience and discount stores offering 'cheap' sunglasses, a general rule of thumb is if you spend \$20 or less, the optics are compromised," added Humphreys.



"Wrap-around styles are best because they protect the eyes and the skin around the eyes. For those with active lifestyles, like skiing and snowboarding, sunglasses should be made of unbreakable polycarbonate," Humphreys added. According to Humphreys, most optical shops offer a variety of name-brand styles such as Oakley, Maui Jim, Zeal and others, so the fashion-minded consumer has many options. But, Humphreys says, "It's important to realize it is not a 'one size fits all' proposition. Once you've selected the best fitting frame, make sure the optician knows what you are using the sunglasses for, so they can insure you have the correct lenses for your planned outdoor activity. You need to be sure that you select the right lens for the proper light conditions."



As we approach the New Year, Northern Plains Eye Foundation Western South Dakota Children's Vision Screening Initiative (CVSI) is celebrating a successful launch this past year. Twenty Lions Club volunteers, representing all five partner clubs, along with Northern Plains' staff have administered over a dozen CVSI screening events with many additional screenings events on the calendar or in process for 2013. We are well on our way toward our goal to screen 1,000 children during the first year of CVSI.

Our thanks to **Rapid City Downtown, Rapid City Rushmore, Rapid City Metro, Piedmont Valley and Hill City Lions Clubs** for their partnership in, and support of, CVSI.

Join our effort to ensure vision screenings are accessible to more children. Donate to CVSI. Join a Lions Club and become trained to administer screenings. Host a benefit to support our fundraising efforts. For more information, phone NPEF at (605) 716-6733!



CASINO Royale

Northern Plains Eye Foundation is launching its first "Casino Royale" fundraising event, planned for Spring 2013, to benefit Foundation programs to protect and preserve vision, restore sight, and develop research to support and promote eye health.

The charity event will feature an evening of socializing, elegant hors d'oeuvres and cocktails, casino-style gaming fun, a silent auction and more.

Watch your mail, or visit www.npef.org, in the upcoming months for more information. With your help, we can make a difference. Support NPEF's "Casino Royale" fundraising event through corporate sponsorship or with a silent auction donation. **Please phone (605) 716-6733 for more details.**





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FOUNDATION

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**THANK YOU
2012
VISIONARY
PARTNERS**



Rapid City Downtown and
Rushmore Lions Clubs



Whose partnerships support the Northern Plains Eye Foundation Health-Care Education Scholarship, Healthy Vision Week and Christmas Gift of Sight flagship programs.

With Deepest Appreciation to Our Donors

- | | | |
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