



NORTHERN PLAINS EYE  
FOUNDATION

Winter 2014

# The Eye Opener

*Northern Plains Eye Foundation (NPEF) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to protect and preserve vision and restore sight for people of the Northern Plains.*



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Northern Plains Eye Foundation (NPEF) won the lottery recently. To many, that statement conjures visions of dollar signs. For NPEF, our vision of “winning the lottery” is that of an adorable little girl in glasses with a pink patch over the left lense.

The little girl, Bella, and her mom, Amber, made us feel like we won the lottery because Amber and Bella personally paid a visit to NPEF’s office to bring a letter of thanks to our Foundation for the work we do. In Amber and Bella’s case, their appreciation was for the community service outreach of the Northern Plains Eye Foundation Western South Dakota Lions Children’s Vision Screening Initiative (CVSI).

“We are so thankful Bella’s condition was detected at her kindergarten screening by the Northern Plains Eye Foundation,” Amber wrote. “If it were not for this screening, we never would have known Bella had a problem.” Amber went on to write that after the screening, upon learning of Bella’s undetected vision problem, the family took her to a local eye doctor for a comprehensive eye exam. The exam revealed Bella’s vision was 20/150, and the family was heartbroken.

Through patching and some creative home vision therapy designed by Amber, Bella was seeing 20/50 by August. She continues to patch and do daily vision therapy, including red-line treatment with red/green glasses.

“We are so thankful to the Northern Plains Eye Foundation for the service they provide through these free screenings,” Amber stated. “Because of the Northern Plains Eye Foundation screening, Bella was truly given the gift of sight.”

Thankfully, our Foundation has had the privilege of hearing many stories such as Bella’s. It makes us proud of what we do.

Recently, we were asked what made us most proud with respect to NPEF’s work. We are humbled, through our CVSI program, a child’s chance of success in learning and in life, is increased through our free vision screenings that

identify undetected vision issues. Through Christmas Gift of Sight, underserved patients who are without financial means to afford care are given the gift of sight-saving surgery, in order to regain their sight, and more importantly, independence and quality of life, because of what we do. Through NPEF’s Workplace Vision Wellness program, we are proud preemptive training to prevent workplace eye injuries is available. And, due to NPEF’s annual scholarship, awarded in honor of Dr. Paul Zimmerman, a past Foundation Board Member and ophthalmologist, medical students may pursue the study of ophthalmology.

*“Because of the Northern Plains Eye Foundation screening, Bella was truly given the gift of sight...”*



*Amber and daughter, Bella, who was referred by CVSI for treatment of Amblyopia*

Because of your support of our Foundation, you can be proud, too. Your financial gifts play an integral role in bestowing essential funding to sustain NPEF’s ongoing efforts across our region to protect and preserve vision and restore sight. Your gifts help our Foundation ensure a child’s potential, like that of Bella, is not handicapped by a vision disorder, and that her family, and others we serve, can enjoy and celebrate the joyous visions of the Christmas season. Please continue to give generously.

## EYE TO EYE: THE DIRECTOR'S VIEW



*Thank you, Erwin!*

A longtime Northern Plains Eye Foundation (NPEF) Board Member, **Dr. Erwin Reimann**, steps off the NPEF Board at the end of this month. Erwin has served as one of our Foundation's Board Members for the past decade, and was President of NPEF from 1997 to 2004.

Over the years, Erwin has provided integral leadership that has brought our Foundation through many changes. Today, his legacy is an organization that brings vision-related community outreach to literally thousands of individuals across the region through free children's vision screenings that identify undetected vision issues, sight-saving surgery for underserved patients who are without financial means to afford care, an annual scholarship for medical students pursuing the study of ophthalmology in order to insure quality health care in our region for future generations, and preemptive training to prevent workplace eye injuries.

Most importantly, he inspired our Foundation's Board and Staff to believe and personally invest in our Foundation as key stakeholders, so that together we could achieve our goals.

On behalf of the NPEF's Board of Directors and Staff, I would like to personally thank you, Erwin, for the very important role you played in support of our Foundation's mission through the donation of your valued time, talents and expertise. Your passion, dedication, and leadership will be truly missed.

As we say goodbye to 2014, on behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff of NPEF, may your holidays be bright and your New Year be filled with health, happiness, and prosperity.

*Ronda Musinsky*

Executive Director  
Northern Plains Eye Foundation



## LIONS SALUTE

Our cover article shares the successes of the Northern Plains Eye Foundation Western South Dakota Lions Children's Vision Screening Initiative (CVSI); a key area of community outreach for Northern Plains Eye Foundation (NPEF).

These achievements are possible thanks to our CVSI partnership with area Lions Clubs and a wonderful group of core volunteers from Rapid City Downtown, Metro, and Rushmore Lions Clubs, and Hill City and Piedmont Valley Lions Clubs.



*Club of the Year, Piedmont Valley Lions, and NPEF Chair, Zeller*



*Volunteer of the Year, Dick Fischer, Piedmont Valley Lions, and NPEF Chair, Zeller*

These enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers invest hundreds of hours each year administering screenings, assisting with clerical tasks, and leading the charge in raising thousands of dollars through fundraising efforts to sustain this vital program that identifies undetected vision issues in our children.

To express our gratitude, NPEF hosted a Volunteer Picnic & Salute at Storm Mountain Center at which the following 2014 awards were presented by NPEF Chair Sharon Zeller: **2014 CVSI Club of the Year – Piedmont Valley Lions; 2014 Volunteer of the Year – Dick Fischer, Piedmont Valley Lions; and 2014 Volunteer Couple of the Year – Norm and Sherry Denke, Metro Lions.**

In addition, Dick Tupper, Rushmore Lions, and George Brown, Downtown Lions, were honored with Vision Ambassador Awards in recognition of their longtime and ongoing efforts to identify vision disorders that may significantly handicap a child's potential.



*Volunteer Couple of the Year, Norm and Sherry Denke, Metro Lions, and NPEF Chair, Zeller*

## WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER

**Jack Kaup** is the Chief Financial Officer for Black Hills Surgical Hospital, responsible for directing financial and other functions since joining the company in 1999. He is a lifetime resident of South Dakota and graduated from the University of South Dakota with an Accounting Degree in 1988. Jack joined McGladrey & Pullen in Rapid City, which has since merged with Ketel Thorstenson, and obtained his Certified Public Accountant license (currently inactive status). Prior to his current position, Jack was the Controller of Sodak Gaming.

Jack and his wife, Shelly, have three children: Alexandra, 25, Mason, 15, and Maryssa, 14. He enjoys many outdoor activities in the Black Hills and hunting near where he grew up in North Central South Dakota.

Welcome, Jack! We are glad to have you as a member of our Northern Plains Eye Foundation Board of Directors.



**JACK KAUP**



## TERVEEN AWARDED ZIMMERMAN SCHOLARSHIP

In 2011, Northern Plains Eye Foundation (NPEF) created the Dr. Paul L. Zimmerman Memorial Scholarship to honor Dr. Paul L. Zimmerman; a respected partner in ophthalmology at Black Hills Regional Eye Institute and much-loved member of our Foundation's Board of Directors who passed away after a courageous battle with malignant melanoma of the eye. Since that time, the Northern Plains Eye Foundation Dr. Paul L. Zimmerman Memorial Scholarship is presented to a scholar with a passion for the eye care field who most embodies Dr. Zimmerman's legacy of leadership, service, and kindness. The scholarship is given on NPEF's behalf by The University of South Dakota Foundation for award by the Sanford School of Medicine.



The 2014 recipient is Daniel Terveen,

a Spearfish native currently attending The University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine. Daniel hopes to attend an ophthalmology residency, followed by a fellowship, with plans to return to South Dakota to begin his career. Daniel noted, "I love the intricate and precise nature of ophthalmology as well as the ability to follow patients throughout their care."

Earlier this year, NPEF had the opportunity to personally meet and work with Daniel when he and a colleague completed a volunteer research project on NPEF's Children's Vision Screening Initiative (CVSI), from which a manuscript will publish in the South Dakota Journal of Medicine early next year detailing the results of current CVSI data. Congratulations, Daniel!



Black Hills Area Community Foundation presents grant award check to NPEF

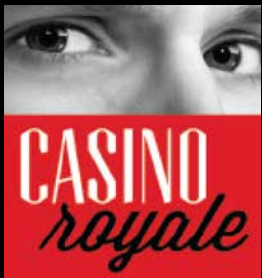
This summer, the Black Hills Area Community Foundation (BHACF) announced the award of 2014 Quality of Life Grants. Awards were based on making a positive improvement and addressing the needs of people in the Black Hills. Northern Plains Eye Foundation (NPEF) is honored to be 1 of 13 agency grant recipients for its Northern Plains Eye Foundation Western South Dakota Lions Children's Vision Screening Initiative (CVSI) which brings free vision screenings to area pre-school and elementary school children.

Shown in the above photo is Karen Simmons-Parks, BHACF Board Member, presenting a check in the amount of \$4,000 to Sharon Zeller, NPEF Chair, and Ronda Gusinsky, NPEF Executive Director.

The BHACF holds endowment funds for 24 agencies, as well as donor advised and scholarship funds, enabling people with philanthropic interests to support the issues they care about and programs that improve the quality of life in the Black Hills.

Thank you, BHACF!

## NPEF HOSTS 2ND ANNUAL CASINO ROYALE



Northern Plains Eye Foundation (NPEF) hosted its 2nd Annual Casino Royale Charity Affair, a "Party with a Purpose," on Saturday, September 20, at the Hilton Garden Inn Rapid City. Community members from across the Black Hills attended the casino-themed event benefitting NPEF's programs to protect and preserve vision and restore sight.

Guests enjoyed an evening of socializing and elegant hors d'oeuvres while challenging local "celebrity" dealers at blackjack and Texas hold'em poker and trying their hand at casino-style craps and roulette tables. Other festivities included caricatures, Plinko "Playoffs," Guess the Chips, silent and live auctions, and a raffle.

Thanks to our event sponsors, promotional partners, auction donors, and guests, this year's Casino Royale was an event to remember, raising over \$25,000 in proceeds and offering a uniquely fun touch point to share the story of NPEF's important community service outreach.

We invite you to join us for the 3rd Annual Casino Royale on September 26, 2015. Watch for updates at [www.npef.org](http://www.npef.org).

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