

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



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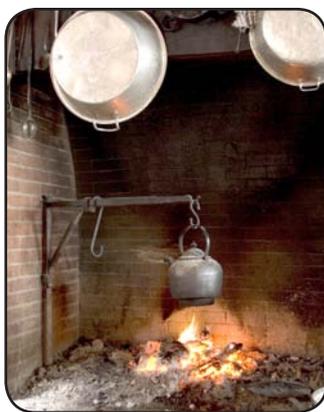
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Do you know the old tale about "Stone Soup?" There are many versions of this old story. It begins with a very poor person offering a "magic stone" to make soup. One by one other ingredients get mysteriously added, and before the characters in the story know it, a delicious soup is created. Like the old "stone soup" story, we in the non-profit world may start with little, but as each of you adds another ingredient, soon we have a savory soup from which to feed our programs.

Inspired by several special gifts we received, we launched a new initiative for 2009—**9 in '09**. I'd like to share with you the inspiration behind the original idea. At an exhibit for the South Dakota Medical Association last Fall, I got to know a delightful woman (a medical student), who told me a fascinating story of an eye disease she suffered as an infant, with correction and follow-up that occurred throughout her childhood. In the course of exchanging stories, she became an ardent supporter of the Northern Plains Eye Foundation and our mission to promote eye health. We were especially touched to receive a generous donation from her proceeds from selling jewelry on her website to help fund our **Christmas Gift of Sight** program. Needless to say, we were most appreciative! The second experience happened when I attended a party at a dear friend's home, and had all those attending surprise me by deciding to give their annual Christmas gift to our Foundation to support our programs—I was truly moved by their generosity! These gifts, along with the ideas of our Development Coordinator, Monae Johnson, sparked our **9 in '09 Friendraiser**.

So, our focus for the rest of this year is to keep on making more friends! Friends to come alongside the Foundation to help us continue our mission to enhance eye health for people of the Northern Plains through professional and public education, research and community service. And our **9 in '09 Initiative** is one way that we can ensure the

STONE SOUP: 9 IN '09

ongoing economic health of NPEF, so that we can turn around and give to others. Building our public base of support is another goal of this initiative. Each staff member and director on our Board has been challenged to find 9 new Friends of NPEF in 2009. So I'm asking YOU—"Won't You Be Mine?" (One of my 9 in '09?).

Donations of any size are welcome. Have some fun and give in increments of 9--\$9, \$99 or \$999... any and all amounts are welcome. And there are a number of ways that you can give in addition to monetary gifts:

- Introduce us to one of your friends who may have the ability to give and is passionate about eye health.
- Let us know about a business that you're familiar with that might help sponsor one of our programs.
- Use a Dunn Brother's Coffee Card (call us to get a card designated for our Foundation) where a percentage of the proceeds will be returned to us.
- Purchase a Herberger's coupon book from us for the next Community Days event.
- Volunteer your time to help us with projects.

In all of these ways, you will be adding your "ingredient" to our "Stone Soup" to help promote **Vision for a Lifetime** here on the Northern Plains.

*****Be one of our 9 in '09 and keep the circle of giving rippling outward!*****



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EYE TO EYE: THE DIRECTOR'S VIEW

Healthy Vision Week: Helping children one screening at a time



We've begun a slightly different schedule for our newsletters, so this issue covers quite a variety of topics. With our **Healthy Vision Week** just around the corner that will be the emphasis of my column this time. I'll begin by highlighting the overall program: **The Healthy Vision Initiative (HVI)**. This is a program with two major branches—one predominantly educational and one more community service-focused. The educational component has many aspects and reaches many age groups, but the current priority is teaching eye health and safety to elementary and middle school students. We believe that being proactive about eye health is tremendously important, and that educating is a key way to maximize eye health and prevent the preventable eye injuries.

The other arm of **HVI** is **Healthy Vision Week (HVW)** which we originally called Vision Screening Week. Our second annual **Healthy Vision Week** will be held in Rapid City and other Black Hills towns on **November 2nd - 6th** this year. **HVW** is a partnership made up of NPEF, eye care professionals and their staff, and business partners. **Free vision screenings** are offered for preschool and elementary school children (**ages 3-11**) for the early detection of vision problems that could affect learning.

In 2008, the year we launched this program, Rapid City and Custer were the only communities served. This year we are expanding to many Black Hills locations including Spearfish, Belle Fourche, Deadwood, Custer, Hot Springs and Kyle. We currently have **33 eye care professionals** who have agreed to donate over **200 hours of their time** for screenings during HVW. Last year 18 eye doctors screened 252 children in Rapid City and Custer, which resulted in 41 children requiring corrective lenses. Other eye problems identified as a result of the eye screenings included convergence problems, mild allergic conjunctivitis, amblyopia, and strabismus. For these children, early intervention was possible and that alone makes this program a success!

This year the focus for HVW will be on providing eye screenings only. This decision was made by the eye doctors who participated in 2008 and attended a planning meeting. The procedure will

be the same as last year—where parents/guardians can schedule screenings by making arrangements with individual offices. A flyer listing participating doctors will be available at NPEF by October 9th. In addition, distribution of flyers will occur in elementary schools of all participating Black Hills Communities. If follow-up eye exams are needed once the child has been screened, participants can set up appointments on their own, or speak with NPEF staff if there is a financial need (a number of doctors have donated their time this year to provide full eye exams for children with a documented financial need and NPEF is coordinating this program).

In addition to the vision screenings, NPEF has a public education focus to HVW. School children will be sent home with an educational piece for parents on how to identify potential vision problems in children. The difference between vision screenings and a full eye exam will also be emphasized, as all eye care professionals believe that complete eye examinations are superior to screenings for early detection of eye disorders and diseases. Listen for our educational spots on local radio stations and look for HVW information on billboards throughout town. We hope to have a television commercial to help spread the message too, courtesy of the generosity of our major visionary sponsors: Knology and Black Hills Power!

It's not too late to help make Healthy Vision Week a success. Be a **Major Visionary Sponsor** (\$1000+), a **Visionary Sponsor** (\$250-\$500) or a **Friend of NPEF** (\$50-\$200). Donations of any size are welcome and will be put to good use! With your support, **Healthy Vision Week** can have a positive impact on children in our Black Hills community. Partner with us, be a key player in our expansion throughout the Black Hills, and help to promote "**Vision for a Lifetime.**" Don't hesitate to call (716-6733), or e-mail kkovarik@npef.org if you have any questions or if you'd like to receive a sponsorship form. For, as Ben Sweetland says so eloquently:

"We cannot hold a torch to light another's path without brightening our own."

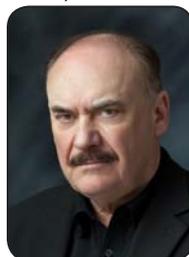
Kathleen Kovarik

VISION FOR THE FUTURE: NEW DIRECTORS JOIN BOARD

NPEF welcomes a diverse group of 4 new directors for 2009 including two eye care professionals, a lawyer and a Black Hills Power director. Pictured from left to right: Dr. Gail Bernard, an ophthalmologist at The Eye Doctors, Rapid City Medical Center (Rapid City), Brian Hagg, an attorney at Whiting, Hagg, Hagg, Dorsey & Hagg (Rapid City), Dr. Jeffrey Rausch an optometrist at Jeffrey Rausch and Denette Eisnach, O.D. (Pierre), and Mutch Usera, Director of Energy Services and External Affairs with Black Hills Power (Rapid City). These four new directors will be serving three-year terms and are already actively involved. Welcome on board!



Dr. Gail Bernard



Brian Hagg



Dr. Jeffrey Rausch

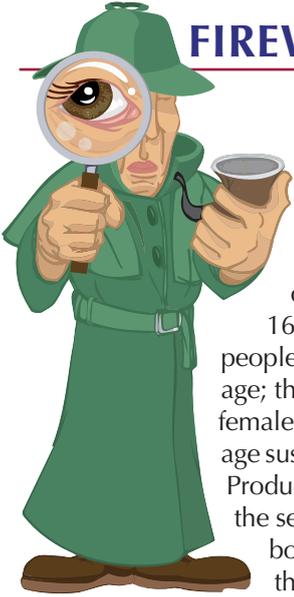


Mutch Usera

VISION FOR A LIFETIME

AN EYE ON RESEARCH

FIREWORKS-RELATED EYE INJURY STUDY LAUNCHED



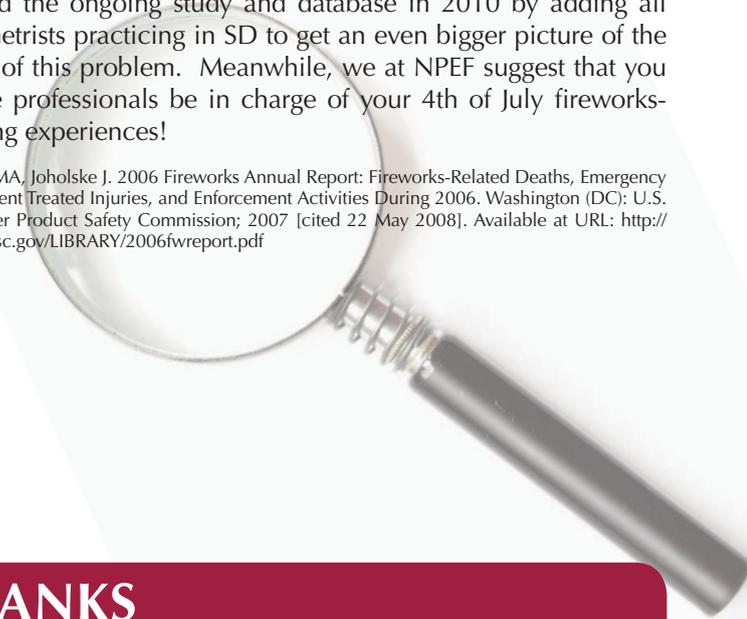
Did you know that in 2007, an estimated 9,800 people were treated in emergency rooms for fireworks-related injuries in the United States? More than two-thirds of these injuries occurred between June 16th and July 16th. In that time period, 1 out of every 3 people injured were children under 15 years of age; three times as many males were injured as females; and young people under 20 years of age sustained 47% of all injuries. The Consumer Product Safety Commission reported eyes were the second most commonly injured part of the body (approximately 1,400 instances). Of those eye injuries, one-third resulted in permanent eye damage.

While others were busy launching bottle rockets this 4th of July, concern about the serious eye injuries associated with fireworks prompted the Northern Plains Eye Foundation (NPEF) to conduct a "Fireworks-Related Eye Injury Study" to gather relevant statistics for South Dakota in 2009. This is the first time this study has been done, and all South Dakota ophthalmologists were invited to participate. Each of them was asked to complete eye injury data forms for eye injuries related to fireworks during the reporting period (June 15th to July 31st). In addition, they were asked to complete a physician's survey/evaluation form to determine the number of fireworks-related eye injuries they have seen in the past 5 years. The survey invited the ophthalmologists to describe their professional view regarding fireworks regulations and restrictions. Information is still being gathered from the eye doctors and will be used for educational programs on eye safety and in building a case to present to the South Dakota Legislature to move toward restricting the use of bottle rockets. South Dakota is one of only a few remaining states that allow the sale and use of bottle rockets.

Yet legislation alone isn't solving the problem. For example, North Dakota legislators passed a bill banning the sale of bottle rockets (to take effect on August 1, 2009), but their new law does not make it illegal to possess or discharge bottle rockets. This means consumers can buy bottle rockets in neighboring states where they are still legal (i.e., South Dakota) and bring them across state borders to discharge, thus hindering the effectiveness of their law. Bottle rockets are one of the most dangerous types of fireworks because they are unpredictable and fly in erratic patterns. They can explode prematurely and break the can or bottle used to launch them, sending pieces of glass or metal into the air, and into the eye. The "Fireworks-Related Eye Injury Study" is the first step needed in the process of developing fireworks safety regulations to benefit SD and the states which border us.

Special thanks to all the SD ophthalmologists and key office staff for their cooperation with NPEF to gather data. Our gratitude also goes out to the SD Academy of Ophthalmology and their director, Gloria Hermanson, for their support, which included a \$2,000 grant to help defray the costs of the study. We hope to expand the ongoing study and database in 2010 by adding all optometrists practicing in SD to get an even bigger picture of the depth of this problem. Meanwhile, we at NPEF suggest that you let the professionals be in charge of your 4th of July fireworks-viewing experiences!

Greene MA, Joholske J. 2006 Fireworks Annual Report: Fireworks-Related Deaths, Emergency Department Treated Injuries, and Enforcement Activities During 2006. Washington (DC): U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission; 2007 [cited 22 May 2008]. Available at URL: <http://www.cpsc.gov/LIBRARY/2006fwreport.pdf>



SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to the following ophthalmologists for participating in our first Fireworks-Related Eye Injury Study:



Prema Abraham
Gail Bernard
Ray Birkenkamp
John Bormes
Dustin Dierks
Monte Dirks
Scott Eccarius
Daniel Hafner
Bryan Hammer
Bernie Hanson

John Herlihy
Paula Hicks
Byron Hohm
Patrick King
Ken Knudtson
Charles Mohler
Michael Moran
Robert Nixon
Greg Osmundson
Geoffrey Slingsby

Alison Tendler
Ronold Tesch
Eric Thomas
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Richard Tschetter
David West
Curt Wischmeier
Paul Wright
Paul Zimmerman



EDUCATION



RESEARCH



SERVICE

NPEF SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CELEBRATES IT'S 5TH YEAR!

Our Board of Directors chose to award 6 high school seniors \$1,000 Health Care Education scholarships each and 5 college students \$1,000 Continuing Scholar scholarships each this year. Altogether, we received 166 applications, the largest number to date! Our Scholarship Committee had a difficult time narrowing down the number of applicants, but our winners were nothing less than stellar students. A typical winner had a 4.0 GPA, took several A.P. classes, received multiple awards, was a National Honor Society member, was involved in at least one sport, and had some work experience.

We continued to focus on students who are pursuing health care related fields of study with both our Health Care and Continuing Education Scholarship. Our criteria included academic merit, involvement in health care related activities or studies, leadership, school activities and community service.

Interested in assuring future medical providers are available to care for you and your family? Help fund deserving college students through this program by calling us at (605) 716-6733 or e-mailing us at vision@npef.org.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SIX HIGH SCHOOL RECIPIENTS



Caitlyn Way
Mitchell HS, SD
Biology (Optometrist)
OSU

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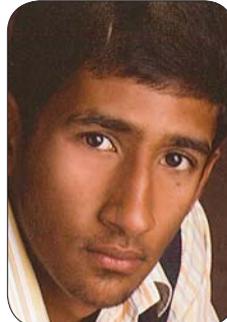
James E. Davids Memorial



Laura Niedert
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SDSU



Kelly Wong
Custer HS, SD
Biochemistry
(Pre-Med)
Augustana College



Sarvesh Kaushik
Brookings HS, SD
Biomedical Engineering
(Neurosurgeon)
U of Minnesota



Katie Rall
Brandon Valley HS, SD
Nursing
Creighton University



Chanesse Schaefer
Faulkton Area HS, SD
Biology
(Ophthalmologist)
Augustana College

CONGRATULATIONS TO NPEF'S FIVE CONTINUING SCHOLARS:



Elise In't Veld
5th Year Winner
Belle Fourche, SD
(Ophthalmologist)
Sanford School of Med.
USD

Sponsored by:

**Rapid City
Downtown Lions Club**



Jerika Ihnen
3rd Year Winner
Tea, SD
Chemistry
(Optometrist)
SDSM&T

Sponsored by:

**Black Hills Regional
Eye Institute**



Maggie Skiles
3rd Year Winner
Scottsbluff, NE
Ex. Science
(Pediatric Optometrist)
W. Kentucky University

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Nicholas Stukel
2nd Year Winner
Burke, SD
Chemistry (Pre-Med)
Creighton University

Sponsored by:

**Pierre-Area
Optometrists**



Rhianna Tuchscherer
2nd Year Winner
Millbank, SD
Pharmacy
SDSU

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORS

Rapid City Downtown Lions Club • Black Hills Regional Eye Institute
Mid-Dakota Diesel • Pierre-Area Optometrists • James E. Davids Memorial

VISION FOR A LIFETIME



CHRISTMAS GIFT OF SIGHT

GIVE THE BEST PRESENT YET!



tasks become incredibly difficult or impossible. That is what happened in July 2007 to Marilyn Jones, the first recipient of the Northern Plains Eye Foundation's Christmas Gift of Sight award.

Marilyn was diagnosed with Graves disease, an autoimmune disease resulting in an overactive thyroid. The disease causes a wide range of symptoms. For Marilyn, the disease most significantly impacted her sight, causing double vision in her left eye and loss of her peripheral vision. What she "sees" out of her periphery is always in motion and she is unable to focus, often resulting in headaches and nausea. She described it as a visual vertigo experience.

Graves disease can cause a person's eyes to "bug out," which is what happened with Marilyn's left eye. During her first surgery in February 2008, the doctor had to break the bones around her left eye in order to put the eye back into its socket, as her muscles could no longer hold it in. The 3 surgeries since, culminating in her Christmas Gift of Sight surgery on December 29, 2008, were to reposition muscles, 1 surgery in the right eye and 2 in the left eye.

Marilyn's sight is still far from perfect—she can't look down when she walks, she can't see above eye level (if she looks up, the room rolls), and her eyes are sensitive to bright light, to name a few limitations. But even with all of that, her ability to see has improved significantly since her last surgery. The double vision has for the most part been eliminated, though it will sometimes kick in when she is tired. "Having double vision is worse than losing sight in one eye, because your brain is constantly having to reshift," says Marilyn. Her peripheral vision is also still problematic, but she has seen some improvement from one rehabilitation appointment and doing eye exercises. She is hopeful that ongoing exercises will continue to help improve this, and reduce some of the resulting headaches.

One of the best results from her Christmas Gift of Sight surgery is being able to read again. Though she has to place what she

is reading in the right position, Marilyn is thankful for the improvement. She is also grateful for friends who help her, and she has learned that it is ok to ask for help. Marilyn speaks of being a survivor, and having limitations pushes her to overcome obstacles and rise to challenges. She also believes that going through this journey has made her a better person and more compassionate for other disabled people.

After giving up her job, setting aside her cabinet-making skills, and exhausting her savings and her early retirement account to make ends meet, there was no money left to pay for her fourth surgery. She is grateful to the Northern Plains Eye Foundation, Dr. Nixon, the Black Hills Regional Eye Institute, and Business Sponsors (Epic Outdoor Advertising, Lamar Outdoor Advertising, KSLT Radio, Medicap Pharmacy, Simpsons Printing, US Bank) for making this gift possible. Surgery can't always fix a problem, but for Marilyn Jones, it was truly a Christmas Gift of Sight.

How would you like to help make someone else's Christmas the best Christmas yet? With your donation, you can join us in helping a neighbor in the Black Hills see Christmas in a whole new light.



*Perhaps your office or business is looking for a new Christmas project?
Or how about engaging in a different kind of "gift exchange"?*



Partner with NPEF in giving to Christmas Gift of Sight!
Call us to find out ways that your office can get involved...

OR

Complete the attached envelope & add the letters "CGOS,"
to designate the use of your gift.



EDUCATION



RESEARCH



SERVICE

NPEF OUT AND ABOUT



Business 2 Business Expo.



Health & Human Services

Rapid City Chamber Events

Spring Journal Club



Alcon Sponsors

Eye Health & Safety Educational Programs



Healthy Vision Week Planning Meeting



A BIG THANK YOU TO STARBUCKS

for providing the very popular coffee for NPEF's booth at the Health & Human Services Health Fair on May 2nd.

THANK YOU TO 2008 DONORS

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 Ms. Linda Arnio
 Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Baldwin
 Dr. & Mrs. John Barlow
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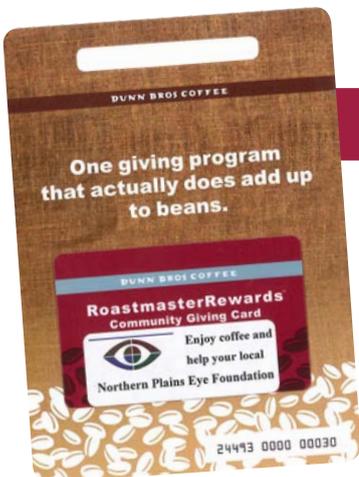
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 Simpsons Printing



As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.
 ~John Fitzgerald Kennedy



DRINK DUNN BROS AND BENEFIT FOUNDATION

* 10% of all coffee bean and coffee purchases goes to NPEF

* Interested in participating?
 Call (605) 716-6733 or e-mail us at
 cjaniel@npef.org and we'll send you a card

* Help us reach \$150 in donations by November 1st!





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FOUNDATION

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NORTHERN PLAINS EYE
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COMING ATTRACTIONS

South Dakota Philanthropy Day - Oct. 2
World Sight Day - Oct. 8
Healthy Vision Week - Nov. 2 - 6
Board of Director's Annual Meeting - Nov. 17
Parade of Lights - Nov. 28
Christmas Gift of Sight - December

