

The Spectacle

Official Publication of the Opticians Association of Virginia

BUILDING BRIDGES FALL SYMPOSIUM

The OAV recently held its Fall Symposium in the idyllic setting of Natural Bridge Virginia. Opticians from around Virginia were present to learn new techniques and discover new technologies.

There were many highlights of the convention: Judy Canty started off the weekend with an informative presentation on Free-form lenses and the impact it is having on offices across the state. The second hour was an impromptu round table discussion on the ethics of disclosing PD's to patients and the methodology different offices used to charge for a cope with requests of patients and non-patients alike.

Sponsored by Bausch and Lomb, Andrew Taddeo was an informed contact lens speaker who gave NCLE credit hours. Knowledgeable, informative and professional were just a few of the words

used to describe Mr. Taddeo and his lectures.

In his first time speaking to the OAV, Jeff LaPlante, sponsored by Signet Armorlite was arguably the hit of the convention. His direct way of speaking, coupled with humor and lively examples entertained

attendees as well as educated them.

Tammy Blackwell with Pixel Optics discussed the latest

in electronic eyewear technology and the discussions continued after classes when she teamed up with Aspex Eyewear and Luzerne Optical to show live demonstrations of the new technology at the tailgate party and barbeque event in the evening.

Great weather was on hand for the tailgate party, catered by the Silver Pig and

sponsored by Robert Flippin.

Sunday's certificate class featured Jackie O'Keefe discussing solutions for patients who return saying "I can't see!" Kristi Green provided a hands-on class to help opticians practice the techniques learned in

the prior session. To cap it off, Robert Flippin presented "Am I Legal?"

which succeeded in reinforcing the laws that apply not only to opticians, but to doctors and unlicensed staff as well.

While Natural Bridge was certainly an interesting location for the event, it did not disappoint! The mountain air and history of the area, as well as the beauty of the surrounding made the weekend a lovely getaway and an entertaining and an educational one, at that!

*"Jeff LaPlante,
sponsored by
Signet Armorlite
was arguably the
hit of the
symposium."*



Learning about the tools and how to do adjustments in the Hand-On portion of Sunday's certificate class.

Inside this issue:	
From the President	2
Committee Updates	3
Ask the Lab Is It Legal?	4
They all look the same to me!	5
How Accurate are Internet Eyeglasses?	7

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

I can't begin to tell you how amazing our 2011 Fall Symposium was. The speakers were fantastic, the meals delicious, the facility convenient, the tailgate party fun and the mountainous backdrop was breathtaking. What I observed the most was how much fun everyone was having. Without meetings would be just that...meetings. The enthusiasm from your Board of Directors and all who attended was contagious. How do you spell fun? OAV! And just wait until our 2012 Spring Convention! I guess it pays to think outside of the box.

On that note, do we think you are passionate about outside of the box during what you do on a daily basis. Perhaps you are If not, take a good look inside, soul search and try to figure out what is holding back that enthusiasm.

With that said, I have a little challenge for you over the next few wintry months. Whenever you feel that sense of accomplishment during your work day, jot down the reasons why. You never know, I may just ask you to share your "out-of-the-box" story.

Our workday? Perhaps you have an eyewear repair technique that is not written in "the book". Or your sales approach is unique to who you are. Or even how you problem solve can be outside of the box. Each day that we go to work should present a new experience for you and your patients/clients. So that at the end of your day, you can look back and chuckle to yourself on what you discovered. And sharing such discoveries with your colleagues can be just as rewarding. I hope your workday makes you smile and that



Jackie O'Keefe Lincoln, President
OAV
757-469-5367
okeefejl@charter.net
<http://okeefeopticalconsultants.vpweb.com>

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE BACK TO YOUR PROFESSION

Committees are now forming. To volunteer to serve on a committee, please contact the committee chair listed below:

Membership	Bob Chelak	optician555@yahoo.com
Fundraising/Corporate Partners	Debby Robertson	debby@ruffeyes.com
Branding of Licensed Opticians	Yolanda Jackson	yojo_5105@verizon.net
Online Eyeglass Sales & Releasing PD's to patients	Deb Benner	DebbieBenner@nilseneye.com
Community Service	Airrion Agee	optiguru@yahoo.com
Newsletter & Communications	Christian Toro	ct2940@email.vccs.edu

2011-2013 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT
Jackie O'Keefe

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT
Kristi Green

SECOND VICE-PRESENT
Arrion Agee

TREASURER
Tom Kirkland

SECRETARY
Tami Reavis

CAPITAL DIRECTORS
Deb Benner
Yvonne Metten

CENTRAL DIRECTORS
Jennifer Gibson
Heather Maddox

NORTHERN DIRECTORS
Tim Lane
Don Price

TIDEWATER DIRECTORS

Yolanda Jackson
Ed Millan, Jr

SOUTH WEST DIRECTORS

Bob Chelak
Robert Hall

STUDENT/INTERN

Christian Toro

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Debby Robertson

COMMITTEE UPDATES

COMMUNITY SERVICE

As Fall arrives and the holidays begin to quickly approach, we often hear TV and radio announcements reminding us to help out the less fortunate in our communities. Participating in community service activities has always been in the back of my mind and maybe it has been in yours. However, if you are like me, the thought comes and goes as my attention to the details of everyday life fill up each day. Last year I was introduced to a volunteer organization that a friend in Tennessee is participating in. Remote Area Medical also known as RAM.USA is an amazing organization that offers us the opportunity to utilize our opticianry skills to help people in need across in the US and other

countries.

I often heard stories from my academic peers of exciting mission trips to exotic places and the astounding good that was achieved. As you can imagine, I was very excited to find out that there were two missions within our own state! One is in Wise County and one is in Grundy County. I'm proud to say that I participated in my very first domestic mission this past July.

Attending this mission opened my eyes to the need for volunteers within the opticianry community. Most of the work done at these sites in VA is performed by Lions Club volunteers and only a few are actually opticians. They do an excep-

tional job with the resources they have but what I recognized was that so many more could be helped if experienced opticians would volunteer their time at these events.

If you want to learn more about this event or other optically related volunteer opportunities within our communities, please consider contacting us at OAV. Our Community Service committee would love to hear from you.

Kristi Green
First Vice President
Community Service Committee



CAN I HAVE MY PD?

This is a question that many of us are being asked lately. Frankly, it leaves me nostalgic for the days when patients didn't have a clue of what a "PD" was. But, here we are. The real question seems to be "what are we going to do about it?"

If you decide to give the patient their PD you are therefore accepting a certain amount of liability. According to 18VAC100-20-120 Accountability of licensee, you are responsible for your acts and omissions. So if you provide measurements for the fabrication of eyewear, you are responsible for ensuring that those glasses meet or exceed the standards set forth by Virginia. You can only request a patient bring the glasses to you, and not wear them until you have inspected them. If they do not meet safety standards, then you have to trust the patient will no longer wear them and send them back to be remade. That's a big gamble considering in a recent study by Pacific University of Optometry 44.8% of spectacles they had purchased online failed at least one parameter of optical or impact resistant standards.

If you decide not to provide measurements upon request you need to be ready for backlash from the patient. I suggest having a standard response backed up with valid reasons. I have heard opticians state that it is "illegal to give out PD's". It is not illegal, but as of yet a case has not come before the Board for Opticians concerning this issue. Is it possible to lose your license over providing measurements without verifying the eyewear? Yes.

I suggest that you explain to your patient that you do not provide PD's because those measurements are to be taken by the optician who is making your glasses and to verify that they are made correctly.. Explain to your patient that you are concerned for their safety. Glasses purchased online do not have to meet our licensing standards of safety and can actually be dangerous.

Also, explain the benefits of purchasing eyewear from a brick and mortar store. "With your purchase price you get the skill and knowledge of a licensed optician and recourse if the glasses do not meet standard. You also get unlimited adjustments and

cleanings. Our glasses carry a one year warranty against damage and defects and we cover Doctor remakes at no additional cost. This means that if something were to happen to them you can just walk in and be assisted immediately. No shipping, no waiting."

I would also suggest that every patient considering purchasing glasses online read the website "Terms of Use" disclaimer.

Ultimately, it is your license, therefore your decision. Whatever you decide put your policy in writing and be consistent.

Online eyeglass sales were a hot topic at our fall symposium. You can bet that we'll be talking about this again in the spring.

Have suggestions or want to get involved in this committee? Please contact us! We would love to hear from you!

Deborah Benner LDO, ABOC
Capital Director for the OAV
Committee Chair for Online Eyeglass Sales:
Deborah Benner
Jennifer Gibson

ASK THE LAB

Question: Someone told me that they fit tall and short people differently concerning progressive lens heights, because shorter people spend more time looking up and taller people look down more. What should I do?

Answer: You should fit progressive lenses according to the manufacturer's instructions, which generally mean that the frame should be pre-adjusted and the patient should be seated at eye level with you. Straight ahead gaze is what you're looking for. Physical height affects head movement, not gaze. I'm somewhat vertically challenged. I tilt my head

up to see tall things, not just my eyes.

Question: I have a patient that has an antique pair of drilled rimless glasses that have glass lenses and wants me to put their prescription in them using glass lenses also. Can I do that?

Answer: Well, yes you can, but the more important question is should you do that? That answer is no. You'll be hard pressed to find a laboratory who will fabricate glass lenses in a rimless frame of any kind, drilled or grooved. The liabilities are just too great. In 1993, the OLA (Optical Laboratories Association) addressed this question in a Tech Topics paper

by Technical Director George Chase. He indicated that even though drilled and grooved glass lenses would normally pass the drop ball test, the exposed, unprotected lens edges were likely to chip or microcrack with normal use, reducing the impact resistance. My lab, Luzerne Optical, will not process CR-39, SunSensors, 1.55 or 1.56 mid-index lenses in a rimless or semi-rimless frame. Because these materials are brittle, it's not a question of if they will crack or break, but when they will.

Judy Canty is a Territory Sales Manager for Luzerne Optical Laboratories. Send questions to her at judy.canty@gmail.com.

“Physical height affects head movement, not gaze.”

“Using letters of designation such as LDO or LO could be seen as an attempt to deceive the public.”

IS IT LEGAL? - OPTICIAN ON NAME BADGE

Question: There are some people who work in a dispensary near our office that wear name tags with term 'Optician' on them. I know that they are not Licensed Opticians but they say that everyone in the dispensary that sells glasses is called an Optician. Is that legal?

Answer: Under Virginia law the term 'Optician' is protected, and no one may hold themselves out to the public as being so without a valid license from the Commonwealth to practice Opticianry. Furthermore, using letters of designation such as LDO or LO could be seen as an attempt to deceive the public and would be prohibited.

Even if the entire staff has taken and passed the ABO (American Board of Opticianry) written exam, which will then say they are a Certified Optician, they may still not use the title until they are licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia to practice Opticianry. If you see this activity occurring, you may file a complaint with the Virginia Board for Opticians and they will investigate. Go to the OAV's website and click the "File A Complaint" button for a direct link.

Virginia also requires that Opticians post their license in a conspicuous place so the public may know the qualifications of their eye care professional. Always encourage your customers to

look for the license and only trust their vision to a Licensed Optician.

CODE OF VIRGINIA

§ 54.1-1704. Practice of opticians restricted.

No person shall practice or offer to practice as an optician in this Commonwealth unless he holds a license issued under this chapter.

BOARD FOR OPTICIANS

18 VAC 100-20-90. Display of license.

Every person to whom a current license has been granted under this chapter shall visibly display his unaltered license in a conspicuous place in plain view of the public in the principal office in which he works. A duplicate license which has been notarized shall be posted in any branch offices.

THEY ALL LOOK THE SAME TO ME!

How many times do you have to hear this before you take a good hard look at your frame bars?

The frame selections on your frame boards are a mirror of your practice. They are the meat and potatoes of your business. They speak volumes on how you view your patients.

The first thing and perhaps the last thing that your patients see are your frame boards. They need to make as good a first impression and as strong a lasting impression as possible.

Are your frame boards full? If not, you're a prime target for every shoplifter in town. Shoplifters like nothing better than seeing "holes" in the inventory. After all, what's another hole or two... or three? You probably won't notice if another goes missing. If you sell a frame from the board, replace it immediately with back stock. If the back stock is filled with the "dogs" you can't seem to move, use them anyway. You never know, someone may have been looking all over town for that one frame. Put some crazy tinted lenses in it and it will serve as a reminder that you need to replace something that sold with something else that will sell.

Are they clean? A comedienne once said it was ok to allow you kids to write their names on the dusty furniture, just don't let them use a date. Dust anywhere in a professional office is not

funny. In fact it's indicative of a business that doesn't do much business and doesn't intend to either. Frames and frame bars or shelves should be clean. Demo lenses should be clean and free of dots, dashes or "x marks the spot". There is nothing more embarrassing than having a patient ask you to clean the frames they're trying on because they can't see through them. Except perhaps watching them clean the demos themselves. Ouch!

Are they organized? How you organize your frame bars is your choice, but you have to have some sort of a plan. You can organize by gender, by manufacturer, by color, by style or by designer. Whatever you're comfortable with. Just make sure there is a plan in place. The one problem area can be sunwear. Grouped together, a block of sunglasses can look like a black hole. Dark Frames + Dark Lenses = Black Hole. You may want to consider grouping sunwear within each of your other categories, e.g. gender, designer, etc. Or you may want to create a "racing stripe" of sunwear through the entire board area. The concept behind integrating sunwear into ophthalmic frames is to create the idea of prescrip-

tion sunwear. It can make introducing the second pair purchase that much easier.

Are they priced? How you choose to mark prices on your eyewear is also your choice. Whatever system you choose, it should be difficult for a shoplifter to remove. Check your frame bars frequently to make sure that whatever system you use is visible on each frame and that the prices are current and correct.

Populating the boards

This is where we all get into trouble from time to time. You know how many frames your boards can accommodate. Keep in mind that you

cannot be all things to all people and that you cannot buy only the frames that YOU like. You have an idea of what your patients want and can afford. Buy the frames that your patients will like and can afford. Buy frames that work with your patient mix. For instance, if your practice sees a significant percentage of children, then your children's frame mix should reflect that. Set a limit on the number of lines you can carry and stick to it. Allot a percentage of board space to each line and then work with your frame reps to keep those spaces filled with products that will move.

As a side note, make sure that you and your staff always wear current eyewear styles, both ophthalmic and suns. You are all walking advertisements for your dispensary, even on days off. I encourage you to have everyone wear great eyeglasses, even staff members who don't need correc-

(Continued on page 6)



A full frame board discourages shoplifters and give you more to sell.

"The concept behind integrating sunwear ... is to create the idea of prescription sunwear... introducing the second pair purchase"

SOMETHING TO TRY

Frame pricing is not understood by most optical patients as they have little knowledge of the cost benefits of different attributes such as flex hinges, nickel free metals, country of origin and so on.

Patients will often ask for a low price frame or look at low priced frames first. There is no

rule that says you need to display ALL your low price frames. Keep your less expensive frames readily available to present when price is an objection, but show the best ones, pointing out the key features. Often the most expensive frames that are locked up and the low priced ones the most available for the optical con-

sumer to try on. Since the expensive frames are not easily accessible, the patient is less likely to try them on, and you are less likely to sell them!

If you can't put away the low priced frames, keep the more expensive frames at eye level, where your customer is more focused.



Left: Past President Debby Robertson, with Carter Lowry, former State Board member and Billie Taylor current Chairman of the Virginia State Board for opticians. Right: Bikers Robert, Jackie, Tami, Robert, Debby and Ron on the Parkway.



THEY ALL LOOK THE SAME TO ME! (CONT)

(Continued from page 5)

tive lenses.

Making your inventory work for you

Effective and attractive displays are a great way for inventory to sell itself. However, there are some simple rules to follow.

Make your display tell a story. Who are you appealing to with the line? Does the line have a distinctive feature that will make it more attractive?

Make your display “user friendly”. If you want your patients to try on the frames, make sure they feel free to pick them up without destroying their surroundings.

Allow the frames to “breathe”. Too many frames too close together? Patients can't see anything. Like not seeing the forest for the trees. Build your display using everything you want to use and then begin taking things away until you have a fresh and clear picture. You're selling frames, not display props, right?

Change and update your displays often. While pa-

tients may not come in often enough to get tired of them, you may forget the frames are there as well. When my children were young, I used to rotate the toys they played with so that it seemed that there was always something new. Frames are like that too.

Your frame inventory represents a significant portion of your working capital and it needs to be carefully monitored so that the return on your investment is a positive number.

You need to:

- Track sales
- Monitor patient demographics
- Watch for excessive returns as a measure of quality/durability
- Be aware of trends and style changes

Above all, you need to be ready and willing to share your excitement about your frame selection with every patient who walks through the door.



Sally Silman, Tami Hall, and Carolyn Snell.



Francisco Altamirano, John Carlo, Billie Taylor, Russel Snodgrass, and Rodney Smith with his wife, Hilda.

HOW ACCURATE ARE INTERNET EYEGLASSES?

There has been much debate about the sale of eyeglasses online. For Virginia's Opticians it opens up questions of ethics and liability when considering whether or not to release a patient's PD. For consumers, it opens up the question as to whether their eyeglasses have been fabricated to safety standards mandated by laws pertaining to their state. Much has been assumed and generalized about the products purchased from online websites, but nothing has been proved...until now.

The Pacific University College of Optometry in Forest Grove, Oregon investigated the safety of prescription eyewear ordered from online vendors and delivered directly to consumers. They studied compliance with the optical tolerance and impact resistance requirements of the eyewear ordered.

The University looked at over 150 pairs of glasses, comprising over 300 lenses, ordered from the 10 most visited internet vendors and the results were astounding.

Spectacles ordered consisted of ranges of lens and frame materials, lens styles and reflecting current distributions in the United States. They evaluated the completed pairs measuring sphere power, cylinder power and axis, add power (if indicated), horizontal prism imbalance, and impact testing.

In evaluating the spectacles received, the study found that several spectacles were provided incorrectly, such as single vision instead of multifocal and lens treatments were added or omitted. In 28.6% of spectacles, at least 1 lens failed tolerance standards for at least 1 parameter,

and in 22.7% of spectacles, at least 1 lens failed impact testing. Overall, almost 45% of spectacles failed at least 1 parameter of optical or impact testing.

Nearly half of prescription spectacles delivered directly by online vendor did not meet either the optical requirements of the patient's visual needs or the physical requirements for the patient's safety.

With this kind of record, the value of Opticians is underscored in the importance of checking eyewear before dispensing it to patients. Opticians verify that the eyewear is made to the safety standards required by law, as well as ensure that the lenses that were ordered are the lenses that are received.

“Remind patients to ‘Look for the License’.”

How Much do your Colleagues Earn? Are you Earning Enough?

Watch your mailbox and your e-mail. The OAV will be conducting their first ever salary survey.

We will be asking about salary, benefits, area of the state, qualifications and length of service. When you receive it, please fill it out completely and honestly. All responses will remain anonymous.

The more people that fill it out, the more useful it will be, so do your part and answer the survey!

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 19-20, 2012—OAA Leadership Conference

February 29-March 4, 2012—SECO—Atlanta, GA

March 22-25, 2012—Vision Expo East—New York, NY

April 6, 2012—Virginia State Board for Opticians Meeting—Richmond, VA

April 20, 2012—OAV Board Meeting—Richmond, VA

April 21-22, 2012—OAV Spring Convention and Trade Show—Richmond, VA



OPTICIANS ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA

14 N 8th Street
Richmond, VA 23219
Phone: 866-734-9251
Fax: 877-800-1103
E-mail: oav@vaopticians.org
www.vaopticians.org

[We're on the web
www.vaopticians.org]

Advancing Virginia's Opticians

Opticians Association of Virginia
presents
Boots & Buckles
Spring Convention
and
Trade Show
April 21 & 22, 2012
Holiday Inn Koger Center
Richmond, VA