This past week, Nancy, Jim, and I had the opportunity to represent the NDOA at the AOA Annual Congress in Dallas. Early in the conference there were some pretty big questions, and the biggest was the issue of a special dues assessment, to help fund a positive image campaign for optometry. Another significant issue involved the two open trustee positions on the AOA board, which were being contested by four candidates.

THE ELECTION FOR THE TRUSTEE positions went smoothly. The new trustees to the AOA board are Dr. David Cockrell of Oklahoma and Dr. Ron Hopping of Texas. A more important race for us North Dakotans will be held next year, when Dr. Dori Carlson will be up for re-election to the AOA board. She will be running for one of two open spots, and at least three candidates are already on the ticket. It’s not too early now to start planning a trip to the congress next year in Las Vegas, to support Dori in her quest.

THE DUES ASSESSMENT WAS PASSED unanimously in the House of Delegates. During the course of the meeting, a very strong case was made to assess dues in order to pay for a positive image campaign. The dues assessment was passed unanimously in the House of Delegates.

Continued on Page 3
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was made for the need for a public relations campaign. I am confident that the company running the campaign, Hill and Knowlton, is a good choice, and a good fit for our profession.

**“PROUD TO BE AN OPTOMETRIST”**

**THIS PHRASE CAME UP REPEATEDLY** during the congress, and there were times when these words really hit home. I felt this phrase while listening to Dr. Scott Jens, the Wisconsin optometrist who has taken on the task of developing the Infantsee program. This is a man who is driven by the good he is doing. His passion for the program and his honest devotion to the children who will be helped, comes through in all of his presentations.

**I FELT THE PHRASE AGAIN** during a presentation by Dr. Brian Holden from Australia. He is the leader of a new group called “Optometry Giving Sight.” This organization has a mission to work on a worldwide scale to improve the vision conditions (primarily refractive error) of people living in poverty.

**I FELT THE PHRASE AGAIN** during the awarding of the VSP “People First” national award. The doctor who received this award has taken VOSH to a new level, to the point where he has coordinated the construction of three vision clinics to provide care in Guatemala.

**CMS Institutes New National Provider Identifier**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has announced the availability of the National Provider Identifier (NPI) for use in standard electronic health care transactions. The NPI will be the single provider identifier, replacing all current provider identifiers currently used for each individual health plan with which doctors do business.

**THE NPI IMPLEMENTS A REQUIREMENT** of HIPAA and must be used by most HIPAA – covered entities for standard transactions by May 23, 2007. Small health plans have until May 23, 2008.

**TO APPLY ONLINE FOR YOUR NPI, VISIT** [https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov](https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov) or you may request a paper application by calling 800-465-3203.

Additional information about the NPI is available at [www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/hipaa/hipaa2).

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**President’s Message Continued . . .**

I FELT THE PHRASE AGAIN when the coordinator of Healthy Eyes, Healthy People described some of the impressive programs that have been funded by grants through that organization.

**AS INDIVIDUAL OPTOMETRISTS,** we have a chance to directly impact the lives of the people we see, and we also have an impact on our community. As an organized group of optometrists, we have the opportunity to do much more. We can’t do it all (and indeed a few OD’s were questioning the number of benevolence programs currently being provided), but we each need to determine how, where, and to what level we want to help. The opportunities are there, and we will all get back more than what we put in.

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**Thank You**

Dear NDOA,

The sympathy and support that you have extended to us at this time is deeply appreciated.

Thank you for your words of comfort and memorial to the “Book of Memories”. We love Jim and will miss him always.

The family of Dr. James McLaurin
In Memory of Dr. James McLaurin

Dr. James R. McLaurin, NDOA Past President and Lifetime Member, died Tuesday, May 31, 2005 at Innovis Hospital in Fargo at age 77.

Dr. McLaurin was born on Sept. 2, 1927 in Milton, ND, where he grew up and attended school, graduating from Milton High School. He attended the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, ND. James married Hildegarde DeGagne in Grand Forks. He later attended Optometry College in Chicago, Il. He entered the US Navy in 1945 and was discharged in 1949. Dr. McLaurin had 43 years of experience practicing optometry in North Dakota, including Harvey, Bismarck, Fargo and Devils Lake. He married Pam Joslyn on June 6, 1987 in Grand Forks.

He is survived by his wife, Pam of Fargo; three sons, Mark (Shirley) of East Grand Forks, MN, James Jr. of Denver, CO and John (Ruth) of Grapevine, TX; three stepsons, John A. (Carol) of Devils Lake, ND, Jesse (Michelle) of Hawley, MN, James D. (Karlene) of Devils Lake; seven daughters, Dr. Mary McLaurin of Minneapolis, MN, Dr. Debra McLaurin of Anaheim, CA, Lisa (Chad) Nilsson, Jane Comstock, Amy Wazniczka, Judy (Robert) Stein all of Minneapolis, MN, Joy McLaurin of Anchorage, AL; one stepdaughter, Bonny Frith of Devils Lake; ten grandchildren; eight step grandchildren, two great grandchildren; three step great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his son, David and his granddaughter, Tammy Geller.

The Lighter Side of Life . . .

- If you want to keep your teenager out of hot water, just put some dirty dishes in it.
- Happiness isn’t a destination. It’s a way of traveling.
- Admitting you were wrong is the same as saying you’re wiser today than you were yesterday.
- There are too many people in too many cars in too much of a hurry going too many directions to get nowhere for nothing.
- Never pick a quarrel – even when it’s ripe.
- Many ambitions are nipped in the budget.
- Build a bridge, not a barrier. Make a friend, not a fuss. Find a cause, not a controversy. Be a cheerleader, not a critic. Seek a solution, not a standoff.
- Truth shouts . . . But sometimes it has a very small audience.
- The challenge is not so much earning our keep, but keeping our earnings.
- Politicians straddle the fence, keep their fingers crossed, keep both ears to the ground and think twice before saying nothing. No wonder we’re in such trouble.
- A laugh is simply a smile with a soundtrack, while a smirk is a smile that doesn’t work.
- Advice is something which we give by the bushel, but take by the grain.
- Home is a place where hearts are sure of each other.
- There are really only two kinds of people: those who listen to nobody, and those who listen to everybody.
- Experience teaches you to recognize a mistake when you’ve made it again.
- There’s only a slight difference between keeping your chin up and sticking your neck out – but it’s a difference worth knowing.
- For those who want peace and quiet? A phoneless cord.
“NDOA
The Army of Volunteers for Optometry in North Dakota”

VOLUNTEER—WHAT IS IT?
Webster’s Universal College Dictionary defines a volunteer as follows:

1. A person who voluntarily offers himself or herself for a service or undertaking.
2. A person who performs a service willingly and without pay.
3. A person who acts without legal obligation to do so, esp. such a person who pays the debt of another.

THE NDOA BOARD HAS SCHEDULED an Optometric Summit on July 14th to explore the past, the present and the future of optometry in North Dakota. The Board has invited several Past Presidents of the NDOA to share their involvement and expertise.

AS YOU KNOW, THE NDOA EXISTS primarily due to the members who have stepped up to leadership positions, set goals and objectives and fulfilled their responsibilities in advancing the profession, as you practice it today. The battles were fought and won, but continuing to fight the battles before you, will allow you to prosper during your career.

WHEN YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH HIPAA, Blue Cross/Blue Shield reimbursement, need continuing education credits, vision insurance plan participation, who do you call? The NDOA of course!

YOU HAVE WATCHED THE NDOA volunteers and staff serve you for years and may have thought you could do that, perhaps even better! Undoubtedly, you have ideas about what should or could be done, that no one else is working on. Here’s your call to duty, GET INVOLVED! TAKE CHARGE! HELP GET IT DONE! If you have a passion or expertise in a given area, you are more qualified than others, to help conquer the challenge.

I ENCOURAGE YOU TO VOLUNTEER for a new NDOA committee or taskforce, which I am confident will be developed during the NDOA Summit. You will never have a more rewarding experience. My most rewarding experience of the past has been being involved with NDOA members working side by side with their peers, on behalf of the profession as a whole, putting all personal gratification aside.

IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE, the NDOA will need qualified, motivated members such as yourself, to carry our organization forward. Any and all can do it! The time and effort needed is not overwhelming, that is if we are not forced to depend on a chosen few. Let’s align the Army.

DON’T DEPEND ON SOMEONE ELSE to notice your interest and potential. Step up to the frontline, call Dr. Tom Samson, NDOA President or me at the office, to indicate your interest in serving your Association and your profession. The following positions need volunteers:

1. NDOA Officer—Secretary/Treasurer
2. Continuing Education Chair
3. Vision USA North Central Regional Coordinator
4. Eye Care Benefits/BXBS Advisory Committee
5. Industry Relations Committee
6. Conference Coordinating Committee
7. Public Relations
8. Legislative Planning Committee

THE NDOA BOARD AND STAFF cannot continue to carry the load of implementing the activities of the association alone. We anxiously are awaiting your volunteer draft response! We will do our best to put you to work and trust me it’s not, for the most part, without pay!

Have a great summer!
InfantSEE
Tools Kits

ALL NDOA MEMBERS WHO HAVE signed up as InfantSEE providers should have received via mail the following:

- A Sample Letter to Parents—This has been developed as an example of one of the ways you can introduce InfantSEE to new parents. Brochures will be available to order through the AOA Order Dept. sometime in July.

- A Sample Letter to Doctors—Like the letter to parents, this is a tool you can use to introduce InfantSEE to other infant health care professionals.

- Office FAQ Sheet—Information that may be useful to your staff as you prepare to incorporate InfantSEE into your practice.

- The InfantSEE Forms Packet—These forms have been designed especially for the program and are a very important component of the assessment process. Included in this packet:
  - One pad of 30 InfantSEE Patient History Forms—with a bound-in reorder reminder. This form is sent to the parent/guardian of the patient to fill out prior to the scheduled appointment. Have the parent or guardian sign the form. The completed form should be filed with the patient’s records in your office.
  - 30 2-Part InfantSEE Clinical Assessment Forms—to be completed during the InfantSEE Assessment. The top copy is for the patient’s records. The bottom copy (with the names of the patient and parent blocked out) should be sent to:

    **InfantSEE Assessment Service**
    American Optometric Association
    243 North Lindbergh Blvd. Floor 1
    St. Louis, MO 63141

TO HELP KEEP AN ACCURATE COUNT OF InfantSEE patients seen and to collect important diagnostic information, InfantSEE providers are strongly encouraged to return a copy of the Clinical Assessment Form to AOA immediately following every InfantSEE Assessment.

PARTICIPATING PROVIDERS MAY reorder the Forms Packet at no cost by simply calling the AOA Order Department at 800-262-2210. Brochures may be ordered through this method as well, when they become available.

InfantSEE Resource List

- AOA publications and groups
  Optometric Clinical Practice Guidelines
  Pamphlets and patient information
  Infants and Children’s Vision Coalition
  AOA Topical Interest Group
  [www.aoa.org](http://www.aoa.org)

- [www.slitlamp.com](http://www.slitlamp.com)
  Hand held slit lamp
  Bluminator

- Bernell Corporation 800-348-2225
  ***Special InfantSEE Discounts Offered***
  Finger Puppets
  Richman Face Dot Paddles

- Richmond Products 561-994-2112
  ***Special InfantSEE Discounts Offered***
  Lea Gratings
  Teller Acuity Card Set
  Lea Face Stimulus Paddle

- Precision Vision 800-772-9211
  Patti Pics
  Patti Stripes

- Stereo Optical 800-344-9500
  Teller Cards
  [www.stereooptical.com](http://www.stereooptical.com)

- GOOD-LITE 800-362-3860
  ***Special InfantSEE Discounts Offered***
  —Call 800-262-2210 while supplies last***
  Lea Gratings
  [www.good-lite.com](http://www.good-lite.com)

Medicaid Update

As a reminder, the North Dakota Legislature during its most recent session, approved a 2.65% increase in reimbursement for Medicaid services, including vision. Eye exams, as of July 1 should be reimbursed at $47.22.
Surgeon General Commends InfantSEE

An AOA delegation has met with Surgeon General Richard Carmona to discuss the InfantSEE program. After the meeting, Dr. Carmona said, “I commend the American Optometric Association for their efforts to improve the health and well being of all Americans, and I look forward to partnering with AOA to advance the 2005 agenda of the Office of the Surgeon General: ‘The Year of the Healthy Child.’ I particularly want to thank the nearly 7,000 optometrists nationwide who are participating in InfantSEE for all they are doing to provide much-needed eye care services to America's children.

We Are Proud to Announce That the InfantSEE program was “born” June 8, 2005 on NBC’s Today Show!! Viewers were encouraged to log on to www.InfantSEE.org to locate an InfantSEE provider in their area. . . . And the response by both the public and media has been exceptional.

Our Work Has Just Begun and We Need you now more than ever. The number of AOA member optometrists enrolled in the program increases every day. Your participation moves InfantSEE closer to its goal of having a provider in every community.

Now Is the Time! If You Haven’t Already registered, please fill out the information below to enroll as an InfantSEE [provider today.

The NDOA Will Forward Your Signup information to the InfantSEE Program at the AOA.

InfantSEE SIGN UP SHEET

INFANTSEE IS A PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM designed to ensure that optometric eye and vision care becomes an integral part of infant wellness care to improve a child’s quality of life. This program was developed in partnership with the Vision Care Institute of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. to stress the critical importance of the early detection, management, and treatment of ocular conditions and diseases. Under this program, AOA member Optometrist will provide a comprehensive infant eye assessment within the first year of life as a no cost public health service.

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NOW IS THE TIME! IF YOU HAVEN’T ALREADY registered, please fill out the information below to enroll as an InfantSEE [provider today.

THE NDOA WILL FORWARD YOUR SIGNUP information to the InfantSEE Program at the AOA.

InfantSEE Provider Sign Up Form

Name: _______________________________ E-mail: _______________________________
Address: ___________________________ City/State/Zip: ___________________________
Phone: _____________________________ Fax: ________________________________

Please return completed form to: NDOA
921 South 9th Street, Suite 120
Bismarck, ND 58504
Fax: 701-258-9005

Don’t Miss Out On NDOA’s Annual Event

WE ARE STILL ACCEPTING registration for the NDOA’s Annual Golf Outing July 15, 2005 at Hawktree Golf Club.

THERE WILL BE 2.5 HOURS of Continuing Education offered before the golf outing. The registration fee is $90.00 and includes breakfast, CE, lunch, green fee, cart fee and prizes.

YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO invite your staff, allied health care providers, industry representatives, etc.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN in on the fun, please call the NDOA office at 701-258-6766 or 800-637-2020, as soon as possible to sign up.
UPCOMING EVENTS

July 15, 2005
NDOA 2005 Annual Golf Outing
Hawktree Golf Club – Bismarck

October 13-15, 2005
NDOA 102nd Annual Congress
Ramada Plaza Suites – Fargo, ND

JULY BIRTHDAYS

Dr. Tom Samson   2
Dr. Tim Tello      3
Dr. Kari Torkelson  4
Dr. Joseph Thorman  8
Dr. Tom Hansted    9
Dr. David Biberdorf 19
Dr. Jeremy Taylor  20
Dr. George Gero     22
Dr. Michael Rexine  30
Dr. Michelle Carter 31

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