2011 Legislative Conference and Board Review

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This year we celebrate an anniversary for our profession. In 1911, a group of forward-thinking individuals gathered in Jefferson City. This group had a defined purpose: to establish an optometric law in the state of Missouri. That group worked over the next ten years with that goal in mind, and in 1921, the first optometric law in Missouri was passed. The dedication and direction of that group forged the foundation for the optometric profession we enjoy today.

Missouri optometry is again at a defining time. What will doctors of optometry in 2111 say about the doctors of 2011? We have the ability to shape our profession for today and ensure our future for tomorrow.

AOA gains at the federal level have opened the door for optometry in the reshaping of our national health care system. On a state level we are in a very strong position with two MOA member doctors in the Missouri Legislature: Speaker of the House, Dr. Steven Tilley, and Representative Dr. Terry Swinger are both working to protect our interests. These doors have been opened, but they can also be closed, if we do not choose to walk through them.

At the end of 2010, the MOA board of directors developed and administered a survey to the membership of the MOA. The goal of the survey was to find the direction for Missouri optometry. About 1/3 of the membership responded, and thank you to everyone who participated by returning the surveys. The input from members is critical in providing direction to the board, as we provide a voice for your needs. The results will help the MOA Board move the profession in the correct direction for years to come.

One of the foremost impressions from the survey was the need for a MOA presence in Jefferson City, providing the voice for optometry. With term limits in Missouri’s legislature and the political climate that existed in the November elections, the cost of maintaining that presence has become more expensive.

In October, upon being installed as President of the MOA, the MOPAC account balance was at the lowest point in my ten years on the board. As we reviewed our PAC funds and compared those to the aspirations and goals for the profession, we realized that without a greater investment in our PAC, we will not be able to advance our profession. The time has come, like it did in 1911, when we must move in a new direction.

As a result, a committee of MOA doctors was assembled to research the best way to protect our profession and ensure our future. We have to change with the times if we as a profession are to remain relevant in the reshaping of the health care landscape. MOPAC is adopting an “all for one and one for all” mentality. We need every OD in the state making regular contributions. After much consideration, discussion, and research each MOA member will receive a statement for MOPAC dues. These funds will not be used in general association operations, but will be deposited into the MOPAC account with the sole function of protecting and preserving the profession.

As those doctors of 1911 forged a new direction for Missouri Optometry, I hope you too see the direction ahead and join us in reaching new horizons for the ODs of today, tomorrow, and 100 years from now. The actions of today will impact tomorrow.
The 2011 MOA Legislative Conference and Board Review was a success this year.

Attendees moved at a fast pace due to changes in the format of this year’s conference. There was a Board Review Course offered on Sunday and Monday along with the committee meetings and MOA board meetings. Thanks to the many members who attended and contributed to the success of the conference.

On Sunday morning, the MOA volunteer committee members worked to lay out a course of action for the MOA. Following the committee meetings with a working lunch, members had an afternoon of first rate CE courses presented by Dr. Joe Pizzimenti and Dr. Carlo Pelino. The Sunday continuing education covered the essentials in primary eye care, and it continued on Monday morning.

After the CE course on Monday, Dr. Duane Thompson, MOA President, welcomed all who attended the conference. Jerry Burch, MOA lobbyist, gave a brief review of Politics 101, and Dr. Lee Ann Barrett, our MOA Executive Director, presented a short course on proper political etiquette.

Dr. Tim Wingert, moderated a distinguished panel of MOA past Presidents—Dr. Scott Ream, Dr. Kyle Brost, Dr. Greg Goetzinger, and Dr. Tom Greene—who discussed the association's past legislative successes. Then Dr. Tom Cullinane and Rep./Dr. Terry Swinger, along with Jay Hahn, MOA Assistant Executive Director, presented information on interacting with your legislator.

A detailed MOPAC presentation by Dr. Jason Lake and Dr. Jeff Gamble followed. During the MOPAC address, attendees learned that Missouri’s optometrists are behind the states that border us in supporting their PAC funds. A proposal was presented suggesting every MOA member contribute monthly to the MOPAC fund. MOPAC funding is essential to protecting our access to patients and help ensure that we are able to offer the highest level of service to the citizens of Missouri.

The keynote speaker at the noon luncheon was Republican Senator David Pearce of Warrensburg, MO. His talk was warmly received.
The Missouri Optometric Association Auxiliary awarded two $3000.00 dollar scholarships to two Missouri residents enrolled in optometry school: Renee Carter of Hazelwood and Jessica Carson of St. Louis. Both attend optometry school at UMSL in St. Louis, MO. The awards were presented by MOAA officer, Karen Burks.

The luncheon concluded following a talk about the legislative landscape by MOA lobbyists, Jerry Burch and Scott Marrs.

The afternoon continued with the MOA members walking up the hill to the Missouri Capitol to deliver our famous cinnamon rolls to the legislators and their staff.

During the same afternoon, the Missouri Optometric Association Auxiliary also delivered MOA Travel Mugs, lighted eyeballs, and information about optometry to the legislators.

Jack Frost also attended the afternoon and evening festivities by bringing in a winter storm that threatened to disrupt the afternoon deliveries and the Legislative Reception Monday evening. However, not even the winter weather could dampen the warm reception provided for the legislators by the members of the MOA. The evening reception was attended by a large number of legislators.

If you have never attended a legislative conference, you are missing out on a unique opportunity to meet your legislator and discuss issues that are important to your profession.

Make plans now and mark your calendar to attend the next Legislative Conference in Jefferson City, Missouri in January of 2012.
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The MOA needs your help!

The new website about the Missouri Children’s Vision Law—www.missourichildrensvision.com—is live and online!

The website was funded by a grant from the AOA’s Healthy Eyes Healthy People program. It is specifically designed to be linked to MOA member’s own websites, and it features up-to-date information for parents, schools and legislators about the Missouri children’s vision law.

As we approach the sunset of the children’s vision law, it is more important than ever to document cases where the law has made a positive difference on a child’s education and life.

One section on the website is titled “Real Stories.” This is where we need your help. Every optometrist in Missouri has a “feel good” story about how the children’s vision law has helped a child in your community. Please take 15 minutes of your time this week and email your story to Mark Curtis at mcurtis@insighteyecare.com. You don’t need to include actual names for privacy reasons. We’ll post your story on the website, and we encourage you to share your stories with your local legislators.

Please consider linking this website to your office’s website. If you have any questions about how to do this, please contact the MOA home office or your webmaster.
E-Prescribing: What Optometrists Need to Know

E-prescribing enables doctors to send accurate, error-free prescriptions directly to the patient’s preferred pharmacy from the point of care.

E-prescribing generates prescriptions electronically through an automated data entry process that utilizes e-prescribing software and a transmission network that links to the pharmacy’s computer system. This process eliminates paper, phone calls and faxing from prescribing making it more efficient, convenient and safer for patients to access their medications.

E-prescribing benefits optometrists by saving time and enhancing staff productivity. Additionally, it allows real-time access to a single view of the patient’s prescription history which will better inform the prescriber about potential drug/allergy interactions.

Electronic prescribing was included in the Medicare Modernizations Act (MMA) of 2003. This act created a voluntary prescription drug benefit under Medicare. Drug plans participating in the new prescription benefit were required to support electronic prescribing, although it was optional for health care professionals and pharmacies.

In 2008 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a final rule adopting four standards for use in e-prescribing: formulary and benefits, medication history, fill status information, and the National Provider Identifier (NPI). Additional information regarding these standards can be reviewed at www.cms.hhs.gov/EPrescribing.

Prescribing legislation was included in the Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA). This act became law on July 15, 2008 and was supported by the AOA. MIPPA creates financial incentives to Medicare providers who utilize technology to order prescriptions. The following bonuses can be claimed for eligible physicians on all Medicare claims if the successfully ePrescribe:

- 1.0% bonus can be obtained in 2011 and 2012
- 0.5% in 2013

Medicare has also been authorized by congress to penalize eligible doctors who don’t ePrescribe:

- 1.0% in 2012
- 1.5% in 2013
- 2.0% in 2014 and the years that follow

Online Resources
- www.cms.hhs.gov/EPrescribing
- www.nationalerx.com
- www.GetRxConnected.com
E-Prescribing, continued from page 7

Resources available for use include the National e-Prescribing Patient Safety Initiative (NEPSI). This is a new coalition of the nation’s most prominent technology companies and healthcare organizations dedicated to improving patient safety and reducing medication errors.

To accelerate the adoption of e-prescribing, NEPSI is offering free Web-based software from Allscripts called eRx NOW™ to every physician in America. Visit www.nationalerx.com for more information. An additional resource, www.GetRxConnected.com, an online portal that gives optometrists a step-by-step process to help them transition from paper-based prescribing to e-prescribing.

Technology is greatly changing healthcare, and reimbursement may depend on greater utilization of that technology. The e-prescribing movement is another indicator that health care practices are headed towards “paperless” environments, and coincides with efforts for adoption and implementation of EHR/EMR systems.

Pre-Qualified E-Prescribing Systems

Two types of “qualified” e-prescribing systems exist:

- a stand-alone system used only for e-prescribing
- an electronic health record (EHR) system with an e-prescribing function.

The system must be able to:

1. Generate a complete medication list that incorporates data from pharmacies and benefit managers.
2. Select medications, transmit prescriptions electronically using the applicable standards, and warn the prescriber of possible undesirable or unsafe situations.
3. Provide information on lower-cost, therapeutically-appropriate alternatives.
4. Provide information on formulary or tiered formulary medications, patient eligibility, and authorization requirements received electronically from the patient’s drug plan.


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Each One... Reach One

Together we can make the MOA stronger
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UMSL Student Elected AOSA Vice President

Alan Wegener, a third year student at UMSL College of Optometry has been elected to serve as Vice-President of the American Optometric Student Association.

Alan is humbled to receive the privilege and task of responsibly serving AOSA and optometry students across North America while representing the school in Saint Louis. Alan hails from Kansas City, Missouri.

The American Optometric Student Association (founded 1968) currently represents over 6,000 optometry students in the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico.

AOSA is an association of students, run by students and the national voice of optometry students with the purposes of improving the visual welfare and health of the public, promoting the profession of optometry, and enhancing the education and welfare of optometry students.

National liaisons are appointed to convey the student perspective and serve as a two-way communicator and direct link to our allied organizations, such as ARBO, ASCO, NBEO, COVD, CLCS, and others. As vice president, Alan will serve as the AOSA national liaison to ARBO as well as performing other responsibilities within the AOSA.

The AOSA Board of Trustees holds two meetings each year. At the recent January meeting a unique meeting was arranged for the first time in the history of the AOSA. Thanks to the efforts of outgoing president, Saysha Blazier (SCCO), and the leadership of the AOA, we held a joint luncheon and open discussion between the Boards of Trustees of the AOSA and the AOA.

The goal of this luncheon was twofold; to further the process of opening the lines of communication between the two boards and to discuss ways in which the AOSA and AOA can work together to foster increased student involvement in the AOSA in order to transform this ‘youthful exuberance’ into active involvement in our state associations as well as the AOA.

This discussion proved remarkably productive and ranged from topics like student debt load to Optometry’s Meeting® to how to successfully pull off a bowtie like Dr. Steven Loomis. Our hope is to continue this joint meeting to keep the lines of communication open and ideas flowing freely.
Optometry Cares – Your AOA Foundation – wishes you a prosperous, healthy New Year!

AOA members and Optometry Cares are partners in every program and project of the Foundation. Optometrists deliver the care to the programs’ patients; Optometry Cares provides the materials, support and program structure.

2011 presents new opportunities for us to partner:

• VISION USA celebrates its 20th anniversary this year; we need more doctors to see patients to keep up with the continuing high demand for care. The more providers who donate care, the fewer donations per individual are necessary to meet the need.
• InfantSEE® needs a form returned for every baby you see. Help us have an accurate count of how many babies the program serves. Send your forms to 243 N. Lindbergh Blvd, 1st Floor, St. Louis, MO 63141.
• We’re looking for optometry practices that would be interested in participating in our workplace giving campaign. Offer Optometry Cares as an option in your employees’ payroll deduction, and help support the causes of the Foundation.
• Share your stories about how VISION USA and InfantSEE® improves the quality of life for the patients who come to your office.
• Honor a colleague, friend or family member with a donation to the Optometry Cares Book of Memory, which supports the Endowment Fund.

To take part in any of these opportunities, simply send an e-mail to Foundation@aoa.org. Our staff will be in touch. We look forward to our partnership in 2011!

For more information, please visit www.aoafoundation.org

Join the MOA / AOA Para Section

Did you know the AOA’s Paraoptometric Section is the nation’s largest organization serving the needs of optometric assistants and technicians? It’s true, and the same can be said, on a statewide level, about the MOA’s Paraoptometric Section.

Together with the optometrist, paraoptometrics play a valuable role in providing quality eye care to each and every patient who enters the office or clinic.

Joining the Paraoptometric Section offers recognition, education, involvement, networking and volunteer opportunities for members. Membership in the Paraoptometric Section opens the door to personal growth and professional development for all paraoptometrics.

To learn more, visit the MOA’s Paraoptometric Section Online.

Learn more about the AOA’s Paraoptometric Section offerings by downloading these materials available in the online version of VISION:

• AOA Paraoptometric Section Benefits of Membership
• AOA Paraoptometric Member Brochure

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April

3-6  2011 AOA Congressional Meeting
     Washington DC

May

7-8  2011 Midwest Eyecare Congress
     Marriott at Union Station
     St Louis, Missouri

June

3-4  2011 MOA Leadership Retreat
     Country Club Hotel
     Lake Ozark, Missouri

15-19 2011 Optometry’s Meeting
      Salt Lake City, Utah

October

13-16 2011 MOA Convention
      Chateau on the Lake
      Branson, Missouri
Of the nine local optometric societies of the MOA, eight met and have event reports for this issue of VISION.

Central Missouri Optometric Society (COS)
Trustee: Jeffrey Gamble, OD
The Central Optometric Society decided to forgo an October meeting in order to encourage society members to attend the MOA Annual Conference.

Our November meeting was a sponsored by Allergan. Shachar Tauber, MD from St. John’s in Springfield presented a lecture on Dry Eye Treatments. A lively discussion ensued and many good ideas were exchanged.

The COS did not meet in December to allow our members to enjoy the holidays with their families.

Our January meeting will again be sponsored by Allergan featuring Dr. Brett King lecturing on glaucoma. Dr. Chris DeRose will assume the office of Vice-President.

Greater Ozark Optometric Society (GOOS)
Trustee: Scott Burks, OD
The Greater Ozark Optometric Society met on December 7, for a business meeting during which we took the MOA survey and talked about the priorities for the MOA in the coming years. We hope to have a presidential visit, from MOA President Duane Thompson in February or March of 2011.

The Northeast Optometric Society (NEOS)
Trustee: Mindy Blackford, OD
The Northeast Optometric Society met on December 2 at the Pear Tree in Bevier, MO, with 10 members in attendance.

A presentation and survey by MOA-PAC started off the evening. Dr. Duane Thompson, MOA President briefed the group on current MOA events. It was voted to collect dues from each member in 2011 in the amount of $25.00. Dr. Craig Rose, our Treasurer will assess each member.

Keypersons were discussed, and we now have all our senators and representatives covered.

NEOS elected a new president, Dr. Alison Burd. We are looking forward to an eventful and informative Legislative Conference in January. Our next meeting will be held in late February or early March.

Northwest Optometric Society (NWOS)
Trustee: Jeffrey Powell, OD
The Northwest Optometric Society met along with the Kansas City Optometric Society in December for the presidential visit. The society keyperson list was established for the new legislators.

St. Louis Optometric Society (SLOS)
Trustee: Thomas Cullinane, OD
Trustee: Robert Goerss, OD
The St. Louis Optometric Society continues to hold its monthly meetings at the Marriott West in Chesterfield. During the October 12 meeting, AMO sponsored Chris Ulrich, DO, who discussed optometry’s role in cataract surgery and IOL selection. The November 9th meeting was hosted by Hydrogel Vision with discussion on the Clarity H2O contact lens and two hours of CE presented by Thomas Kislan, OD. The CE was preceded by the MOA presidential visit.

* Secretary/Treasurer: Dr. Abbie Rondeau-Nelson

* President: Dr. Chad Renner
* Vice President: Dr. Stephanie Erker
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Society Reports, continued

SLOS, continued
The December Holiday gathering was held at Café Napoli in Clayton and was sponsored by Midland Optical. The annual event offers local society members a chance to relax over dinner and a little trivia. The January 11th meeting will be hosted by Vistakon with a dinner and one hour of CE presented by Steven Goodrich, MD. Firestone Optics will sponsor the February 9th meeting.

Southeast Optometric Society (SEOS)
Trustee: Dan Obermark, OD

The Southeast Optometric Society met November 17 at the Hickory Log in Dexter.
Topics of discussion included the MOA survey, MOA membership and the Each One Reach One incentive. We also discussed this year’s legislative agenda and the fact that two of our members, Dr. Terry Swinger and Dr. Steve Tilley have leadership roles in the legislature. Another topic of conversation was Board Certification. CE at the Legislative Conference will be a 6 hour Board Review Course being presented by Drs. Pizzimenti and Pelino.

Event planner: Legislative Conference January 9-10 in Jefferson City, SEOS meeting January 19, March 16, and May 18 in Dexter. MOA President Dr. Duane Thompson and Executive Director Dr. Lee Ann Barrett will attend the May 18 meeting.

Southwest Optometric Society (SWOS)
Trustee: Greg Goetzinger, OD

No Report Available

West Central Optometric Society (WCOS)
Trustee: Jason Lake, OD

The West Central Optometric Society had an interactive web meeting to discuss the importance of the MOA survey and their needed response for future direction. We look forward to abundant attendance at the legislative conference and our upcoming spring meeting to keep everyone up to date.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We ask our MOA members to take every possible opportunity to encourage optometrists and paraoptometrics who are not currently members of the MOA to join us in supporting the optometric profession.

To those of you who have reached out and brought a new member to the MOA membership roster–THANK YOU!

OD Members

• Justin Crowe (SLOS)
• Tuyet Doan (SLOS)
• Jeffrey Horst (N/R)
• Scott Hussey (COS)
• Erin Lutter (KCOS)
• Laura Montgomery (GOOS)
• Mark Peckham (SLOS)
• Eldon Repsher (SWOS)

Paraoptometric Members

Please encourage all the paraoptometrics working in your practice to join the MOA Paraoptometric Section. Membership fees are only $30 per year, and there’s a wealth of opportunity, just waiting for in the MOA Para Group.

If you have questions about the MOA Para section, please contact MOA Para President Jennifer Ross at 660-747-7300 or by emailing: jross@insighteyecare.com.

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Send all unsolicited articles, news, and advertising to the MOA Central Office. All opinions and statements of supposed fact in signed articles do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Missouri Optometric Association.

Deadlines are the first of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

Missouri Optometry's Place At the Capitol

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