



V/I president-elect Larry Hookway, OD (r), presents a Green's phoropter on behalf of VOSH-Ohio to Lic. Optometrist Jorge Cheruse, Director of the fledgling optometry school in La Plata, Argentina.

## Three Board members serve in Argentina

by Ruth McAndrews, OD

When we received an invitation from ALDOO (Latin American Association of Optometrists and Opticians) to assist in an eyecare clinic to be held in La Plata, Argentina in November, a number of us signed on immediately.

The American contingent included Dr. Larry and Amy Hookway, Bob and Shirley Merriam, Dr. Nelson Rivera, Dr. Choi from Dallas, my husband and me. VOSH-KY volunteer Bob Merriam was able to look over potential facilities for his own upcoming mission. (See Bob Merriam's report on his trip on page 5.)

It was a rewarding and informative experience for all of us and our presence represented a show of solidarity for Argentinian optometry which is making inroads as a primary vision care profession.

Before the clinic we had the opportunity to visit the young optometry school in La Plata. The exam room had a chair, chart, and trial lens set at either end. Dr. Hookway's presentation of a Green's phoropter from VOSH-Ohio was very well received.

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## Container of ophthalmic equipment, supplies reaches fledgling optometry schools in Ghana

### Collection plans underway for Central, South America

It's been a long, arduous, suspense-filled odyssey, but finally, after nearly two years of delays and frustration, your donations of new or good used equipment, glasses, books, a complete optical lab and other ophthalmic supplies have reached their destination in Ghana.

Equipment is now being checked and will be distributed to KNUST School of Optometry and the relatively new optometry school in Cape Coast (UCC), both of which have been anxiously awaiting the container's arrival. Extra glasses will be shared with schools of Optometry in Abia and UNIBEN, Nigeria.

VOSH/INTERNATIONAL, in cooperation with Rotary Clubs in Michigan and World Medical Relief, have been collaborating in this project. Initial plans called for a 20-foot container. So much material was collected that a larger container was needed, requiring more funding for shipping than initially budgeted.

The estimated value of the items is in excess of \$300,000. Final shipping costs from Michigan to Ghana totaled \$12,200. V/I raised \$8,200 through corporate donors including Essilor and Luxottica, private individuals and the World Council of Optometry (WCO). Michigan Rotary Clubs who were already generous benefactors, raised the additional \$4,000 needed. Of the total amount, \$1,650 has been kept in reserve for instrument parts and bulbs.

In addition, many local Rotary Clubs around the country paid shipping costs to get items from donors to the World Medical Relief warehouse in Detroit. Phoroptors, slit lamps, text books, uncut lenses, optical lab equipment and even 50,000 pairs of readers and recycled glasses from New Eyes for the Needy were among items donated by individuals and other groups.

There were many formidable obstacles to overcome, but we did it and already we

know how invaluable the shipment is to Ghana and Nigeria. We offer a special hats off to our intrepid V/I Executive Director and webmaster Harry Zeltzer, who initiated the project and hung in there even when it looked like the container would never reach its intended destination.

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Kojo Dom, Director of International Affairs for the Detroit Lions Club is shown here as he organizes and wraps pallets at the warehouse. Kojo has a special interest in the project as he is from Cape Coast where he has tribal roots and he is an engineering graduate of KNUST University.

## It's time for Tampa and tributes, too

The 2007 VOSH/INTERNATIONAL Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, October 28, 2007, in Tampa, FL, immediately following the American Academy of Optometry Convention.

Since this is VOSH's 35th birthday we'll be celebrating the occasion with a look back and a look ahead. Please join us! See flyer on page 4A for further details and mark your calendar now.

### Your leaders at work

During this past year V/I has experienced a busy, rewarding schedule of developing relationships.

V/I was represented at the AOA Congress in Las Vegas last June, Vision Expo West in Las Vegas, SECO in Atlanta and Heart of America Contact Lens Congress in Kansas City. While attending the Las Vegas meeting, president Ruth McAndrews, OD, delivered the keynote speech at the ASCO(American Schools and Colleges of Optometry) luncheon.

At the World Congress for Refractive Error, Dr. McAndrews presented for VOSH/INTERNATIONAL and Board member Patti Fuhr, OD, presented results of the VERAS project in Granada, Nicaragua. Continuing education lectures on low vision were provided by Dr. Fuhr while her University of Alabama colleague, Dr. Wendy Marsh-Tootle, lectured on pediatric optometry.

Dr. Nelson Rivera represented V/I at the World Council of Optometry General Delegates meeting in Mexico City in April. A few weeks later, in early May, the V/I Board of Directors held its spring meeting in San Salvador in order to attend the second UNESCO Congress for Vision and Development at the University of El Salvador. The formal agenda included an evaluation of the VERAS project with regional partners and a forum for NGOs working in Central America. Participation provided V/I the opportunity to work on coordinating with other NGOs throughout Latin America to develop joint projects.

In early June, Dr. McAndrews presented the commencement address at Inter-American University School of Optometry in San Juan, Puerto Rico. While there, she met with students to discuss their humanitarian missions to the Dominican Republic and she had the opportunity to tour their current school as well as the new one under construction..

## VOSH collaborates with other NGOs to develop vision care systems for the future

Accessibility, affordability, accountability, and sustainability. This is a summary of the World Congress on Refractive Error. In March, Dr. Patti Fuhr, Dr. Wendy Marsh-Tootle, and I had the



privilege of representing VOSH at this event in Durban, South Africa. These concepts were reinforced when the VOSH board recently met at the UNESCO Vision Congress in San Salvador.

In 2001 VOSH signed on to the World Health Organization Vision 2020 initiative. The goal is to eliminate preventable blindness by the year 2020. This cannot be accomplished by one chapter or one organization. It requires communication and collaboration to enhance rather than duplicate our efforts. We need to empower communities and countries to provide internal solutions to vision care. Education is a

large piece of this process: education of the public regarding the benefits of good vision care, education of the governments of the cost to their society from poor vision, and education of vision care providers.

VOSH is a very diverse human resource; comprised of optometrists, optometry students, educators, surgeons, retirees, opticians, and dedicated lay people. We also have a good network to other connections and resources. The challenge is to channel these human and material resources toward responsible development of vision care systems.

I hope you will all join us in October to look at thirty-five years of VOSH. By truly embracing Vision 2020 and achieving its objectives, we could conceivably mark our fiftieth birthday with a "Mission Accomplished" celebration.

Ruth McAndrews, OD

President, VOSH/INTERNATIONAL

## V/I Board members serve in Argentina

*Continued from page 1*

We should be proud of the profession of optometry in the US. The ODs in Argentina dream of someday having the privileges that we have in the US. The optometry school did not have a phoropter; they use trial lenses. The school did have a couple of slit lamps and were fitting vial soft lenses that had expired.

Still, students were eager to learn. They have a three-year program for opticianry, 4 years for a contactologist and a 5-year program for optometry.

We worked four days, each in a different location about an hour south of Buenos Aires. Lic. Optometrist Daniel Valverde of VOSH-University of Guayaquil (Ecuador) met us there, having just returned from the WCO meeting in Turkey. Argentinian optometrists from all over the country came in a show of support for the profession. One day, an OD from Nigeria showed up to help as well.

We examined 500+ patients per day. Although local optometrists and students had done some

free clinics previously, limited funds did not allow them to provide many new glasses. Use of good quality recycled eye wear and new readers from the US allowed them to provide more care for patients in this campaign.

Just after our return, we learned that one of the coordinators, Optometrist Laura Brusi, was awarded a \$4,000 grant from the University of La Plata to continue humanitarian efforts. She is excited about VOSH and has agreed to head up VOSH-Argentina-elect. (See page 5.)



Hector Guidi, an Argentinian optometrist, traveled two hours and rented a hotel room for 3 nights in order to help with the clinic.

I think VOSH can continue to do a lot of good by providing basic equipment to developing optometry schools. Dr. Zeltzer's and Dr. Dale Cole's early efforts to collaborate with foreign optometry schools in underserved areas has opened a lot of doors for VOSH. Now the WCO sees our value and sees this association with optometry schools as the most exciting area of growth for VOSH/INTERNATIONAL. Thanks to V/I Director Dr. Nelson Rivera and Optometrist Laura Brusi for putting this mission together.

## Meet your in-coming VOSH-INTERNATIONAL president

When V/I convenes for its annual meeting in Tampa, FL, on October 28, Larry Hookway, OD, of Willard, Ohio will be named the sixteenth president of VOSH/INTERNATIONAL. Just who is this man whose daunting task will be to continue to steer the course of this multi-faceted organization as it continues to partner with other related NGOs to meet the eyecare needs of people who have no services available or who cannot afford them?

Dr. Hookway holds a BS in psychology from Ohio State and he earned his OD from the Illinois College of Optometry (ICO) in 1982.

He had been enjoying the course of his own private practice in Willard, Ohio, for 13 years when he decided to volunteer on a VOSH trip to Honduras in 1996. There was one particular 55-year-old man who worked his way back through the lines to find Dr. Hookway. The man thanked him over and over.

He told Dr. Hookway that he'd made him young again. A simple pair of glasses had meant so much to him. Needless to say, Dr. Hookway was sold on the VOSH experience.

Since that first VOSH venture, Dr. Hookway has headed up medical teams serving in El Salvador, Venezuela, Tanzania, Ecuador, Argentina, Honduras and Guatemala. In organizing trips, Larry usually works in tandem with Barbara Plaughter, RN, a longtime VOSH-Ohio volunteer. He handles all details concerning equipment and inventory. She's in charge of trip logistics.

For the past 3 years, the self-taught computer geek has singlehandedly input data from his Chapter's eyeglass inventory into the REIMS computer eyeglass selection program, making the task simpler and more efficient for untrained volunteers working in the dispensary on VOSH trips.

Dr. Hookway has felt so strongly about VOSH that he has made it a family affair through the years, inviting his two children to work with him when they turned fifteen. Daughter Samantha has been on 3 trips; son Alex on two. Wife Amy has participated in 6 trips.

Less than a year after his first VOSH trip, Dr. Hookway was appointed to the Board of Directors of his state Chapter, VOSH-Ohio, and he continues as an active Chapter Board member today. He has served as Assistant Director of the Ohio Chapter and he has served two terms as Director (president).

In 2003, just as V/I was focusing on major

organizational changes to better meet the challenges of global eyecare concerns, Larry took on an added leadership role as vice-president of VOSH/INTERNATIONAL. He was named president-elect at the V/I Annual Meeting in October, 2006.

Despite the time he gives to VOSH, Dr. Hookway has also managed to find time to serve on the Board of the Huron River Valley Habitat for Humanity, he's a past-president of the Willard Rotary Club, and past Zone Governor of the North Central Ohio Optometric Association. His spare time is dedicated to Ohio State football and basketball.

Dr. Hookway has been witness to remarkable progress in the VOSH organization during the past eleven years. "Implementing and maintaining a website, [www.VOSH.org](http://www.VOSH.org), has enabled us to communicate inexpensively and in a timely manner with people all over the globe. Then, when the World Health Organization added refractive error blindness to the list of preventable blindnesses, V/I's leadership began to network with many other eyecare NGOs (non-governmental organizations) around the globe," explains Dr. Hookway. He gives special kudos to webmaster Harry Zeltzer, OD, for his skill at making connections.

"Working with other like groups has had a huge impact on our organization," notes Dr. Hookway. "We're all learning from each other and we're committed to seeking means of working together to do a better job."

As president, Dr. Hookway will continue these coordinating efforts with the WHO and its VISION 2020 project, the goal of which is to eliminate preventable blindness by the year 2020.

How? "V/I needs to help provide its Chapters information that will help them provide care to the areas of most need," he says. "Also, we need to concentrate on making our efforts more sustainable." Recently, V/I was able to help provide equipment for fledgling optometry schools in Africa and Argentina where there is currently little equipment and few books. (See article page 1). The materials will impact the quality of students' training; in turn, they will be better able to serve the eyecare needs of their people, not just for one or two weeks a year, but all year 'round, for years

to come."

Dr. Hookway is looking forward to meeting the many challenges facing VOSH. "It has a huge impact on all of us, especially on personal attitude adjustment," he says. "You immediately realize how great your life really is, how lucky you are to live in the USA and how fortunate you are to have a skill that allows you to make a real difference in someone's life. And, through the various VOSH experiences you gradually form an extended family of very close friends and the world becomes a better place."



Larry Hookway, OD

### V/I leaders will ring NASDAQ market closing bell on October 19

To commemorate World Sight Day, V/I president Ruth McAndrews, OD, and Executive Director Harry Zeltzer, OD, will ring the market closing bell at the NASDAQ, in New York's Times Square, on Friday, October 19, 2007, at 4 PM EDT. The official date of World Sight Day is October 11, but the 19th was the closest available date. Join us!

"Sounding the bell is to raise public and professional awareness of refractive errors and low vision in international public health issues," says Dr. McAndrews. "It is also to celebrate 35 years of dedication and hard work by VOSHers who are providing eyecare where there is no access to vision care."

### Appointed V/I Board Administrator

At its El Salvador meeting, the V/I Board of Directors voted to appoint Natalie Venezia, an attorney from San Diego, CA, and an active VOSH/IL volunteer, to serve as Board Administrator.

Natalie, who is fluent in Spanish, will be assisting in a variety of capacities. Her first assignment? To record the minutes of the session for Charlie Covington who was unable to attend. Welcome aboard, Natalie!

## **Making Connections: How Harry does it**

Our website is working. We continue to receive over 3,500 hits per month., but that figure alone does not tell whole the whole story.

It's what happens afterwards that makes the difference. Executive Director Harry Zeltzer, OD, also serves as our webmaster. Unless he's on a VOSH trip or out fishing, Harry checks the message board and other contact pages, answering questions and making information updates on a daily basis. Because of his long view of our organization, he is often able to make connections that are fruitful.

Take for example, a posting by Dr. Judy Wilimas of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. A staff member suggested she contact us to inform us about an upcoming retinoblastoma symposium and also to see if there are areas in which we could work together to benefit more children. Dr. Zeltzer forwarded the email to Doug Vilella, asking if his Guatemalan docs might be interested. Dr. Vilella did, indeed, forward the email to Dr. Mariano Yee, who heads up the two VOSH-PA permanent clinics in Guatemala.

Dr. Yee arranged for two ophthalmologists who work in the clinics to attend the symposium. Connection made, thanks to Harry.

Or, how about this inquiry from VOSHer Ken Henderson, OD:

"I have been leading a small group of Northwest VOSHers to El Salvador for 6 years. We worked in the Mexijanos Lions Clinic one day with an eye screening. They have a good supply of glasses which are disorganized. I recall VOSH had a program to create an inventory of glasses. Where can I find out more as our local Lions is interested in helping them put it on computer to simplify the method?"

Harry immediately connected him with Skip Charles, co-creator of the REIMS computer eyeglass inventory system.

## **V/I seeks to establish sustainable eye care model in Nicaragua**

V/I, recognizing the numerous VOSH efforts by individual Chapters in various parts of Nicaragua, (See V/I newsletter, page 1, Spring, 2005) is looking to collaborate with the Chapters, Nicaraguan health organizations and Nicaraguan officials to move these projects in the direction of sustainable eye care which has become accepted worldwide as the desired course of future aid.

Specifically, can VOSH/INTERNATIONAL and its Chapters collaborate with Nicaraguans to create a model like FUEDEM'S in El Salvador? (See article below).

All of VOSH's members have a common goal to serve those in need. The Board welcomes the opportunity to assist in coordinating these efforts through a point person on the Board in order to build this service area.

A feasible plan would have to address

availability of funding from sources in addition to VOSH, as well as the gathering of data regarding Nicaragua's present eye care resources and needs.

Nicaraguan guests who provided input at the Board meeting in El Salvador included Miguel Silva, OD, of Managua, Nicaragua, advisor to V/I, Ing. Sergio Danilo Romero, Mission Coordinator of VOSH missions in Nicaragua, Dr. Francisca Rivas, Ophthalmologist and Director of CENAO (National Ophthalmology Hospital) in Managua.

Since a number of VOSH Chapter leaders who are active in Nicaragua live in the New England area, plans are in the works for V/I president Dr. Ruth McAndrews to meet with them during the AOA Convention in Boston. If you are going to Boston, please stop by our booth and say hello. For further information, contact Dr. McAndrews: [ruthsmca@msn.com](mailto:ruthsmca@msn.com).

## **V/I Board endorses collaboration with FUEDEM's program in El Salvador**

After making an on-site visit while in El Salvador in May, the V/I Board of Directors formally endorsed the efforts of FUEDEM (Foundation for the Development of Women), a non-profit foundation dedicated to addressing and treating visual health in rural and poor areas. It holds 300 rural missions annually and performs 15 cataract surgeries daily in the San Salvador facility.

The Board supports the FUEDEM program as it encourages the creation of sustainable systems in El Salvador, while allowing VOSH members to participate on a regular basis.

FUEDEM uses the funds it earns through paid optometric and ophthalmologic services and ophthalmic materials to finance their mission of providing eye care to the poor and rural areas of El Salvador.

FUEDEM maintains a clinic in San Miguel, as well as a mobile clinic.

FUEDEM has been partnering with VOSH teams by arranging and organizing VOSH missions to El Salvador. They will obtain governmental permission, assist with customs issues, and gather patients.

From VOSH's standpoint, the missions are standard, with the exception that VOSH would not bring in recycled glasses, and thus, would not dispense glasses. VOSH is encouraged to bring readers and frames. Glasses will be made up by FUEDEM, which revisits the areas a week or so later to dispense them.

For more information, see V/I newsletter, Spring, 2006, page 6 and visit [www.fudem.org](http://www.fudem.org).

To coordinate a VOSH trip with FUEDEM, contact Greg Pearl, OD, of VOSH/CA, who will be the Board point person, and/or Ricardo Granada, of Fudem (Director of Programs), at [rgranada@fudem.org](mailto:rgranada@fudem.org)

## VOSH NEWS

### FVI exam time

The next cycle of examinations for the Fellow of VOSH/INTERNATIONAL honor will be held on Saturday, October 27, 2007 at the Doubletree Suites in Tampa Bay, FL.

FVI inductions will take place during the Annual Meeting on Sunday, October 28. Opportunity to earn the designation is open to individuals with demonstrated knowledge, skills and experiences to successfully meet the challenges of preventable blindness. Requirements, sample questions and application material can be found on our website, [www.VOSH.org](http://www.VOSH.org). For further information, contact committee chairman Stuart Frank, OD, at [frank.s@ghc.org](mailto:frank.s@ghc.org).

### VOSH-Argentina organizes

After its provisional status is ratified at the October meeting of V/I in Tampa, you can add VOSH-Argentina (UNLP) to the growing list of VOSH Chapters in foreign countries. The Chapter will be based at the Optometry School of the Universidad Nacional de la Plata in Buenos Aires Province, Argentina (UNLP).

Optometrist Laura Brusi, Professor of Ophthalmic Optics, will direct the Chapter. Professor Brusi won a grant last December to set up a program doing missions in the neighborhoods with optometry students. [Laubru1881@yahoo.com](mailto:Laubru1881@yahoo.com) or [laubru@biol.unlp.edu.ar](mailto:laubru@biol.unlp.edu.ar).

### VOSH-NY and Rotarians team up to serve native children in Zijuatanjeo, Mexico

The care benefits and inspiration of a VOSH mission can continue long after the doctors and volunteers return home. Such is the case in tropical Zihuatanjeo-Ixtapa on the southern Pacific coast of Mexico. A VOSH team of nearly 50 doctors, optometry students, Surgical Eye Expedition (SEE) surgeons, nurses and lay volunteers worked closely with local hospital and city officials to conduct a large public clinic in August, 2004, coordinated by Dr. Jorge Won and the VOSH-NY chapter, along with Lisa Martin, a Rotarian and humanitarian, then from Gloucester, MA, but now from Bainbridge,

Washington. Nearly 2,000 persons were screened, given eye glasses, and 49 cataract surgeries were completed in three and half days.

Today, Martin is still carrying the banner for VOSH in Mexico. Using the training she obtained in both the 2004 clinic in Zihuatanjeo and another clinic in Peru, she has trained a corps of twenty volunteers to screen all the native children in the Netzahualcoyotl ("Netza") School for Indigenous Children, plus twenty teachers and staff. Using the school's lunchroom and kindergarten as a clinic, over 350 free acuity tests were given over several days for the city's neediest children, ages 5 to 14.



Street children who speak 4 different indigenous languages, not Spanish, wait in line for eye exams at The Netza School.

Two local staffers, Ophthalmologist Dr. Alejandra Martinez and Dr. Esmir Balazar from the local Hospital General then did optometric exams on the 60 or so patients who seemed to need glasses. Both doctors had assisted with the 2004 VOSH clinic and were happy to donate their time and offices again. The Rotary Club of Bath Sunrise, Maine raised \$400-\$500 USD, and new eye glasses were ordered locally at a cost of around \$30 per pair, depending on prescription. Some cases were easily remedied with readers, brought in by the US Rotary team.

In February, 2007, a 30-person team led by Dr. Phil Ortiz of I Care International, along with a number of VOSH volunteers, served over 1,500 patients. Recycled glasses not used at this clinic were left at the site to be used for future clinics.

"Capturing eye problems at the primary school level is essential," says Martin, who is also Executive Director of The Netza School Project, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit that is committed to helping the school and its community. "If a child cannot see the page of the book or the blackboard, how can they feel confident in learning?" To reach Lisa Martin: [lisa@lisabmartin.com](mailto:lisa@lisabmartin.com). See also [info@netzaproject.org](mailto:info@netzaproject.org).

### VOSH-KY to Buenos Aires, Argentina, March, 2007

by Team Leader Robert Merriam, VOSH-KY

This VOSH trip was a pioneering project in Argentina, one of several countries in Latin America where the practice of optometry is in its developing stages.

Our clinic was held at two sites - Berazategui and Quilmes, both suburbs about 30 minutes SE of Buenos Aires. The VOSH-KY team consisted of 5 U.S. ODs, 14 optometry support people, and a surgery team of 4, headed by Dr. Larry Stewart of North Syracuse, NY. In addition, we had 10 to 12 Argentinian ODs and 4 or 5 Argentinian OD



students helping us. With two Retinomax autorefractors, we were able to give refraction printouts for each of the patients examined.

We examined 3,238 patients in 4 ½ days. Our hosts are following up in filling the Rx's we were unable to fill.

Unfortunately, for various reasons, our cataract team was unable to perform any surgery on this trip. Our ODs did find 34 cataract surgery candidates

who were referred to Argentinian ophthalmologists for service.



ABOVE: ODs at work in a gymnasium in Quilmes, Argentina. Left: Prescreening a patient



Elizabeth Garland, a student at the new England College of Optometry, pauses for a photograph with Yanilka.

## Yanilka can see

by Elizabeth Garland, student Voshier,  
New England College of Optometry

In April, 2007, Bina Patel, OD, of the New England College of Optometry led a group of students on a SVOSH trip to the Dominican Republic. Following is an excerpt from Elizabeth's report.

When I first met Yanilka, she was scared, timid, seemingly upset and searching all around with her eyes, not really fixating on anything. With a +20D lens, she instantly fixated straight ahead with a look of curiosity on her face. Faculty Coordinator Bina Patel, OD, and I determined her prescription to be around +15 D. I went to the dispensary and, to my surprise, found a relatively small, round, pink pair of glasses. After heating them and bending them for about 10 minutes to get them to fit her face, I went back and placed the glasses on her.

Yanilka smiled from ear to ear, put her hands together as if to clap, then turned to her mother who was sitting a little behind her to the left and called out "mama." She gazed at her mother for a few seconds then jumped up to touch and see her more closely. Her mom started crying.

Then Yanilka turned back to me and it was play time. We began by making funny faces at her and without us asking, she'd make them right back (imitate us) out to about 15 feet. Her eyes stopped moving all over the place and instead fixated forward. She was seeing the world for the first time and she was in awe over all the toys and lights and stickers we had for her. She wanted to see and touch and play with everything.

Lastly, Yanilka told the translator that she wanted to go home with me. She gave me a big hug and never stopped smiling from the time the glasses were put on her face until she walked out the door!

## SVOSH externship program to El Salvador

This summer, Bruce Moore, OD, a professor at the New England College of Optometry and an active VOSH participant for many years, will be leading approximately 20 optometry students to Santa Ana, El Salvador for two weeks as part of an externship program.

Students will work with ASAPROSAR (Asociacion Salvadorena pro-Salud Rural), a multi-disciplinary organization which treats eye conditions and health problems, provides social programs for women and agricultural programs. The NGO also has a program to offer micro credit to El Salvadoran entrepreneurs.

ASAPROSAR and FUEDEM (See page 4) are the two largest NGOs serving the needy in El Salvador. Both NGOs welcome volunteers. For further information about ASAPROSAR, see their website, [www.asaprosar.org](http://www.asaprosar.org) or contact contact Dr. Alan Gruber, [alangruber@massmed.org](mailto:alangruber@massmed.org).

**"I love this (web) site.  
Keep it good working"**

- John Mugu,

Lome, Togo Togo, May 20, 2007

**Visit [www.VOSH.org](http://www.VOSH.org) often**

## To Cameroon with love

Anwi Ngando was born in the city of Limbe, Cameroon, West Africa. Her family moved to Forest Grove, Oregon, when she was sixteen. After completing her undergraduate studies at Pacific University in Oregon, she enrolled in the Illinois College of Optometry. She has just completed her OD degree and will be working as an optometrist in Chicago where she now resides.



Anwi Ngando hard at work at the Ethiopian clinic

While a third-year student, Anwi participated in a VOSH trip to Jiga Jiga, Ethiopia with Charles Covington of VOSH-FL. She was overwhelmed by the instant gratification of those who were rendered service.

In November, Charlie will be leading a team to Douala, Cameroon, Anwi's native country. Indeed, she has already signed on to serve her fellow countrymen.

Way to go, Dr. Ngando!

## New graduate program in clinical vision research offered online by NSU

While we all know how important VOSH efforts are from personal experiences, we've long decried the lack of documented data to formally evaluate the work done on VOSH trips. Now Nova Southeastern University's College of Optometry is offering a fully-accredited, on-line Master of Science in Clinical Vision Research. Purpose of the program is to provide the practitioner with a bridge between clinical practice and knowledge-base to perform research.

The 45-hour credit program will

include core courses along with the opportunity to conduct a research project with an academic advisor in the student's area of interest. It's an ideal offering for the VOSHer who may be interested in pursuing an additional degree and training to better evaluate VOSH mission outcomes and practices.

For further information, contact Dr. Josephine Shallo-Hoffman, Director MSCVR at [shoffman@nova.edu](mailto:shoffman@nova.edu) or 954-262-4226.

# VOSH News notes

## FOUR VOSHERS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE UNESCO-NSU COURSE

Congratulations to American VOSHers Nelson Rivera, OD, Dave McPhillips, OD, Christine Smith, OD, as well as Kajal Shah, OD, of the United Kingdom, who all recently completed a course for VOSH members and leaders. NSU professor Janet Leasher, OD, MPH, administered course content.

The twelve-week module course was delivered via internet. A similar course with greater emphasis on research in cooperation with other NGOs will now be incorporated into a new, online NSU Masters in Science in Clinical Vision Research degree program slated to begin its next session on July 1, 2007. (See related article below.)

Non matriculating students may register to "audit" the "VOSH" course, but must pay per credit hour, plus student fees, for the 12-week quarter. For further information: Josephine Shallo-Hoffman, PhD, Director MSCVR at [shoffman@nova.edu](mailto:shoffman@nova.edu).

\* \* \* \* \*

## ANOTHER SOURCE FOR READY-MADE GLASSES:

The International Center for Eyecare Education (ICEE) has recently launched a new website and is offering high-quality, low-cost, ready-made glasses and low vision aids in a variety of styles. For further information, go to [www.iceegr.org](http://www.iceegr.org)

## Visit [www.VOSH.org](http://www.VOSH.org) for comprehensive listing of upcoming trips and more

We want you to consider joining a VOSH trip. For a comprehensive, updated listing, please refer to the Upcoming Trips list on our website [www.VOSH.org](http://www.VOSH.org).

Upcoming trips are listed in order by nearest date. Several Chapters also have their own website. When visiting [www.VOSH.org](http://www.VOSH.org), click on individual Chapters for those with Chapter links as well as the portfolio of photos from a number of completed trips.



## AMPHITHEATER WILL BE BUILT IN GUZAPA, EL SALVADOR, IN MEMORY OF DEAN SLOCUM, 1933-2006

*"Rage, Rage, against the dying of the light."*

So read the quote under the photograph of the program offered at a memorial mass in honor of Dean Slocum, of Carlton, Oregon, at the time of his passing in March, 2006.

Dean need not fear. Indeed, his light will continue to shine on the people of Guzapa, El Salvador, for years to come as his family and friends have raised \$10,000 in his memory, specifically for this town.

The above photo of Ann Slocum Edmonds, OD, and her beloved dad, Dean Slocum, was taken in Guzapa in 2003. At the time, Dean had just fallen on a slippery rock in a rain storm. He was held in such regard that the local people renovated the pathway and renamed it "El Camino de Deano." Soon there will be 'El Teatro de Deano,' an outside amphitheatre stage.

For much of his professional life Dean Slocum worked for publishing companies. In the last five years, Dean realized a life-long dream and opened a small French restaurant with some good friends. Also in his later years, Dean assisted in VOSH missions to Guzapa, El Salvador, led by his daughter Ann Slocum Edmonds, an Oregon optometrist and active VOSH leader. An outgoing, warm man, he spoke often of the remarkable people he met in this village.

Following a VOSH trip this past January, Ann traveled to Guzapa and presented a check to the head of the school and the community. When she asked the headmas-

ter what he thought would be the best use of the funds, he took her out into the open field, sat two plastic chairs down on the grass, and said simply, spreading his hands, "El Teatro de Deano."

Ann plans to return to Guzapa in two years for the dedication this outdoor stage area and will run a VOSH trip for the community at that time. Any remaining funds will be used to purchase laptop computers for internet access for local students.

\* \* \* \* \*

## ONE SMALL COLLABORATION MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE:

When Dr. Harry Zeltzer's ASAPROSAR team sent supplies to El Salvador in preparation for its medical/eyecare clinic in early February, the container included a slit lamp for the new optometry school in San Salvador. When Dr. Zeltzer asked his Chapter, VOSH-NECO, about possible equipment donations for El Salvador's fledgling optometry school, he learned that by chance, then VOSH-NECO president Jay Jordan, OD, had just received an email from Miko Yokoi, informing him of a slit lamp she would be willing to donate.

The slit lamp was received and transported to its final destination at the University of El Salvador by Natalia Colome, Servidora Optica, while the ASAPROSAR team was in San Salvador.

We'd like to encourage such collaborations as including equipment and book donations with other shipments already in the works by Chapters is an efficient means of minimizing transportation and handling costs. For inquiries, contact V/I vice-president Jeff Forrey: [jforrey@comcast.net](mailto:jforrey@comcast.net)

\* \* \* \* \*

## ANTIQUÉ OPTICAL EYE WEAR:

V/I has a link to an interesting website that celebrates vision aids, the optical lens and especially spectacles, which, though taken for granted by nearly everyone, have had a profound impact on the human experience over the past 730 years. Visit [www.VOSH.org](http://www.VOSH.org) for the link or go to [www.antiquespectacles.com](http://www.antiquespectacles.com).

**VOSH/INTERNATIONAL** is a voluntary non-profit organization whose primary goal is to facilitate the provision of vision care worldwide to people who can neither afford nor obtain such care.

**VOSH/INTERNATIONAL** accomplishes this goal by service as a coordinating body for affiliated Chapters, by administratively supporting activities of Chapters and members, and by actively promoting the formation of new Chapters and new members.

**VOSH/INTERNATIONAL** is a non-sectarian and non-political organization. Currently there are 39 VOSH Chapters. In addition, there are 17 active student Chapters affiliated with American schools of Optometry.

Visit **[www.VOSH.org](http://www.VOSH.org)**

## VOSH/INTERNATIONAL

Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity



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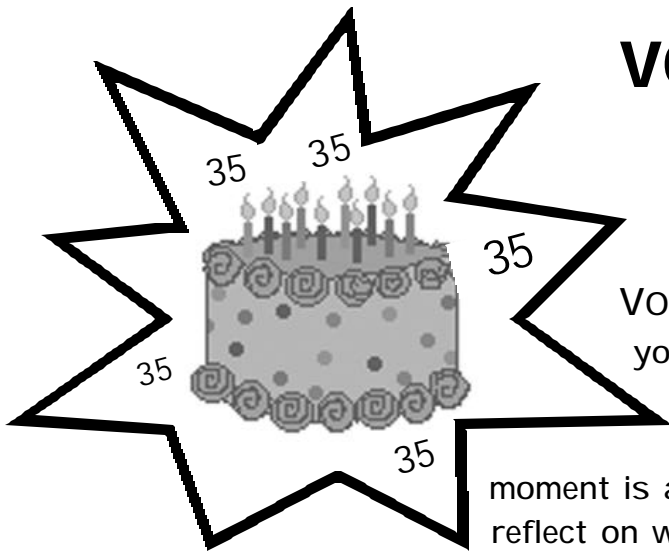
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*In addition, active student VOSH Chapters affiliated with American Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) include: Illinois College of Optometry, Indiana U. School of Optometry, Inter-American U. of Puerto Rico School of Optometry, Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State U., New England College of Optometry, Northeastern State U. College of Optometry, NOVA Southeastern U. College of Optometry, Ohio State U. College of Optometry, Pacific U. College of Optometry, Pennsylvania College of Optometry, Southern CA College of Optometry, Southern College of Optometry, State U. of New York State College of Optometry, U. of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry, U. of CA, Berkeley School of Optometry, U. of Missouri-St. Louis School of Optometry, U. of Houston College of Optometry.*

# VOSH BIRTHDAY BASH & ANNUAL MEETING



VOSH turned thirty-five years old this year. Midlife you might say of us. What a dynamic, worthwhile, worldwide organization we've become. VOSHers have much to be proud of. This historic moment is a time to celebrate and honor our successes, to reflect on what we want for the future. Please join us as we celebrate our accomplishments and look to providing eyecare services to needy people even more effectively in years to come.



## VOSH BIRTHDAY BASH & ANNUAL MEETING

*will be held immediately following the American Academy meeting*

WHERE: **DOUBLETREE SUITES HOTEL**

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The schedule will include discussions and speakers as well as our VOSH/INTERNATIONAL Annual Meeting and inauguration of officers. The second group of Fellows of VOSH/INTERNATIONAL (FVI) will take exams on Saturday and be inducted on Sunday. A photography exhibition will honor our founders and other VOSH pioneers.

### Registration Form for V/I Birthday Bash & Annual meeting

#### REGISTRATION RATES:

\$50 pp before Sept. 15

\$60 pp after Sept. 15

Couples: \$90

Students: \$30

Sunday evening dinner:  
\$50 per person

To register, fill out this form and send it along with your payment to:

V/I Secretary/Treasurer Charlie Covington, 111 Linda Lane, Lake Mary, FL 32746

Questions? Contact Natalie Venezia: [ncvenezia@yahoo.com](mailto:ncvenezia@yahoo.com)

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

# VOSH NEWS

## Viva VISTAKON!

Special thanks go out to VISTAKON, a Division of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care Inc., which gave V/I a \$20,000 grant again this year to assist us in forwarding our projects.

## Peruvian eye care project served by VOSH-SOS

Ver para Leer (See to Read) was recently organized to serve the eyecare needs of impoverished Peruvians. The project is a combined effort of the Peruvian Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, INO (National Ophthalmology Institute), Lions Club, Loayza Hospital, and a local OMD, to better the visual health of Peruvians who are illiterate.

The organization anticipates examining 77,000 patients this year alone. VOSH-SOS, (Peru) worked with the group in Ayacucho in May, where they handed out readers to approximately 1,300 patients. Most patients were illiterate, and most spoke only Quechua (native language) so the team had to scurry to find translators. For further information: Optometrist Severo Sanchez, [sanchez2102@hotmail.com](mailto:sanchez2102@hotmail.com).

## Myfundrazor.org can benefit VOSH

Are you an active Internet shopper? If you are, here's an opportunity to help us raise money without any added cost.

Myfundrazor.org is a major e-commercial portal aimed at non-profits. It sells a variety of articles large and small, at reasonable prices or at the exact same price you would expect to pay in a local store. If you make your purchase through myfundrazor.org, V/I will receive a portion of the sale. The larger the item, the bigger the donation. Also, the higher the volume of sales, the larger the amount donated. Shipping may or may not be free, depending on the company whose product(s) you purchase.

See [www.myfundrazor.org](http://www.myfundrazor.org)

## VOSH-Indiana, VOSH-Honduras collaboration continues

By Jeff Marshall, OD,

President, VOSH-Indiana

A record number of 89 people arrived in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, in February, 2007 to participate in Dr. Jeff Marshall's annual VOSH-Indiana/Honduras experience.

Three ophthalmologists, two from the states and one from San Pedro Sula, performed 62 cataract procedures. Three scrub nurses, one RN and volunteers

John and Mona Delgado helped the surgical area run smoothly. Fifteen optometrists and twenty optometry students from the Illinois College of Optometry provided eye exams to over 4,000 people. Five students were in surgery every day. Once again, Ruth Berkling, wonder woman from San Pedro Sula, handled all of our arrangements in-country. It is believed that half of our glasses supply was stolen somewhere as it went through customs. Having an extra supply left over from past years saved the day.

Dr. Kevin Waltz continues to support the activities of VOSH-Indiana and VOSH-Honduras. His dream of a world class surgical facility in San Pedro Sula is rapidly coming true. For further information: Jeff Marshall, OD, [vosh-indiana@indy.rr.com](mailto:vosh-indiana@indy.rr.com) or Ruth Berkling, [ruthberkling@yahoo.com](mailto:ruthberkling@yahoo.com).



Dr. Kevin Waltz, and his team at work in one of the two surgical stations in the new surgical suite in the clinic at San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Thanks are due to Dr. Waltz himself, the primary benefactor behind this VOSH-Indiana/VOSH-Honduras project.

## Container arrives in Africa

Continued from page 1

Two Michigan-based individuals must be recognized for their enormous efforts. Kojo Dom is a Detroit engineer and Director of International Affairs for the Detroit Lions Clubs; Nelson Edwards, OD, is an active VOSH-MI member and Board member of World Medical Relief. Among their many tasks, the two men handled all the nitty gritty details of storing and preparing donations at the Detroit warehouse site.

With the successful implementation of this initial project, V/I has been encouraged by the World Council of Optometry to continue collecting and shipping equipment to other foreign optometry schools. We are now more cognizant of the costs involved, space restrictions, coordination requirements both here and abroad.

Using what we've learned from this initial effort, V/I has already met with the WCO, ASCO, ALDOO (Latin American Optometry/Opticians Association),

ALDEFO (Latin American ASCO) in order to develop an effective system of providing instruments, books and supplies to optometry schools in developing countries.

We believe that in providing badly needed equipment, books and other supplies to the schools, we are helping their own students improve their skills and hence, better serve the eye care needs of their country.

If you have new or used equipment (only in good condition, please), text books, or other related material to donate, please contact Jeff Forrey, OD, at [jforrey@comcast.net](mailto:jforrey@comcast.net).

Dr. Forrey would also like to hear from any VOSH team or individuals who might be able to transport one or more pieces of equipment among their regular travel allotment to Central or South America.

[www.VOSH.org](http://www.VOSH.org)