

VOSH/International Humanitarian of the Year: Dr. Don Kuehn

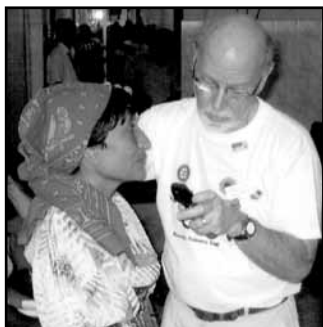
Kansas optometrist, Dr. Don Kuehn, was selected as the 2011 VOSH/International Humanitarian of the Year. The award recognizes a VOSH member who has improved visual welfare through leadership, invention, public health, developing sustainable eye care and furthering the understanding of the correction of refractive error.

A graduate of Southern College of Optometry, Dr. Kuehn contributed to his profession on various committees of the Kansas Optometric Association, being named Optometrist of the Year in 2000. He likewise contributed to his practice community of Russell, KS serving on various boards, as church leader, and as the Rotary club president.

It is through his 20 year tenure as Kansas VOSH Chairman and for his activities in Haiti, Honduras, Guatemala, and Panama that Dr. Don made his greatest contributions of providing eye care to the underserved. For this the Kansas Optometric Association honored him in 2004 with their Vision Service Award given for extraordinary dedication and untiring service to the profession of Optometry.

Don was among those who joined fellow Kansan and VOSH founder Franklin Harms on the first trip that involved other states. Don recalled his experiences with Dr. Harms: "The phone rang at exactly 10:02 pm. I picked up the receiver and said 'Hello, Franklin. What's up?' You see, back in the early 70's, before cell phones, landlines were the only practical way to communicate long distance. All Kansas optometrists knew that if the phone rang at exactly 10:02, it was Dr. Franklin Harms. He would always make his calls at that time because phone rates went down after 10:00. I think he waited 2 minutes just to make sure he got the reduced rate. Franklin was intense and focused when it came to VOSH. His phone calls usually consisted of, 'Can you serve on the VOSH board?' 'We have a trip going to Honduras and I want you on it.' 'We need someone to be the VOSH treasurer.' 'We need someone to work in the VOSH booth at convention.' and so on. He was very persuasive, and how could I not be a part of something that is so inherently good."

A memorable patient for Dr. Kuehn was "a young boy that we saw on the first day of one of our clinics in Panama. He and his friend were playing around a construction site. His friend picked up a fist full of cement dust and threw it into his face and eyes creating instant agony. The boy's mother took him to a hospital where they wrapped



a bandage around his head and she was told that he would be okay. When we saw the boy, we found gobs of cement still under his lids in both eyes. There was only a remnant of epithelial tissue left. We irrigated his eyes, washing out the cement and treated his pain with an anesthetic. He was medicated, pressure patched, and told to return the next day. We saw the boy every day until we left. On the last day, he was seeing and feeling much better. The corneal epithelial layer had improved to about 90% coverage. I feel that we saved that boy from a lifetime of blindness.



Lifetime Achievement Recognition of Professor Brien Holden *By Dr. Greg Pearl*



VOSH confers our Lifetime Achievement Award only to those who have made a global impact on visual impairment due to refractive error in their lifetime of work. First of all Professor Brien Holden has changed the lives of every optometrist and most contact lens patients worldwide with his development of silicone-hydrogel contact lens material at his research lab in Australia.

However, more importantly to VOSH, he was the first optometrist to serve on the IAPB Board of Directors. Dr. Holden convinced their board to change the way they viewed blindness and visual impairment. Prior to his involvement with the IAPB, they based their studies of the global prevalence of blindness upon visual acuity worse than 20/60 after refraction. Brien convinced them to also check uncorrected visual acuity as subjects presented to the study. For the first time these new studies conducted in the developing world revealed that refractive error, i.e. the need for eyeglasses, is a major cause of visual impairment, second only in prevalence to cataracts. These studies clearly expressed the need to increase the availability of optometric services in the developing world.

However, Dr. Holden didn't stop there. He also created the global institutions to effect the changes needed. He and others created the International Centre for Eyecare Education (ICEE) to teach basic refractive services and to develop non-profit vision centers in the developing world. Additionally he founded OptometryGivingSight which solicits funding for these projects from the optical industry, optometrists and their patients.

Under Professor Holden's influence, the IAPB has recently concluded studies worldwide which when published, will show that the global need for reading glasses is four times the need for distance correction. This will highlight the need for global optometry development even further.



Reflections on Boston 2012

Ellis Potter, O.D., F.V.I. President of VOSH/International

What a wealth of information was presented! What inspiration our speakers gave us on eye care activities throughout the world! What a review of events and activities of this year of VOSH!

We have done a lot! We heard:

- Award winners relate their experiences.
- The history of VOSH clinics becoming superb examples of sustainable clinics.
- Many ways to address eye care needs in the developing world.
- Updates on optometry in Africa and Latin America.
- Reports of our chapters at work.
- Details of our partnership with OptometryGivingSight.
- Research that will put refractive error in the headlines and in the spot light.
- Results of our VOSH technology transfer program supplying equipment to schools and clinics in Latin America.
- Updates of our activities in Nicaragua and Mexico.
- Emotional stories that only VOSH volunteers understand.

This kind of meeting rekindles our enthusiasm and regenerates our excitement about VOSH. This kind of meeting gives us a chance to interact, meet new friends, and discuss our common interests.

Now it is up to each of us. Talk about the new VOSH! Tell your friends, neighbors, acquaintances and colleagues about the need for sustainable eye care. Encourage others to participate and contribute their time, talent, and treasure to the VOSH experience. Use your imagination to implement and bridge the gap from the traditional VOSH experience to sustainable clinics. Describe the gratification that you get from helping others with the VOSH experience. Use your heart to find ways to deliver our most important product, Hope to the Hopeless.

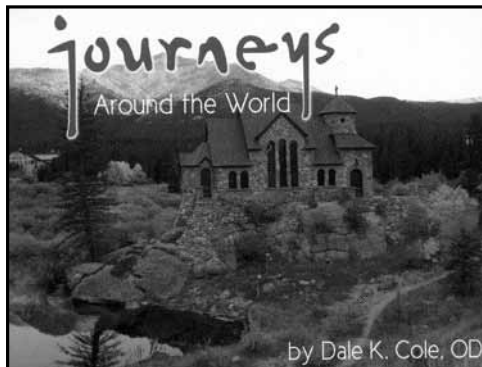
We have done much! But there is much to do! Let's do it!

VOSH/International Board Members

Journeys

Dr. Dale Cole, Past-President of VOSH/International, is also a professional photographer. Dale has now integrated his travel experiences into a coffee-table style book entitled "Journeys—Around the World."

Included are images from 18 states in the USA as well as photos from 17 other countries. Dr. Cole is donating \$5.00 to VOSH for every book sold. To read more about his photography and purchase his book visit www.dalecolephotos.com.



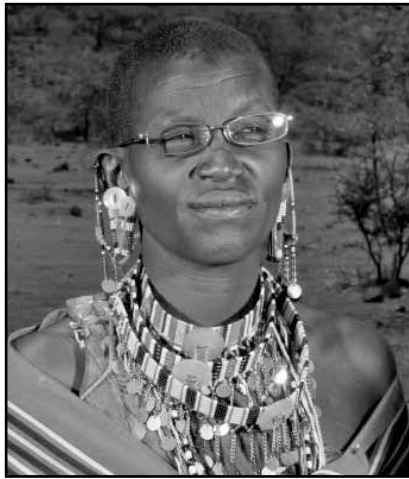
Left to right: John Gehrig, Deborah Wright-DeMadeiras, Harry Zeltzer, Greg Pearl, Ruth McAndrews, Mike DeRosier, Clive Miller, Charles Covington, James Vaught, John Spencer, Natalie Venezia, Les Walls, Bina Patel, Dave McPhillips, Ellis Potter, Dale Cole, Not shown: Todd Fleischer.

VOSH/International
www.vosh.org

Ready-Made Glasses are Available and Affordable

For ready-made equal power lenses, VOSH/Southeast will supply readers from +1.00 to +4.00D in quarter-diopter steps for \$1.00 each. Higher single vision plus of +4.50, +5.00 and +6.00 are available for \$2.00 each. Minus spheres are available in half-diopter steps from -1.00 to -4.50 for \$1.25 each. Pediatric spheres from -1.00 to -5.00 are \$2.00 each. Contact Max Bruss at maxobrusso23@msn.com or call him at 352-598-0153.

Tasman Optical Solutions exhibited their custom Rx system in Boston. It allows you to assemble a pair of glasses with different spheres in each eye as well as cylinders of one and two Diopters at axis 90° and 180°. Frames are ophthalmic quality Monel metal with stainless steel spring hinges and screws. There are three stylish adult models plus a children's model in various colors. Interchangeable, pre-cut and edged, acrylic, asymmetrical lenses in power progressions from +4.00 to -4.00 are available for each frame model. The lenses are scratch-coated and FDA approved for impact resistance. Consequently, a custom anisometric and/or astigmatic Rx can then be provided on site for about \$5.00. Contact Jay Biggs jay@tasmanopticalsolutions.com for more information



"The peachtree glasses were a huge help on our recent mission to Barranquilla, Colombia in September 2011. Once I wrote a prescription for a patient, the dispensers could easily pick the most appropriate frame. The fact that the lenses are symmetrical and will fit either eye made creating the correct prescription quick and easy. This was better for the dispensers because they did not have to search through boxes and boxes of glasses to find the closest prescription. It was also better for the patient because they have a brand new pair of glasses. Additionally, it made the experience even more fulfilling for me because I got to see the reaction of the patients to their new glasses."

— Dr. Michael Cizek

OPTOMETRYGIVINGSIGHT and VOSH

In October 2008 VOSH/Int'l and OptometryGivingSight agreed to work together to create more sustainable vision care projects for those without access to eye care. The collaboration is allowing us to help develop local clinics and well-equipped optometric training programs. To date \$300,000 has been allocated or disbursed to support sustainable VOSH projects. These include:

- Trial lens sets for optometry schools in Peru, Panama, Nigeria, and Trinidad.
- Development of an optometry school at Xochicalco University, Tijuana.
- Presbyopia study in Nicaragua
- Equipment for UNAN School of Optometry, Nicaragua
- Technology Transfer Program
- Vision Center and Outreach Program, Haiti
- Support for satellite clinics with FUDEM, El Salvador

"Yes, We Can!"

(African Council of Optometry 2008-2011)

Dr. Uduak C.E. Udom, President of the African Council of Optometry updated us on their progress over the last three years. Dr. Udom explained how she was drafted into a leadership role in 2008, given a title, no previous secretarial notes, and no treasury.

First of all, the mission statement and logo were revised, a temporary office space borrowed, and email connections established. From there standing committees were established and there was an outreach with Special Olympics.

At one point Dr. Udom and some of her friends emptied their bank accounts, wrote letters of appeal, and met with politicians in their effort to promote optometry. The result was a Community Eye Health workshop in Ethiopia in August 2011. An outreach project examined over 200 Ethiopian school children, with glasses provided as needed. An MOU with Salus University has now provided for six scholarships for AFCO students to pursue a Masters in Public Health degree. A VOSH chapter is being organized at University of Gondar in Ethiopia. For more information go to www.afcoptom.org.

From the Message Board

Hi. My name is Eduardo and I'm from Mexico. I just want to thank you for all you do. I wish you the best luck on this foundation that helps a lot of people...

WANTED

Projector slides and CAX bulbs for American Optical Project-O-Chart. Contact Max Bruss at maxobrusso23@msn.com.



THE RIGHT TO SIGHT

Save the date!

VOSH/International
Annual Meeting

October 27-28, 2012
Phoenix, Arizona

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

VOSH/INTERNATIONAL accomplishes this goal by serving as a coordinating body for affiliated chapters. It provides administrative support of chapter activities. It also provides promotional opportunities to encourage the formation of new chapters and recruitment of new members.

VOSH/INTERNATIONAL is a non-sectarian and non-political organization. Currently there are 31 regional chapters and 31 university-affiliated chapters.

www.VOSH.org

VOSH/INTERNATIONAL
Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity



OPTOMETRYGIVINGSIGHT

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