The Missouri Optometric Association was well represented at the 2007 Optometry’s Meeting™ in Seattle.

For a complete convention report, see page 5.

Spring CE Set for Grand Lido Braco, Jamaica

We are repeating a destination for the first time!

Join us when we return to the Grand Lido Braco in Jamaica for an all-inclusive vacation you won’t forget.

Read the full story on page 6.

Leadership that Works: MOA Leadership Retreat

Doctors of optometry from across Missouri gathered in June at the Country Club Hotel and Spa at The Lake of the Ozarks. This Leadership Retreat allowed optometrists, industry alliance people, and paraoptometric members to attend meetings to improve communications among themselves and ensure continual improvement of their organizations.

Complete details and more photos appear on page 8.
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President’s Message

Whew! It’s August already!

I hope everyone has been enjoying their families and friends this summer. It is hard to believe that the annual convention is only two months away.

Remember that we are meeting at the Chateau on the Lake in Branson, MO, again this year. What a beautiful and relaxing location that your family is sure to enjoy.

There is wonderful CE for the staff and yourself. Don’t forget to register as soon as possible, as I am sure that the hotel will fill up quickly.

I am sure all of us are seeing lots of kindergartners by now. Please remember to fill out the official form so we can show we are making a difference in our young Missourians’ lives. The reporting form is available for downloading on our website. If you need any more information for you, your school district, or local newspapers, remember to visit our website at www.moeyecare.org.

We are narrowing down our executive director search to the final three candidates and hope to have our final choice by late August. We are very excited about our candidates. We are hopeful to find an executive director to lead us for an extended period of time.

We had a busy and educational trip to the AOA congress in Seattle in June. There are many issues for us to address in the next year, both federally and locally. We will be discussing these at the business meeting in October. I would like to thank all of the ODs who participated in the AOA business meetings as delegates. The time dedicated to our profession is appreciated.

Don’t forget to register as soon as you can for the convention in October. We look forward to seeing you there.
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MOA Members Attend Optometry’s Meeting™

The Missouri Optometric Association was well represented at the 2007 Optometry’s Meeting™ in Seattle.

Those serving on committees were:

- LeeAnn Barrett, OD – Resolutions Committee and Chair of Optometry’s Charity Gala
- Tom Greene, OD – Nominating Committee
- Scott Ream, OD – Credentials Committee

The House of Delegates passed two resolutions. The first dealt with encouraging optometrists to communicate with school nurses regarding their referrals and to support the nation’s school nurses as they carry out their mission of coordinating and monitoring the health of our school-aged children.

Their second resolution resulted in the formation of a project team to re-evaluate the legal and legislative defense fund. The project team will be making a recommendation to the AOA board as to the effectiveness of the fund and whether or not to continue the fund.

Dr. Scott Ream, president of North Central States Optometric Council, presented the Virgil Deering Award to Michael Jones, OD, retiring AOA executive director and Dan Lex, executive director of the Wyoming Optometric Association.

The members of the House of Delegates heard a report from Dr. Randy Brooks on the progress of the Joint Board Certification Project Team. The project team is made up of members from AAO, ARBO, ASCO, AOA, AOSA, and NBEO. The final report of the project team will be presented to the 2008 House of Delegates.
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- laundry service
- airport transfers

Ten hours of continuing education provided by Dr. John Warren. ($350)

Airfare will be arranged separately and you have the choice of numerous airlines (you may use your frequent flier miles!). Contact Robin Smith at Midwest Travel for flight arrangements (1-800-728-5387).

Contact the MOA office 573-635-6151 for additional information and to reserve your spot on the beach!!!!
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- Mark S. Danzo, O.D.
President, 20/20 Institute, LLC

Please contact Randy Sego at **800-204-1989**
or **randys@2020institute.com**
Leadership that Works: MOA Leadership Retreat

Doctors of optometry from across Missouri gathered in June at the Country Club Hotel and Spa at The Lake of the Ozarks. This Leadership Retreat allowed optometrists, industry alliance people, and paraoptometric members to attend meetings to improve communications among themselves and ensure continual improvement of their organizations.

On Friday there were meetings with industry alliance members and MOA members with discussion on mutual issues that affect them. Each group was able to share information to improve communication and understanding of events that are affecting eye care in Missouri.

However, it was not all work and no fun; on Friday afternoon a golf tournament was held at The Oaks at Tan-Tar-A Resort. There were reports of storm conditions that were moving through the central part of Missouri, but showers did not dampen the golfers’ fun on the golf course.

Following the golfing there was a welcoming reception and dinner outside at the Country Club Hotel. The weather continued to be unsettled, and storms blew into the area causing the reception to move indoors following the BBQ dinner.

The guest speaker at the Saturday morning meetings was Dr. David Cockrell from Stillwater, OK. Dr. Cockrell currently serves on the AOA Board of Trustees. Dr. Cockrell updated everyone on what is going on at the AOA level, and there was a discussion on the AOA looking into the board certification issue.
On Saturday afternoon there were committee meetings to discuss important issues that could affect optometry and eye care in Missouri. There followed a block of time when all in attendance split up into their subgroups for intense discussions on the individual topics. The goal was to be able to report on the status of each area of discussion and give recommendations on courses of action for the future. Saturday evening and Sunday morning the MOA Board of Directors Meeting was held to act on items dealt with during the different committee meetings.

Any member of the MOA may attend the June Leadership Retreat. If you are interested in attending next year, talk to any MOA society officer or MOA board member to find out how you can become more active in your profession.

Optometric Recognition Awards

Congratulations to the 2008 Optometric Recognition Award Qualifiers for the Continuing Education recognition Award.

The initial award is given to doctors of optometry who have completed 150 hours of approved continuing education in their field over a period of three consecutive years.

The Continuing Education Award is given to doctors of optometry who have completed 50 credit hours of continuing education in their field over a one year period and, in addition, have previously received the Initial Optometric Recognition Award.

The award presentation took place on June 26, 2008, during Optometry’s Meeting™ in Seattle, Washington.

Congratulations to the American Optometric Association’s Continuing Education Award Recipients from Missouri:

- Dr. Sharon Dyer
- Dr. Kurt Finklang
- Dr. Ronald Fornelli
- Dr. John Turley
Dr. Larry Snider of Harrisonville has agreed to chair the Missouri Optometric Association Political Action Committee.

A past-president of the MOA (88-89), Snider has been in private practice in Harrisonville for 32 years and is currently the senior partner of Snider & Swopes Optometry, PC. Dr. Lori Swopes joined the practice five years ago.

"PACs are a controversial topic for many people" says Snider. “In their purest form, they simply represent a group of like-minded people and help support campaign expenses of candidates that support their beliefs. It’s a simple fact that it takes money to run for office. Most candidates hate to ask for it, but must. Voters hate to give it, but should. PACs help streamline the process."

Snider continues, “On the other hand, however, when PACs get too large and too strong, they can warp the political process and wield an unfair advantage over elections. Government should never be for sale to the highest bidder. The fact remains that PACS exist, and the MOA must participate.”

“I promise,” says Snider, “to use my experience gained while serving on the MOA board, state board of optometry, and my unsuccessful campaign for the state senate in 2004 to guide our PAC in a way that serves optometry in a fair, bipartisan, and ethical manner. I encourage all of our members to participate.”

Every MOA member is encouraged to support MOPAC with a $25-$50 monthly credit card withdrawal. With systematic giving, the MOPAC committee can budget expenditures and do a better job of representing our profession. Please visit the MOA’s secure online MOPAC contribution form, notify the MOA office, or call Dr. Snider to set up your account.
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Taking the Mystery Out of Electronic Billing: Third Party Issues

Rich Wilson, O.D.

After many years our practice has finally taken the plunge into electronic health records. Sounds simple enough, but as with any substantive practice management change, there have been a few bumps in the road.

In our experience the actual recording of the examination in the electronic record was fairly easy to learn, our software mostly intuitive, and we have been about to customize our screens of information to the point that patient flow is pretty smooth.

Getting our services paid for once the work has been done is a much more difficult task. After weeks of filling out paperwork, phone conversations with a claims clearing house and our software vendor, many e-mails to insurance companies, we have successfully filed vision and medical claims AND received payment for those services in a timely manner. Sounds like all is well, doesn’t it?

Just last week we sent in a batch of 20 claims that was dutifully prepared by our insurance clerk. We received confirmation from our software and our clearing house that the claims were valid, sent, and received. A couple of days later we receive notification that all of the claims in the batch were rejected and some mysterious codes were attached attempting to state why they didn’t go through.

We called the insurance company customer service representation only to find out that the claims were never received. It turns out that their claims collection service is the entity that rejected the claims, not the insurance company. Their advice was to talk with the clearing house vendor to solve the problem.

Continued, Mystery, page 15
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Congress Overrides Bush’s Veto, Protects Doctors from Medicare Cuts

Congress has voted by a wide margin to ensure that the AOA-backed bill to save Medicare is the law. H.R. 6331 prevents a looming 10.6 percent cut in Medicare payments to physicians. The measure also prevents the 5 percent pay cut scheduled to begin Jan. 1, 2009.

The action blocking the cuts came as they were about to take effect. Many physicians had warned that the cuts could have curtailed services to the 44 million seniors covered by Medicare. The legislation freezes rates for this year and increases them by 1.1 percent next year.

The measure also provides Congress with a full 18 months to find a solution to the flawed Medicare-sustainable growth rate (SGR) payment formula. If Congress had not intervened, these pay cuts to doctors would have undoubtedly limited care and service for seniors who depend on Medicare, the AOA maintained.

Concerned optometrists from across the country had been calling Capital Hill to urge their representatives in Congress to safeguard patient access to eye and vision care through Medicare. “Congress heard us loud and clear”, said Peter Kehoe, O.D., AOA president. “Massive Medicare cuts would have severely hampered our mission to ensure that America’s seniors have access to quality and affordable eye care. I’m proud of the role that optometry played in averting a Medicare meltdown and protecting patient access to care.”

Heart of America OEP Congress

Make plans to attend the Heart of America OEP Congress scheduled for November 9-10, 2008, in Overland Park, Kansas.

Scheduled speakers include:
- WC Maples, O.D., Vision and Learning
- Mike Earley, O.D., TBI/Rehab
- Robert Sutter, O.D., Lenses

The anchor hotel for the Congress is the Wyndham Garden Hotel of Overland Park. You may make reservations by calling 918-383-2550 or by going online.

To register for the conference please contact John Metzger, O.D. by calling 913/469-8686 or emailing health4eyes@yahoo.com.
Society Nominations Due

This is a reminder to all our MOA societies that it is time to make your nominations from your society for the 2008-09 offices and awards.

- MOA Board Trustees
- MOA Board Officer
- MOA Optometrist of the Year
- MOA Young Optometrist of the Year
- MOA Friend of Optometry

The forms have been sent to each society president and should be signed by your society’s president and secretary, and returned to the MOA central office no later than August 31, 2008.

Mystery, continued from page 12

We followed their advice and the prerecorded message said “we don’t take phone calls, please send an e-mail to the following address....” Their reply further stated that “our new policy is not to speak with providers, but instead please call your software vendor for support.”

Nice.

After a lengthy conversation with our software vendor, it turns out that they changed an aspect of our claims processing setup so that our claims were being sent with our practice name as the billing entity, as well as the rendering entity, and additionally the provider was being labeled as the rendering entity.

Once the information relating to the practice as a rendering entity was removed, we sent a test claim through, it was accepted, and the batch was resubmitted. Hopefully payment will arrive sometime soon.

Electronic filing, when it works, is a great time saver. It has caused all of our staff and doctors to be much more expert in insurance and filing issues. The several layers of management in claims processing can be a problem.

Next time we may explore some of the ongoing mysteries of Missouri Medicaid.
June’s CMOS meeting was dedicated to celebrating the distinguished career of Dr. William Dellande of Columbia. It was held on June 24, 2008 at Chris McD’s with Vistakon sponsoring the dinner.

The CMOS meeting for July was Tuesday July 22, 2008. MOA President Greg Goetzinger spoke about current optometric issues in Missouri to a very receptive and enthusiastic crowd. The meeting was held in Jefferson City at Madison’s Cafe in Jefferson City.

CMOS meetings are planned for all months except October (due to the MOA convention in Branson) through the end of the year. August’s meeting is scheduled at D Rowes restaurant and it is sponsored.

If you are not receiving notification of the meetings by email, please contact Dr. Heather Webster at heberweather@hotmail.com.

At our June GOOS meeting, elections were held, and all officers were re-elected to their position. Dr. Justin Hart is President; Dr. Brad Lewis, Vice-President; Dr. Lane Nutt, Secretary/Treasurer; and Dr. Scott Burks, Trustee.

We are still looking towards having an event in coordination with the Children’s Vision Law and the start of the school year after this summer or in early fall.

The KCOS takes its much needed summer break to regroup and get focused for the next round of society meetings to begin.

The Board of Directors for the KCOS met in July tackling such issues as the not-for-profit status of the organization. In August and September, we are encouraging members to get involved and become engaged in the numerous campaigns throughout the city. September 8th will be our first official society meeting for the year. We look forward to CooperVision sponsoring an excellent speaker. Then, two days later on September 10th, many in the Kansas City area will go to the Kansas Optometric Association’s regional meeting.

See Society Reports, page 17
Society Reports, continued from page 16

Southeast Optometric Society
Trustee: James Hunt, O.D.

Our July meeting of the S.E. Optometric Society was held on Wednesday July 16, 2008 in Dexter, MO. The meeting was hosted by our society trustee, Dr. James Hunt. He lead an informative discussion on several issues of interest to those in attendance. He reported on the ongoing selection process to find an Executive Director for the MOA. He also informed the members of the SLOS’s plan to introduce a bylaws change at the MOA Convention in Branson, MO. The St. Louis Society will be asking for a bylaws change requesting two trustees but only one vote at the convention in Branson in October.

There was also a lively discussion on the Board Certification issue. The AOA is exploring a board certification process and its impact on our profession. The SEOS members were also asked to have any eye care reps, who visit their offices, be informed about the MOA Convention and asked if their company was going to be represented at our convention.
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Welcome New Members

The Missouri Optometric Association is pleased to welcome the following new member. Please introduce yourself the next time you see him at an MOA sponsored event!

- Barry J. Barresi, O.D.

The Missouri Optometric Association-Paraoptometric Section is pleased to see their ranks continue to grow with the addition of the following new members.

- Steven L. Branstetter
- Amanda L. Bryson
- Robin E. Vassholz
Calendar of Upcoming Events

2008

October 9-12
MOA Annual Convention
Chateau on the Lake
Branson, MO

2009

January 15-20
Spring CE
Grand Lido Braco, Jamaica

January 25-26
MOA Legislative Conference
Capitol Plaza Hotel
Jefferson City, MO

February 13-15
Heart of America Contact Lens Society
Kansas City, Missouri

May 29-31
MOA Leadership Retreat

June 24-28
Optometry’s Meeting™
Washington, D.C.

October 1-4
MOA Annual Convention
Lodge of the Four Seasons
Lake Ozark, MO
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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.