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UPCOMING EVENTS

OCT 8-10th	GOA Meeting, Athens, GA
NOV 4-6th	ALOA, Birmingham, AL
NOV 11-12th	NC Opt Society, Asheville, NC
DEC 1-4th	SC Opt Assn. Conv. , Hilton Head, SC

MESSAGE FROM LEE



Hurricane Katrina

The natural tragedy of a class 4 or 5 hurricane striking the low lying country of the Gulf Coast bordering Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana has caused all Americans to pause and reflect just how fragile our world really is. My dear neighbors here in the South have been the source of some of the humor I have shared with you over the years. There is nothing funny about the difficulty facing them now, although I am sure there are many of those strong and resilient characters that will find an amusing situation to share with us after they have regained a resemblance of normalcy in their environment. Concerned Citizens all over America, indeed all of the World, are providing aid and assistance through various means. Money, clothing, food, water and various other forms of aid are reaching the evacuees. Everyone is pitching in and helping where they can. It's the neighborly thing to do. Collectively each of our contributions can make a huge impact. We feel we can help the most doing what we do daily: manufacture contact lenses. So, if you have a patient needing to replace GP Lenses as a result of Hurricane Katrina, call our office and we will replace them free of charge.

Fall To The Past

Fall is officially here. The evenings are a little cooler, the leaves begin to change colors, there doesn't seem to be enough daylight left at the end of the day to get in 9 holes of golf and football fills the weekends. The days go by faster, much faster than when I was in my youth. Now, in the fall of my years, I see the days passing quickly and I sometimes reflect back on what helped bring me to this

point in life. I did not play college ball. I grew up in a very small town in the South where if you wanted to play on a High School team, chances were pretty good you would make the team. You might not be a star player but you would be on the team. You could help with the struggle to win, and at the end of the season, if you worked hard, you might just end up with a few bragging rights that would keep the towns folks talking until next season.



I remember traveling from town to town in our yellow school bus. Coach Underwood was a remarkable coach, and a tremendous motivator on those long trips. I remember one trip in particular when we were traveling to play our most infamous High School rival. The previous year we really took a whipping from this school and the Coach did not want a repeat. We had practiced our plays over and over. Gone through every possibly circumstance. We were prepared and ready, but that did not stop the Coach. Still about half an hour away from our destination Coach was walking up and down the isle of the bus



drilling us on plays and tactics. He would stop at one player and yell "Smith, it is early in the first quarter, we are on our own 15 yard line, it is fourth down and 9 to go, **WHAT DO**

YOU DO?!" Smith says, " I punt Coach". That's right says the Coach as he looks for his next victim. "Jackson, it is late in the second quarter, we are 30 yards from the goal line, it is second down and 8 to go, **WHAT DO YOU DO?!"**. Jackson says, "I throw a pass Coach, **CONT'D ON NEXT PAGE**

LEE CONT'D

10 yards down and out" "That's right" the coach said and moved on. His face was red with anticipation, eyes glazed and stretched wide open as he stopped and looked down at me. "Dickerson, there are 10 seconds left on the clock, we are down by 4 points, and have 3 yards to the goal line, WHAT DO YOU DO?!" I looked up at him and answered as directly as I could. "I stand up on the bench Coach so I can get a better view!"


Warming the bench was not a bad thing. At least I was on the team. It is kind of like that with the United States of America. We're not all big star players, but as a tax paying citizen, you are on the team. You contribute and your efforts have an impact on others. If you want to help, you can get in the game. If you have the heart, there are many civic organizations that will find a position for you. Get active, participate in the process and make a difference. You'll be glad you did. Who knows, you might just earn a few bragging rights of your own.

Lee Dickerson

Technical Resources cont'd

minutes I can send the job to our lab, remake that exact lens and ship it to you the same day. Patients and ECP's find it comforting that they can consistently reorder a lens they like and are familiar with, as opposed to finding out that their lens has been discontinued.



Another side of the business is keeping track of the billing after the order. We send an invoice with each package that ships from our office. However, we know that many times this invoice can get lost, especially if you're receiving more than one package each day. For this reason, we've tried to make it easier for you when requesting copies of invoices. We've designed a new tool on our website that will allow you to request invoices electronically. It's very simple. Just bring up www.abbaoptical.com, click request invoices, and enter your email or fax number (we prefer email, but fax is ok too), your name, the invoice numbers you need, and press REQUEST! Momentarily you will receive the invoices you requested.  There's no limit, they just have to be your patients! This will save your staff and our staff valuable time and will help you properly keep track of your patient's billing and history.

Technical Resources

Did you say Accounting?

Being an eye care practitioner certainly has its challenges. In addition to being the best practitioner you can be, you have to also manage and run a business. Accounting and bookkeeping can be a frustrating part of managing a business, but a very import one. Studies consistently show that the more meticulous we are in keeping records on our patients the better we'll serve them and the more attractive our bottom line will look.



Here at ABBA, we strive to not only keep up with our customers, you the eye care practitioner, but YOUR customers the patients as well. As technology advances we're expected to do a better job and we're rising to that expectation. I think most of you will agree that we do a pretty good job of keeping patient records. I take calls frequently from practices looking for lenses made for a patient back in 2000 or beyond and most are surprised that within seconds I can tell you the patents prescription, lens design, and material used years ago. Additionally, within



Soft Lenses

For a few years now we've been distributing a disposal lens called the **Preferred 55**. It's an aspheric lens made from 45% methafilcon and 55% water. The response has been favorable. It's a great alternative to some of the higher priced big volume leaders. The lens is very high quality, comfortable, and very easy to order. We keep a large stock of them here, so when you order them from us by 1PM, they will ship the same day. For those of you that ship overnight, that's a pretty quick turnaround. We also have Preferred Torics and Colors. Another great aspect of the lens is that they're available exclusively within the professional eye-care practitioner community.

Speaking of soft lenses that are only available through ECP's, remember our **ABBAsoft** lenes. They're not available because they haven't been made yet! ABBAsoft lenses are custom made to order specially for your patient. Keep ABBAsoft in mind for your patients requiring custom soft lenses or an upgrade in material.



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Vision Source

A Practice Growth Strategy That Works!

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Like most of my colleagues in this ever-changing profession, I found myself excited about the coming surge of baby boomers flooding my office due to presbyopic symptoms. I would then prescribe state of the art progressive lenses to help them with all of their visual needs. I also realized that I had some really good, soft and rigid multifocal contact lenses available at my disposal to catch all of those "vain" or otherwise spectacle-adverse patients with just the right prescriptions. Well, I quickly came to realize that the much-awaited group of presbyopes not only had work demands requiring clear and predictable vision at all distances, but also had expectations requiring new levels of performance. The one thing I could always do to appease my disappointed patients, due to limitations with contact lenses, was to direct them to the optical department for a light-weight, AR coated pair of glasses to meet their needs. I was never a fan of GP multifocals based on my personal history of moderate success as well as countless conversations with colleagues offering me the same feedback. However, my success rate took a major turn for the better this year when I started working with ABBA's Custom Eyes Bifocal and EZEyes Multifocal contact lenses. As a result, I've not only seen an increase in referrals from satisfied patients, but I have also experienced professional gratification.

In our field, the key to any good technological advancement is ease of use in the clinical setting and ultimately, patient happiness. When I began investigating these GP lenses, I was impressed by the innovative designs and I could see how these lenses, combined with the right materials, could provide my practice a new, viable option in the treatment of presbyopia. Soon after, I began ordering these lenses utilizing ABBA's website (www.abbaoptical.com) as well as receiving assistance from their informed consulting team. Choosing the right design should be based on the particular patient's visual needs and/or occupation. A simple pearl to remember is that the bifocal design works exceptionally well for patients with high near-point demand, while the multifocal design serves the needs of most patients requiring

clear vision at all distances, especially the intermediate zone. Both lenses exhibit great translation and improved comfort due to ABBA's "lid rest technology." What differentiates the EZEyes multifocal from the Custom Eyes bifocal is the EZEyes' hybrid design, which combines an aspheric back surface with a crescent-shaped segment on the front surface, leading to an intermediate zone below the central zone. This is further enhanced by a clever, smooth transition area centrally on the segment that blends the distance and near zones to prevent image jump. This fitting strategy has yielded success levels previously unattainable in my practice. I have refit GP and soft contact lens wearers as well as spectacle lens wearers that were previously unsuccessful with contact lenses. Furthermore, first time lens wearers have been excellent candidates and often the most appreciative patients.

In the world of declining margins due to heavy competition, soft contact lenses sold by the big boxes as "loss leaders", and patients seeing their contact lenses as a commodity, we need to differentiate ourselves from all others in order to thrive. I recommend that you promote advanced technology, specialty contact lenses. In addition, you must properly bill for the medical management of your patients' ocular health as it relates to contact lens wear. Your level of success will hinge on your ability to gather pertinent information about your patients' visual needs, setting proper expectations through education in the exam room and exhibiting confidence and excitement about this new technology. I have found these patients to be the most likely candidates to refer others to my practice for the same treatment. A presbyopic patient once shared an interesting observation with me that supports this method of referral-based practice growth. He said, "Doc, practically everyone I know is now over 40. I've told them all about my new lenses." I simply smiled and asked him to kindly refer his family and friends to our office for their eye care needs.