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SPRING ISSUE

 Ontario Opticians Association
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President's Address

Welcome to the brand new **ONTARIO OPTICIANS ASSOCIATION** – our new look and our new website. As your president, let me express my appreciation for your interest in the Association. The pendulum is swinging and the optical industry is on the cusp of change. Now, more than ever, we at the Association need your support. Your interests are our interests.

Our objective in launching our new website is to present you with electronic updates regarding the latest developments in the optical industry. We hope to be able to identify the impact of these developments on each of us as opticians. There has already been much activity on the political front. Our provincial government seems very open to changing the health regulations regarding eye care. The OOA will be presenting the opticians' side of the story. We will make sure we are heard and listened to. We will be more effective with your support. In turn we will work on improving communication within our own ranks so that everyone has an understanding of the impending changes.

As of the end of February 2002 these are some of the latest developments that you should be aware of:

- The Health Minister, the Honourable Tony Clement on September 11, 2002 has ordered action to be taken to stop "the lack of co-operation and mutual respect by eye care sector partners on a range of issues, including refractometry"
- The OOA joins the Coalition of Professional Health Care Associations and participates in a response to the Minister and HPRAC on HPRAC's recommendations to the Health Minister. [This document is available on our website](#)
- The OOA has recently presented a submission to the Health Minister requesting an increase in our scope of practice to include refractometry and prescribing for the purposes of communicating the results of refracting. This document is available on our website
- The College of Opticians of Ontario (COO) is finalizing "Standards of Practice for Opticians to Perform Refractometry"
- The COO has met to discuss refractometry and freedom of association with the other two O's

- The COO has elected a new executive
- The COO has taken a position of equality within the 3 O's

For Your Consideration:

Did you know that the OOA and the COO are the only stakeholders in the optical industry that believe that there is a risk of harm in dispensing eyewear to people over the age of 9? Consider the implications of this position. Consider its impact on the employability of opticians.

The OOA is at the table representing your best interests while policies are being formed. In order to keep up with the political game we have to hire lawyers and consultants. This costs money. Membership is where we get money. Why should a small number of opticians carry the load for all opticians? With 100% membership and our new and future alliances with other health care associations we could have the voice of many hundred thousand. Instead we speak only for 700. Let's multiply and solidify our ranks - join the OOA now!

The OOA is interested in you. Our newsletter and website will be your windows to your profession. Submit your questions, suggestions and concerns to me.

Best Regards,



Lorne Kashin, RO
President

president@ontario-opticians.com

Notice of OOA Annual General Meeting

Saturday, April 13, 2002, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Vision Canada East
Metro Toronto Convention Centre
255 Front Street West, Toronto

Visit the OOA booth at the convention for a special "combo" membership offer – a show special!

Who's Who of the OOA

Lorne Kashin	–	President
Darren Rogers	–	Treasurer
Kevin Raymond	–	Past President
Debbie Gardiner	–	Continuing Education
German Cuartas	–	Student Education
Graham Sutherland	–	Public Relations
Herb Diestler	–	Member Benefits
Harry Dhaliwal	–	Membership Promotion
Mike Smart	–	Vision Care
Geoffrey Briede	–	Refractometry
Laura Mason	–	Executive Director

A Special Message...

In the 40's and 50's there were very few Opticians in the province - less than one hundred. Most were under the thumb of Optometry. There was, however, a proud and very professional small group of independents. They had a vision and they worked very hard against great odds for 20 years to become regulated professionals. The province's first OPTICIANS ACT passed in 1960. By the mid-60's, about 400 proud Opticians struggled to further their education and improve their place in health care. Crisis after crisis threatened to deregulate the profession and each crisis gave rise to new leaders who rallied the members to prove themselves worthy of professional status. There was Mat Diamond's study of the *Healing Arts* in the 60's, Tom Wells' *Health Professions Regulations and Frank Miller's Health Disciplines Act* in the 70's, and *The Health Professions Legislative Review* (Schwartz Commission) in the 80's. There was life after Schwartz and a revitalized profession of over 1,000 Opticians led the economic boom of the late 80's only to be hit by the recession and a very slow recovery.

During every crisis, the enthusiasm of our leaders caused the rest of us to appear somewhat apathetic. This is again the case. Most of us (now over 2,000 Opticians) have our noses very close to the grindstone. Economic times are tough. Demands on our time and resources are at an all-time high.

Our leaders, the Opticians who have elected the board of our associations, the OOA, the OAC, and our College, are capable of saving us again and again, they need our help. What can we do under the circumstances? We don't have time. We don't have money. We are tired and unhappy. We feel powerless. We can do a lot and although it isn't easy, it is simple and it is possible.

1. Be the best Optician you can. You owe it to yourself. You owe it to your profession. You owe it to your patients and you owe it to your leaders who go where you won't.

2. Refrain from constantly finding fault with the actions of your associations, your College and your elected representatives. They are your best friends and your best hope. They are where you won't go.
3. Know your enemies and be wary. They have their best success when you think they are your friends.

If you believe this message, pass it on. You will be the winner. *Anonymous Optician*

Vision Canada East - Call for Volunteers

We are looking for volunteers who would like to play an important part in making the Vision Canada East convention in Toronto this April more spectacular than last year! You'll be put on the front lines meeting and greeting convention delegates, exhibitors, fellow opticians and students. You'll be associating with the friendly people who run both the Opticians Association of Canada and the Ontario Opticians Association, and helping to keep the registration area, lectures rooms, exhibit halls and social event humming!

This is a great opportunity for students as well as opticians who love to lend a hand and be a part of the best optical show in Canada. Call the OOA office today and speak to Laura about this great opportunity!

Direct from the College of Opticians of Ontario:

Annual General Meeting of the College of Opticians
 Sunday, April 14, 2002 – 1:00 to 2:00 pm
 at Vision Canada East 2002, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, 255 Front Street West

You can definitely claim continuing education credits for attending, possibly win a prize, meet your Council members in person, ask Council some really good questions and get some really good answers, make extraordinary suggestions, and hear about current issues.

You don't want to miss this opportunity and you won't if you make plans now to attend! See you there! Come to our booth and say hello.

Just In – A Special Scotiabank Merchant Services Program for OOA Members!

Introducing a new member benefit designed exclusively for OOA members. Terminal set up fee is waived (a \$30 savings), just \$25.95 per month for terminal rental, VISA discount rate of 1.75%, debit card transactions 11 cents,

manual paper processing is 2.50%. Call the OOA office

to take advantage of these great savings!