



Executive Director Message

“What you are will show in what you do.”

– Thomas A. Edison



**Barry Elliott
Executive Director**

The service of the Lions of Alabama is showing. As a lion in your local club, you may not be aware of the service that is being rendered across the state. I am limited to what I see, but I see plenty of unselfish, compassionate service in so many different areas! It is of course the vision care that really warms my heart.

Alabama Lions Sight (ALS) is approaching 75 years of service in the next lion year, beginning in July of 2019. During the past 74 years, lions have helped 400,000+ with vision care. That is as many people as the largest metropolitan city in Alabama,

Birmingham! Can you imagine if we lined everyone up in Birmingham and said we will pay for you to have a pair of glasses or provide surgeries and advanced eye care! In the month of January, 316 patients were seen in the Lions Clinic at UAB Callahan Eye Hospital.

As time has advanced, since 1944, things have changed, and for the most part, for the better, specifically, in the treatment of eye care medicine. ALS averages about 15,000 vision screenings a year. Today, the use of the Plusoptix gives us the ability to check the vision of a person in approximately three seconds! We know immediately if that person has a medical condition that requires them to be referred to a professional optometrist for further eye exams. The advantage for individuals that have early detections will help prevent blindness or other medical conditions. Plans are being formulated, that if come to fruition, will significantly increase the number of people the Lions will screen and have the opportunity to serve.

I want to tell you about our exciting news, ALS has entered into a partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health. It also includes partnering together with UAB Callahan Eye Hospital and Kid One. We have been chosen to develop a pilot program with the Department of Public Health to bring vision care, along with primary care, in the detection of diabetic retinopathy. For the next six months, Dr. Daum and our Mobile Eye Clinic will see patients in four counties in Alabama. With the aid of a



Executive Director Message

special camera, he will be able to determine if a person's diabetes is affecting their vision. As I understand our program and the funding, we have been awarded as one of four recipients in the United States, to develop a model that can be implemented, not only in Alabama, but nationwide! We are excited about the team we have in place and the ground-breaking work that is being done in carrying vision care to areas where it is almost none existent.

I had the good pleasure to visit and speak to the Centre Lions Club on January 16, and also the Fairhope Lions Club on January 17. These good clubs are great supporters of ALS. It is always a great deal of fun to be with lions and to see the service they are giving in their communities. Thanks for your invitations. I recently made a site visit to our Mobile Eye Clinic in Sipsey. I became one of our patients and ordered my glasses. Lions you need to take advantage of this service. I highly recommend it. Send your local request for eye exams and glasses to our clinic. Attending the state convention then make sure you get an eye exam while you are there. The truck will be set up for lions on Saturday to see patients.

With your help, we are making life changes in the lives of Alabamians!

We Serve!

PDG Barry Elliott
Executive Director