



Executive Director Message

“The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.”

– Helen Keller



**Barry Elliott
Executive Director**

The Lions of Alabama for the past 74 years have displayed a vision of bringing vision care to many Alabamians. The inspiration Lions have received through the years from a blind Helen Keller has given vision to many Lion leaders but also has literally brought physical sight to hundreds of thousands just within our state alone. Our illustrious past is not only a source of pride for us, but to countless thousands, it has been a life changing event!

The Board of Directors of Alabama Lions Sight have issued a vision of even greater service that together we can do so much more in the conservation of sight. The partnership that the Lions sustain with UAB Callahan Eye Hospital allows the Lions to provide the opportunity for the underserved and indigent Alabamians to receive from one of the most advanced and highly ranked eye care hospitals in the nation! The process for Lions Clubs to recommend patients to the hospital have been mailed to each club and sight chair in all three districts. Almost every county in Alabama sends patients to the Lions Clinic in the hospital. This letter should be a help to each club to understand the process.

Alabama Lions Sight has a strong start in its quest to request state funding to screen students in every public school in Alabama. The process isn't quick, as most would understand in Alabama, to get the legislature to act on anyone's request! I can say we have been met with optimism and a plan to move forward in the process. While I have met with several legislators, the quest will require us to keep up the pace and get a quick start on next year's budget. Lions have the state of the art equipment to provide vision screening. The important thing to keep in mind is that we do not want our children to lack for the opportunity to succeed because of vision impairments when it is so easily preventable. What a great investment that can be made in the future of young Alabamians!

The amount of success of our Mobile Eye Clinic is beyond all expectations. This is a major endeavor for the Lions of Alabama! The cost is a heavy one, that is gladly accepted, because



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the result cannot be measured monetarily. For example, last week the MEC had an occasionally slow day at clinic seeing only five patients. Cost wise for that day equals a red-letter day. However, Dr. Daum saw two of those patients that are suffering from severe glaucoma. Neither one knew why their vision was deteriorating as they have been without vision care in a rural county that without the MEC they would have lost their sight within months! The MEC saved their sight that day! Truthfully, Lions can say that they are saving someone's sight every day and changing lives! Currently, the future possibilities for the MEC are beginning to mount. Our six month grant project with the Department of Public health will end in July. I have already signed an agreement to extend our partnership for another 8 clinics with the possibility of even more to come. Lions roar loud and proud!

Those attending the MD 34 Convention in Orange Beach saw firsthand the MEC in action. What a great sight project to bring the MEC to give complete dilated eye exams to residents of two assisted living facilities and to provide the same for Lions on Saturday at the convention! Lions you are providing great service! Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this great service.

We Serve!

PDG Barry Elliott
Executive Director