

# Greenville Lions donate \$7000 for Alabama eye care

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*Greenville Lion Kenneth Edwards presented a check for \$7,000 from the Greenville Lions Club to Barry Elliott, Executive Director of Alabama Lions Sight. Alabama Lions Sight provides free eye care to the medically indigent of Alabama. Thousands of free vision and glaucoma screenings are also conducted in schools and communities throughout the state annually.*

Alabama Lions Sight Conservation Association, Inc. is proud of its own historical significance. In 1925 Alabama native Helen Keller spoke at the annual convention of the International Association of Lions Clubs in Cedar Park, Ohio. More than 5,000 present were inspired as she appealed “to you, you who have your sight, your hearing, you who are brave and strong and kind, will you not constitute yourselves knights of the blind in this crusade against darkness?” Her challenge was taken up by Lions everywhere and Alabama Lions were the first to answer that challenge by forming an association. Today her “knights” number 1,429,000 Lions who serve in 43,900 clubs worldwide.

In 1944, several Lions Club members from Birmingham responded to Hellen Keller’s call. They put together a plan to help those from the area who could not provide for their own sight needs. From this humble initiative, Alabama

Lions Sight was born. This non-profit organization is dedicated to providing funds for the diagnosis and treatment of eye diseases and defects for Alabama’s medically indigent.

A small room in Birmingham’s old Jefferson Hospital offered an unpromising start, yet the association is now one of Alabama’s leading health related agencies. An initial budget of less than \$5,000 was stretched vigorously by the new organization determined to help as many as possible. Today the budget has grown to more than one million dollars as Alabama Lions Sight provides assistance to an estimated 5,000 people annually. More than 300,000 people throughout the state have been served over the years.

The Alabama Lions Sight is unique in that it is an organization in Alabama which provides free eye care to the medically indigent of Alabama. Also, thousands of free vision and glaucoma screenings are conducted in schools and communities throughout the State annually.

This organization receives all of its funding from the Lions Clubs of Alabama, corporations, foundations, and other generous donors in the community. Without the support of these donors, medical assistance could not be provided.

This history of Lions Sight and more can be found at <http://alabamalionsight.org/history.aspx>.