



# Executive Director Message

## “Christmas in Dixie”



**Barry Elliott**  
**Executive Director**

Made popular by the band, “Alabama” the song “Christmas in Dixie” is a favorite this time of the year. It was released in 1985 and personally one of my favorites. The lyrics point out across the land the special joy and happiness that is felt, wherever you may be, but as we like to think, it is special in “Dixie.” It is special this time of the year for Lions and their motto “We Serve.” The community’s sense of making everyone, especially those in need, feel loved and remembered, gives each of us Lions a special satisfaction.

Alabama Lions Sight (ALS) is proud to announce the continuation vision partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health made possible by a grant with the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors! Beginning November 1, 2019 and for the next nine months, our partnership will be bringing vision care to six department of health clinics each month! The success of the pilot program earlier this year ending in July, has enabled us to continue this project. The benefit of this program is that Lions are reaching people that do not have access to vision care in many counties and mostly could not otherwise afford to receive care. Many patients that we see in the Mobile Eye Clinic haven’t had an eye exam in decades. Quite often, the result is the discovery of an eye condition possibly heading the patient towards blindness. Thankfully, their vision most of the time, can be saved. Due to the aging population of Americans, we will always have a pressing need to aide in the prevention of blindness.

Early detection of vision problems is key in our service. I must commend the Lions in their passion to be committed in conducting vision screenings throughout the state of Alabama. Several clubs have the use of their own instruments in screening in order to provide this service in their communities. As we partner with you in screening, it is of the utmost importance we receive your numbers in all of your screenings so these can be reported. This data is essential in determining so many things! We need these numbers in order to establish health care policy. Without this data, treatment and funding will be lagging to provide the



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kind of care that is needed in the fight against blindness. So many associations and agencies report this nationally so that change can be brought to vision care. Congratulations to District A that has made possible on their district website the ability to report club screenings that is linked to ALS' website. ALS in turn has the capability to report for the Lions of Alabama so we can help bring about the needed research, funding and treatment.

Concerning vision screenings, ALS is persistent in the quest for funding in order to screen students in every public school in Alabama. Please keep this in your thoughts and prayers as we talking with the legislators of Alabama. It will take a great effort on our part as Lions. Many share the passion that I have in early detection in the fight against blindness. Statics say that 80% of vision impairment is either curable or treatable. The equipment we use measures six different medical conditions of the eye. We can screen infants from 3 months and up in 3 seconds when we focus on the pupils of their eyes.

It is such a pleasure to share the Lions service to the clubs recently visited: Northport Lions, Flomaton Lions, and Fayette Lions. These and all Lions Clubs are busy especially this time of season. Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas from all of us at Alabama Lions Sight!

*Paula          Doris          Erin          Barry*

*Dr. Kent Daum          Trish Dunkin          John Wilkerson*

We Serve!

PDG Barry Elliott  
Executive Director