

Lions provide free children's screenings

FOR THE FROSTBURG EXPRESS

FROSTBURG — Free children's vision screening is being offered at elementary school around Allegany county by the various area Lions Clubs. The screening provides for early detection of a variety of eye problems.

The Lions Club Preschool Vision Screening Program uses photo screening technology for the detection of amblyopia. Photoscreening technology is simply taking a flash photograph of the child's eyes, with high speed film. Light is reflected from the retina and this reflection is analyzed to detect the problems that cause amblyopia. The camera takes two instant Polaroid flash photos of the eyes, and places them in one picture. Crescent marks and shadows appear in the eyes when they are not focusing properly. This procedure is noninvasive, painless, and causes no ill effects. Eye drops are not used.

After the initial photo screening, the photograph is forwarded to the Department of Ophthalmology, University of Iowa, where it is further analyzed by vision specialists. The final report is forwarded directly to the parent or guardian for inclusion in their medical records or further medical evaluation, as noted in the report. Confidentiality is maintained at all levels of the

screening.

Elwood Glass, LaVale Lions, is the Allegany County chairman for the program and coordinates screening activities, countywide.

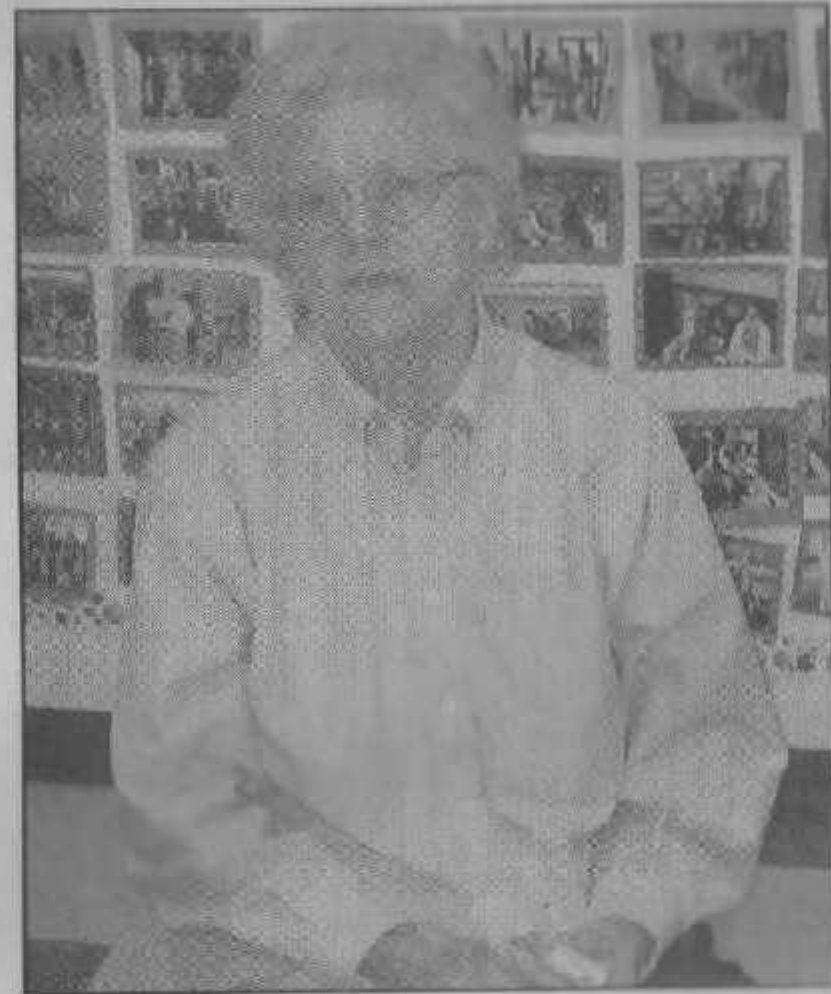
The problem is easily corrected if detected before the age of four. Unfortunately, the majority of children do not receive proper eye examinations until they enter school, thus potentially causing reading or other learning problems.

Frostburg Lions President Bill Munck said the screening "is another resource for parents. No cost, no hassles, and a quality eye report confidentially provided directly to the parent or guardian."

Once the parent or guardian gets the report from the University of Iowa, they should make arrangements with an ophthalmologist to have their children's eye properly examined. Lions clubs also can help if a family should need assistance. "We can point them to the proper eye professionals," Munck said. Some Lions clubs will help with payment of examination fees, and/or the purchase of glasses if necessary. "All the parents have to do is call," Munck added. "We have many, many resources to help out."

For more information on vision screening programs, call (301) 687-0212.

Community



QUICK WITH A STICKER

Phyllis Thomas, a member of the Frostburg Lions Club, waits for a child to finish having photographs of his eyes taken during a recent vision screening at the Frostburg State University Children's Center. She presented youngsters with "My eyes were screened by a Lion" stickers. A mother of two and grandmother of four, Thomas has helped with the Lions' participation in the Appalachian Festival at FSU, the club's chicken barbecues, and will be working with the Lions Vision Screening Committee this winter. Vision screenings have already been held at FSU and the Judy Center at Deal Elementary School. For more information about local Lions clubs call (301) 687-0212, or e-mail fbliions@yastm.com.