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Lions, Eyecare join to promote sight awareness

FOR THE CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS

FROSTBURG — Lions Eye Health Program and EyeCare America have partnered to preserve sight in honor of World Blindness Month in October. The Frostburg Lion Club will assist with literature distribution and promote its Vision Grant Program.

"More than two-thirds of visually impaired adults in the United States are over 65 years of age," said Jake Falinger, chairman of the Frostburg Lions Vision and Disabilities Committee. Falinger added that "the number of Americans with age-related eye disease is expected to double within the next three decades."

Nearly 20.5 million Americans age 65 and older are afflicted with cataracts, the leading cause of blindness in the United States. The prevalence of blindness increases rapidly in later years, particularly after age 75.

The Lions Club International Foundation created the Lions Eye Health Program to aid Lions in educating the community on healthy vision and raise awareness of the causes of preventable vision loss. LEHP is a community-based education program for Lions clubs, other community organizations and individuals.

Lions remain committed

Lions, who has been partially blind since birth.

Lions Clubs International Foundation provides grant funding to Lions districts for large-scale humanitarian projects too extensive for Lions to finance on their own. The Frostburg Lions participate in these programs. Vision Screening for Children is a prime example of the programs offered free of charge by the Frostburg Lions Club and other Lions clubs in Western Maryland.

Lions visit schools, and day cares centers seeking parental approval to screen children's eyes. The Lions take photographs of the children's eyes, which are then sent to the University of Iowa Ophthalmology Department for "reading." If a problem is found, a written report is provided directly to the parents for follow up.

"This is a free program," said Edge Deuel, Frostburg Vision Screening coordinator. "You would be amazed at how many parents don't permit their children to be screened." The Frostburg Lions estimated that nearly 30 percent of young children are not screened. Vision Screening is safe and non-invasive and completely confidential.

For more information about Lions Vision Screening or to

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FROSTBURG — Recycle, a modern catch word, is a fact for the Frostburg Lions. The Lions recycle used eye glasses as a needed resource for the visually impaired population. Lions clubs collect, clean, calibrate, pack and distribute used glasses free of charge.

According to Jake Fallinger, chairman of the Frostburg Lions' Vision and Disabilities Program, "Anyone who wears glasses can help others see better."

Fallinger has been spearheading the Frostburg Lions Club's collection of recycled glasses for more than 20 years.

Karl Bullamore, a Frostburg resident, recently presented the Frostburg Lions Club with more than 400 pair of used glasses that were collected by her daughter, Margaret "Meg" Bullamore, and her sorority at the University of Delaware.

Meg Bullamore wanted the glasses to go to her hometown Lions club. "I've seen the Frostburg Lions at work," she said on a recent visit to her home. "I know the effort they put into their projects."

The glasses will go to the LaVale Lions collection center, where they will be packed for shipment. They are then sent to a regional center for cleaning, repairs,

"This is an amazing system. It works, and there is no cost. You can't get better than that."

Bill Munck,
president,
Frostburg Lions Club

calibration and repackaging for transport worldwide to Lions Eye Clinics for free distribution in developing countries.

The Lions have developed a network for the eyeglass

recycling program everything is donated. "This is an amazing team," said Frostburg President Bill Munck. You can't get better than that.

Munck indicated Frostburg Lions have this year of collected pair of used glasses, about 25 percent of which think might be arriving in Frostburg." Munck said the Frostburg Lions make that there are 4,000 and 6,000 pair of glasses laying in drawers in the immediate area.

For more information about the Frostburg Lions (301) 687-4212.

Frostburg Lions recycling glasses