



Ghana Container Makes a Difference

Two years ago a container of ophthalmic instruments, books, and supplies that was sent to Ghana. It was possible thanks to support and collaboration from VOSH Michigan, VOSH International, World Medical Relief in Detroit, Rotary in Detroit, Luxottica, numerous O.D.'s and individual donors.

David Ben Kumah, KNUST faculty liaison, reported following its arrival: "I was dumbfounded and could not believe my eyes remembering how we have struggled to no avail to get some equipment bought for the department for teaching, research and outreach. Teaching is now going to be more practical oriented to equip our students with the requisite skills to serve humanity."

Since then, he reports, "Our new teaching clinic is functional. There are three consulting rooms, well-furnished with the equipment from V/I. Now facilities are adequate for the training of the ODs. Accreditation has also been given by the National Accreditation Board. But for your timely intervention, we would not have had accreditation to run the OD program. God Bless You all."

Save the date!
VOSH/International
Annual Meeting

November 15, 2009
Orlando, Florida

Letter from Larry Hookway, OD *President of VOSH/International*

Why you should come to the VOSH International Annual Meeting. Here are some of the highlights:

- Harry Zeltzer will give a report on the first meeting of the VISION 2020/USA meeting that was held recently in Maryland.
- I will give a report about the World Council of Optometry meeting and how VOSH can help support the development of optometry schools in countries that are underserved.
- Nelson Rivera will report on how VOSH can improve our partnership with ICEE (International Centre for Eyecare Education).
- Vic Connors will give us an update on our partnership with Optometry Giving Sight.
- Greg Pearl and Ruth McAndrews will report on the VOSH/International projects in Nicaragua.
- Updates on other VOSH ongoing projects (Technology Transfer Program, Fellowship in VOSH International, etc.)
- We will have chapter reports to see what everyone has been doing.
- You will be able to network with the other VOSH leaders to discuss the successful efforts of your chapter and ask about how other chapters solve problems.



Thanks to the board members and board advisors:

This will be my last article for the newsletter as President of VOSH/International. It has been a very interesting, sometimes frustrating, but extremely rewarding ride.

VOSH/International has been blessed with an amazing collection of people on our board. We have educators in Bina Patel and Marcela Frazier that have worked with the student VOSH chapters. Greg Pearl has been very involved with both VOSH California and with the operation of FUEM in El Salvador. Ruth McAndrews has been very active in VOSH Iowa and has led many missions. Harry Zeltzer has been active in the Massachusetts Optometric Society and is the inventor of the X-chrome contact lens. We have past state optometric association presidents in James Vaught and Jeff Forrey. Vic Connors is a past American Optometric Association President and a Past President of the World Council of Optometry. Our secretary treasurer, Charlie Covington, is a retired auditor and we have two advisors that have law degrees (John Gehrig and Natalie Venezia). Deb Wright-DeMaderios has a background in event planning and has been handling the plans for the annual meeting. And our newest addition is Todd Fleischer, who is taking over the job of producing the newsletter. Todd is the Communications Director for the Kansas Optometric Association and does the layout for its publications.

All of these people work without any pay and their passion for helping the people in developing countries is unmatched. If you see any of the board members throughout the year, please remember to thank them for all of their hard work and keep them informed about what your chapter is doing.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me or one of the board members and let us know.

Apply for Fellow of VOSH/International

The following individuals have achieved the distinction of Fellows of VOSH/International (FVI):

Dale Cole	Michel Listenburger
Charles Covington	Jeffrey Marshall
Michael DeRosier	Ruth McAndrews
Ann Edmonds	Robert Merriam
Bud Falkenhain	Bruce Moore
Stuart Frank	Ellis Potter
Patti Fuhr	Stephen Rose
Charles Gray	Richard Ryan
Thomas Henley	Wayne Vanderlees
Jim Hess	Harry Zeltzer
Phil Hottel	

The next examination date for the honor of Fellow of VOSH/International is scheduled for Saturday, November 14, 2009 in Orlando, Florida.

This opportunity is open to individuals with demonstrated knowledge, skills and experiences necessary to successfully meet the challenges of preventable blindness.

Requirements, sample questions, and application materials can be found on the VOSH/International web site, www.vosh.org.

For questions or further information, please contact committee chair Dr. Ann Edmonds at annedmonds@comcast.net.



Optometrist implements in-office donation program

Dr. Robert Le, an optometrist in Sugar Land, Texas, is implementing an in-office donation program to collect complete new pairs of glasses and donating them to organizations like VOSH.

For every pair of glasses sold in his office, he will donate a complete new pair of glasses on behalf of the patient.

Thank You from FUDEM for Frame Donation

FUDEM provides eye care for the underserved in El Salvador and has worked closely with VOSH, especially VOSH-CA. Luxottica generously donated 40,000 new frames to V/I. On their arrival, Fernando Vides Lemus from FUDEM wrote: *"I would like to share the great news that the donation of Luxottica glasses from IMEC has been successfully received at FUDEM! The glasses are impressive. We are deeply grateful with the donation. Thanks to all who helped us with the logistics of the shipment that made it possible this donation to arrive at FUDEM, and that will soon be available to Salvadorans in poverty condition. Soon our patients will also be grateful with your collaboration. Thanks to all of you."*

Travelling with batteries

Retinomax and battery expert, Bob Merriam (VOSH-KY), recommended the following website regarding transporting batteries and instruments containing batteries. He also recommends inserting each battery in an individual zip-loc bag. http://safetravel.dot.gov/documents/airline_passengers_and_batteries.pdf

Optometry Giving Sight Funds VOSH Projects

Thanks to the partnering of VOSH/International and OptometryGivingSight, three projects are now under way:

- **Peru:** Equipment for optometry students (managed by VOSH/Florida)
- **Tijuana, Mexico:** Construction of a new outreach clinic at an optometry school will give students the opportunity to examine the poor, underserved population in that area (managed by VOSH/California)
- **Leon, Nicaragua:** A presbyopia and refractive error study will determine the level of need in the area. Local community health nurses will be trained to screen for refractive error problems. Eyeglasses will also be provided to about 2,000 people during the course of the study.



The theme of World Sight Day 2009 recognizes that:

- Two-thirds of blind people worldwide are women and girls.
- In many countries, men's access to eye care is twice that of women.
- Effective strategies can and do successfully address this inequity.

In the End

By C. Ellis Potter, O.D., F.V.I.

He seemed dazed, they led him in but it was no wonder, he couldn't even see his hand in front of his face. Yet, in the end, this patient was helped with a -28.00 Diopter correction giving him 20/30 vision.

In another instance, one identical twin girl came to the clinic because of school learning problems-the other without complaint. Examining the other, who was not on the exam list, showed in the end both with identical high astigmatism prescriptions.

Waiting hours in line, an elderly lady came with the greatest smile. In the end, her personality sparked the day.

Every team member contributed their part. In the end, with a team effort, we did more together than we could have individually.

In November 2008, VOSH-Kansas went to Temuco, Chile, a city of 250,000 citizens located about 450 miles south of Santiago. This beautiful city, centered in a fertile agricultural region, is where some of the USA winter produce originates. It is in the heart of the Mapuche Indian country where patients have to wait a number of years for eye examinations. In the end, our examination of 2257 patients only dented the list of 10,000 on appointment lists.

It was a Rotary experience without parallel, with each team member hosted by Rotarians. In the end, they accomplished more than they thought they could and Rotary became stronger as a result.

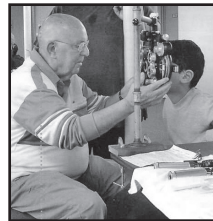
And in the end, we had a chance to relax and experience the local culture. You know a VOSH experience when you see an extreme myope become alert. You know it when you see the facial changes and smiles that result when you put the right prescription in front of the patients face. You know it when you are hugged by the appreciative grateful patient that you have served. You know it when you have touched and changed their lives. In the end, it is you that has changed!

Tribute to Dr. Floyd Woods (VOSH-IL)

By Dr. Sandra Bury

Floyd was one of the great ones indeed. He passed peacefully from prostate cancer August 25, 2008 in his home in Bradenton, FL at the age of 81. He remained an active VOSHer to the end and spent his 80th birthday in Mexico on a VOSH mission. He loved the spirit of volunteerism that VOSH promotes and he loved his VOSH patients more, often reflecting on their stories decades after missions. He loved the unique opportunity that his work with VOSH provided. He enjoyed his foreign patients very much and learned much about life through his interactions with them. It reinforced in him the beauty of optometry and the universal kindness and likeability of people. His patients were never merely patients, but dear friends. Patients everywhere sensed his kind and gentle nature, especially children. He knew he could make the most impact as an optometrist by working with children's vision.

Floyd was the man who talked me into becoming an optometrist. He was a friend, mentor and like a father in many ways. The lessons you learn in school help you as an optometrist, but the lessons Floyd taught have helped me be a much better doctor and a much more decent human being. I'm in his debt for those lessons, and I'm humbled by the example he set for a life committed to service to humanity. I often wonder where we'd be today without that amazing generation of optometrists and volunteers. Floyd was only one. They've all given us a great gift through their example and legacy. We've got to work hard to see that this spirit continues into the next generation of doctors.



Huddleston Honored

Dr. Jay Huddleston (VOSH-Northwest, VOSH-Iowa) of Anacortes, Washington was honored



by the Washington State Association of Emblem Clubs at their May 16 luncheon. The Emblem Club's major project is "I Care," which provides eye examinations, glasses, cataract surgery, or therapy for those who are otherwise unable to afford these services.

Dr. Huddleston's office has been a generous key provider for this program.

As he has also been an active VOSH volunteer, the WSAEC donated \$2000 to VOSH in Dr. Huddleston's name.

Optometry World-Wide (Excerpts from "Off the Cuff: Asia Report")

By Arthur B. Epstein, OD, FAAO

On this whirlwind lecture tour, I've visited with colleagues in Hong Kong, Bangkok, Singapore, Taiwan and now Seoul. Asia is alive with activity and its growth is just breathtaking. From a professional perspective, optometry has just exploded. Several American optometry schools have sister programs here. Even our American Optometric Association is involved. The current economic crisis has underscored the smallness of our world and how interconnected we all are. The long-term success of our profession will largely depend on our ability to provide care for the many millions of underserved patients throughout the world.

VOSH/Kansas Mission at Hariharananda Gokulashram, India

By Dale Cole, O.D., F.V.I

VOSH/Kansas led a mission to India in November 2008 in cooperation with VOSH/Lone Star and VOSH/India. Hare Krishna Patnaik, President of VOSH-India, is a native of Orissa. Hare's friend, Gopi Gopalan, was the key coordinator with local organizations.

Our team of twenty included six optometrists and three Illinois College of Optometry students. Dr. Dale Cole and Dr. Ruth McAndrews were past presidents of VOSH/International. V/I board member, Dr. Nelson Rivera, V/I Secretary-Treasurer, Charles Covington, and V/I Legal Counsel, John Gehrig were all included in the team.

Puri is a coastal city on the Bay of Bengal in the State of Orissa in Northeastern India. Bhubaneswar is its capital (about 600,000 people) Puri has a population of 200,000 in the city, but including surrounding villages it will be approximately 300,000. We stayed and worked at an ashram about 15-20 minutes car ride from Puri. The local language is Oriya, very different from Hindi (the national language). Our local hosts were most helpful with the translation as very few people spoke or understood English.

Our clinic ran for 5 ½ days, providing services to over 1700 patients. One local ophthalmologist helped for a couple days. A local optometrist helped and fabricated eyeglasses for those who needed custom prescriptions. The cataract rates in this population were very high (about 20%, twice the average we see in these types of eye missions). LV. Prasad Eye Clinic in Bhubaneswar was most helpful as they assisted us by providing care for most of our referrals. The Lions Club in Bhubaneswar also supported about 56 cataract surgeries.

Most of the team returned to Delhi to fly back to the United States. We arrived in Delhi in time to hear the evening news of the bombing in Mumbai. The three ICO students, Puju Shah, Komal Patel, and Pranali Mehta had gone to India early to visit relatives before the clinic and all were departing from Mumbai. Puja and Komal had been at the Taj and Oberoi hotel a week before the bombings. To the relief of VOSHers, family, and school officials, the terrorist attack was not near the airport and all made a safe return.



Feifke Runs Boston Marthon to Save Sight

By Derek Feifke, O.D., Past-President VOSH-O.N.E.



One trip to a small village in Southern Guatemala, a young mother brought her four-year-old daughter into a clinic which had been set up by our team of VOSH volunteers in the local schoolhouse. While it was evident the child had Down's Syndrome, I was told via the translator that the child was "blind." The small child's gaze jerked and darted about as her mother held her fidgeting body tightly to her lap. Within a few moments of scanning a diagnostic light in her eyes, I realized that this beautiful child had a very high myopic prescription. Her reaction upon placing the delicate glasses on her face was one I will never forget.

An incredible calm overcame the small girl, and it felt like a warm light was suddenly turned on. Her eyes widened and she began to slowly move her head as she gazed around the room for the first time. Her mother's reaction too was one of joy as she realized her infant daughter could now see. The feeling in the room at that moment in time was almost surreal and so wonderful that it is one that I hope to hold deep in my heart for always.

After running the 113th Boston Marathon (my sixth) in 3:55 on April 20, I am happy I decided to dedicate my run again to raising funds for VOSH-ONE (Volunteer Optometric Service to Humanity of New England). My determination to train for and run the grueling 26.2 miles from Hopkinton to Boston parallels my intent to continue the battle against preventable blindness in the world. There are literally millions of people in the impoverished third world, who by our standards are considered legally blind, many of whom can be helped with the provision of simple eyeglasses. My recent trip to Antigua, Guatemala was my seventh to Central America. Our group of six doctors examined one thousand patients and dispensed as many glasses and eye medications as were needed.

Humanitarian of the Year

The VOSH/International Humanitarian of the Year Award will again be conferred at the November Annual Meeting. If you know an individual that you would like to nominate for this recognition, please send a summary of their accomplishments to President Larry Hookway at larry@hookwayeyecare.com.

Ladies Home Journal Feature

Ladies Home Journal editor-in chief, Salle Lee, went to Nicaragua with VOSH in February and wrote a story about her trip for the June 2009 issue. Her experience prompted the New York staff to do an in-house eyeglass collection which was then donated to VOSH.

Stop and see us in the exhibit hall!

- **International Vision Expo West:**
Las Vegas, October 1-3
- **American Academy of Optometry:**
Orlando, November 11-13

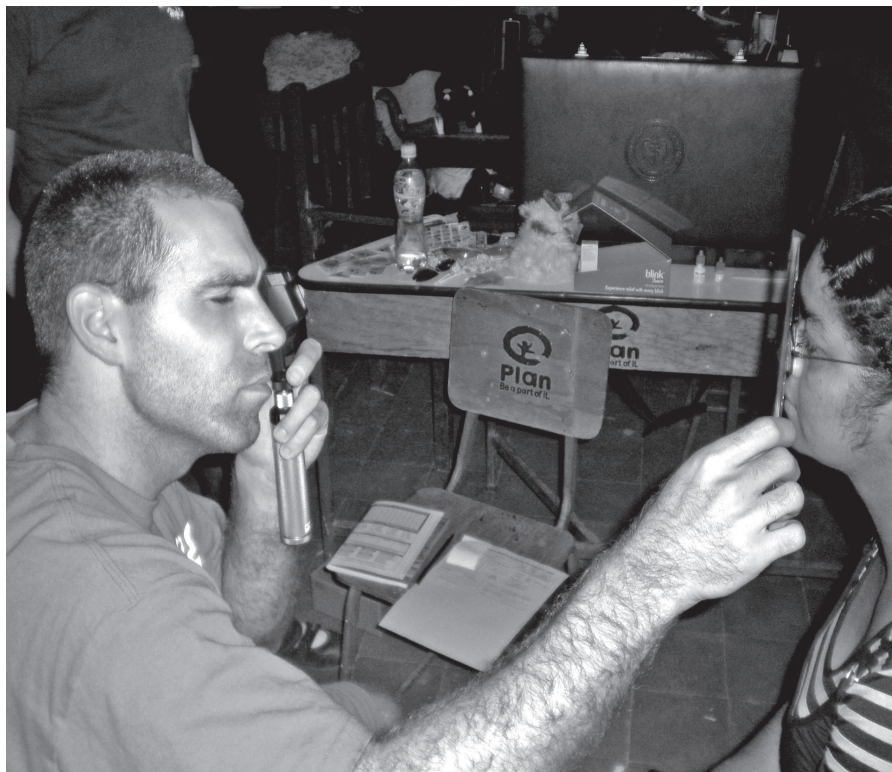
Foundation Provides Grants for ICO-SVOSH

Illinois College of Optometry students are opening their hearts and wallets to volunteer for domestic and global humanitarian missions through Student Volunteers in Optometric Services to Humanity (SVOSH). These missions to underdeveloped communities around the world provide life-changing care for thousands of people in need and allow students to participate in restoring or improving vision while also exposing them to different cultures and diverse eye conditions. While the cost limits the number of students who can become involved, The Jenzabar Foundation has awarded a grant to aid ICO's student chapter of VOSH by subsidizing the cost and support the humanitarian work of ICO students.

"When you think about it, here are students who are thousands and thousands of dollars in debt making a decision to volunteer and put together whatever resources they can to join a medical mission trip," said ICO-SVOSH President Michelle Crist. "We feel very fortunate to receive this grant from The Jenzabar Foundation, as it will allow more students to participate in an experience that not only broadens our clinical knowledge, but will also carry over to when we are practicing optometrists."

Typically, students become a member of SVOSH their first year and work toward a mission, which they can go on during their third professional year. The cost per student can range from \$1,000-\$3,500, depending on the location. Students who complete 40 service hours for ICO-SVOSH prior to their trip will receive \$500 from The Jenzabar Foundation to offset their expenses, once they have completed 40 service hours. Grant funds were for the 2008-09 and 2009-10 academic years, making it possible for more students to volunteer and provide services to thousands of people in need.

In February, 25 ICO students participated in a mission trip to Honduras, which was the last of nine mission trips for the 2008-09 academic year.



SCCO Students Provide Vision Care in Tijuana

By Christian Alvarez

The VOSH mission trip to Tijuana was a memorable experience, as I had the opportunity to volunteer with a group that served hundreds of underserved, impoverished individuals. I have visited Tijuana before and was very aware of the situations many of its inhabitants contend with on a daily basis, so I felt gratified having been a part of an effort to improve these people's daily lives. I had the opportunity to meet young boys and girls with visibly impoverished appearances, but despite their living conditions had very lively and positive attitudes.

It was a tremendous satisfaction knowing that VOSH's efforts will prevent these children from struggling in school due to vision problems, and have a greater opportunity to succeed. Many people, both young and old, received eyeglasses, will have improved vision, and will have one less fundamental issue to overcome. It was an honor to partake in VOSH, and I hope I may continue to serve.

Facts on Gender: www.v2020.org

- Women make up some 60% of the world's working poor—people who work but do not earn enough to lift themselves above the \$1 per day poverty line.
 - According to the World Bank, in Sub-Saharan Africa, inequality between men and women in education and employment halved economic growth between 1960 and 1992.
 - Rural women alone produce half of the world's food and 60-80% of the food in most developing countries.
 - In Kenya, giving women farmers the same inputs and education as men could increase yields more than 20%.
- According to Professor Brien Holden, "Failing to act to eliminate avoidable blindness not only severely impacts on the lives of individuals, families and communities, but also creates this current significant economic burden on the global economy. We have understood for some time that vision impairment has a direct link to poverty." (www.icee.org)

2009 Missions

- Aug. 16-23, Dangriga, Belize (PCO SVOSH) EVansh@salus.edu
- Aug. 30-Sept. 6, Milot, Haiti (DelVal) drmcpod@aol.com
- Aug., Honduras (NSUOCO) jmiedunn@gmail.com
- Sept., Peru (Santa Cruz Quebec) pierre.labine@sympatico.ca
- Sept. 18-29, Jamaica (NW) stevenster@gmail.com
- Oct., India (India) harepatnaik@yahoo.com
- Oct. 3-4, Grundy, VA (VA) dvccler@aol.com
- Oct. 9-22, Yerevan, Armenia (ONE) lbennettod@earthlink.net
- Oct. 9-25, Balighai Ashram (India) harepatnaik
- Oct. 31-Nov 17, Temoco, Easter Island, Chile (KS) epotter@iolaks.com
- Nov. 6-15, Nicaragua (FL) suzybamberg@vosh-florida.org
- Nov. 7-16, Patzcuaro, Mexico (OH) arliss@wcoil.com
- Nov., Mexico (Santa Cruz, Quebec) pierre.labine@sympatico.ca
- Nov., Apopa, El Salvador (ONE) amblerj@sover.net
- Dec. 12-20, Rivas Nicaragua (KY) idox@insightbb.com
- Dec. 28-Jan. 12, Santa Barbara, Honduras (OR) annedmonds@comcast.net
- Dec. 28-Jan. 12, Kakinada, India (OR) annedmonds@comcast.net
- Dec. 29-Jan. 8, Guayquil, Ecuador (UCBCO) vosh.president@gmail.com

2010 Missions

- Jan., Nairobi, Kenya (OR) annedmonds@comcast.net
- Jan. 8-18, Kobonal, Haiti (OH) arliss@wcoil.com
- Jan. 16-24, Nueva Esperanza, El Salvador (NE) islanddoc5@aol.com
- Feb. 13-21, San Cristobal, Mexico (VA) dnbclark@verizon.net
- Feb. 20-27, San Pedro Sula, Honduras (IN) vosh-indiana@indy.rr.com
- Feb., Haiti (Santa Cruz) pierre.labine@sympatico.ca
- Mar. 20-28, Guanacaste, Cost Rica (OR) annedmonds@comcast.net
- Mar. 20-28, Honduras (OR) annedmonds@comcast.net
- May, Romania (Santa Cruz) pierre.labine@sympatico.ca
- Ixcan, Guatemala (OR) annedmonds@comcast.net
- Loouane, Morocco (Santa Cruz) pierre.labine@sympatico.ca
- Nov. 20-Dec. 2 Nairobi, Kenya (IN) vosh-indiana@indy.rr.com

Blindness and Vision Impairment: Global Facts

According to WHO estimates:

- Approximately 314 million people suffer serious vision impairment
- Of these, 45 million people are blind and 124 million have low vision
- Yet 75% of blindness is avoidable - i.e. treatable and/or preventable
- 90% of vision impaired people live in developing countries
- Restorations of sight and blindness prevention strategies are among the most cost-effective interventions in health care
- Infectious causes of blindness are decreasing as a result of public health interventions and socio-economic development. Blinding trachoma now affects fewer than 80 million people, compared to 360 million in 1985
- 153 million people's vision impairment is due to uncorrected refractive errors. In most cases, normal vision could be restored with eyeglasses
- Aging populations and lifestyle changes mean that chronic blinding conditions such as diabetic retinopathy are now rising
- Women face a greater risk of vision loss than men
- Without proper interventions, 76 million people could be blind by 2020
- Without effective, major intervention, the number of blind people worldwide is projected to increase to 76 million by 2020
- 517 million are visually impaired at near due to uncorrected presbyopia.



Dr. Rosa Elena Bello Receives Honorary Degree

In June, Simmons College of Boston, MA conferred an honorary degree upon Dr. Rosa Elena Bello in recognition of her embracing vision of public health, her immense organizational abilities, and her work providing service-learning to Simmons College students in particular. Dr. Elena has helped coordinate VOSH activities in the San Juan del Sur area on several occasions. She has been involved in providing medical services to the area and has also developed an unique community-oriented literacy program.

Hess Retires

After 26 years as president of VOSH-Minnesota, Jim Hess, OD, has decided that it's time to turn that position over to someone else. He plans to remain active in VOSH, and volunteers will still be sorting glasses in the basement of his office twice each month. During Dr. Hess' tenure, VOSH-Minnesota has sent out approximately 67 missions, of which he has led 27. Countless people around the world have benefited from Jim's dedication to serving those less fortunate.

Dr. Bob Boeding was elected as VOSH-Minnesota President in February. He can be reached at rboeding@q.com.

Technology Transfer Program

Sharing usable ophthalmic equipment will facilitate other less affluent programs to make use of newer, more reliable resources than they presently have available. This program is encouraged and endorsed by UNESCO and the World Council on Optometry. (See article on Ghana for one example of its impact.)

The most desirable items that programs in developing countries are in need of are:

- Trial lens kits
- Battery powered hand scopes
- Assorted pliers and optical tools
- Hand stones for edging glass lenses
- Uncut lenses; both SV and BF
- Manual lensometers
- Phoropters
- Lens clocks
- Color vision tests
- Keratometers
- Biomicroscopes

This list is certainly not complete, but gives you an idea of some of the basic items from which these developing programs can benefit. Please visit www.VOSH.org for more information.

VOSH/Florida Equipment for Sale

Trial lens sets (104 or 48 pieces), trial frames, retinoscopy bars, and more are available.

Visit www.vosh-florida.org/store2.htm.

VOSH/INTERNATIONAL is a voluntary non-profit organization whose primary goal is to facilitate the provision of vision care worldwide to people who neither can afford nor obtain such care.

VOSH/INTERNATIONAL accomplishes this goal by serving as a coordinating body for affiliated chapters. It provides administrative support of chapter activities. It also provides promotional opportunities to encourage the formation of new chapters and recruitment of new members.

VOSH/INTERNATIONAL is a non-sectarian and non-political organization. Currently there are 33 independent chapters and 24 university-affiliated chapters.

www.VOSH.org

VOSH/INTERNATIONAL
Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity



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