Happy Holidays AFOS members and friends! By the time you read this, Thanksgiving will have come and gone, but I hope you were able to take some time to relax and appreciate the things important to you in life. For me, family is a top priority and I must say that having been involved with AFOS for almost a decade now, I consider our members to be part of a family. We share the bond of service to our great nation and I am exceedingly proud to be a part of this organization.

Traditionally the President’s first column is simply his or her induction speech from the annual business meeting. Mine follows this column, but I wanted to also quickly update everyone on a couple of topics. First, as of this writing, the ED selection process is concluding. The final two candidates are being debated and it’s likely we’ll announce the new ED in early to mid December. We will be keeping Dr. Pattison, who has done a fantastic interim job, onboard until the executive council is sure the new ED has had a comprehensive turn-over. Next, this newsletter contains lists of the current committee structures and current vacancies. Multiple committees have restructured and if you note a service specific vacancy on a committee and would like to submit your name as a candidate to fill the role, please contact the committee’s chairperson and AFOS’ Vice-President, Dr. Jeff Autrey. The only caveat here is that the communications committee member applicants must have web-design knowledge and experience.

Finally, I feel it’s important for our members to know just how much happens behind the scenes on your behalf, both here in AFOS and at the AOA. Not a day goes by when dozens of e-mails are not sent between committees, the council and the officers. It really is awe inspiring to see how dedicated your chosen leaders are. As the AFOS leadership works to make federal service optometry the best it can be, rest assured that the AOA is working not only on our behalf but tirelessly to ensure that optometric practice will continue to be properly recognized as the healthcare system continues to evolve. A few hot-ticket items being addressed by the AOA include standing up to the AMA’s efforts to repeal the Harkin anti-discrimination amendment, supporting the designation of pediatric vision care as essential, which includes fighting to make comprehensive eye exams the standard and backing an end to artificial restrictions on our services imposed by health plans.

I for one am proud to be an AOA member and look forward to continuing to work with them as an affiliate and part of the optometric family. The next time AFOS will do this work with the AOA formally is when our President Elect, Dr. Aly Wasik, the new ED, and I attend the AOA President’s Council in New Orleans on 27 & 28 January. I will report back to you all on discussion topics from this meeting in my next column. Again, best wishes for the holidays!
The President’s Inaugural Speech

Good afternoon colleagues and friends. I stand here humbled to have been elected your 43rd president and look forward to the challenge of leading our great society over the next 12 months.

As tradition holds, I’d like to start off with a few thank-yous. First, to my wife Jen, thank you for always being my best friend and guiding light; I would not be where I am in life without you. To my mentors, CAPT Julie Miavez and retired CAPT Hugh Jamison; thank you for your sage and down to earth advice this last decade. Next, a hearty thank you to our corporate sponsors that we’ve recognized here today; without your continued support, AFOS could not continue to thrive and grow as it has in recent years. To retired CAPT Mike Pattison: you have stepped into the interim Executive Director role with vigor and have been a tremendous asset to us; thank you very much; you’ve made a difficult time for AFOS much more manageable. And finally, I would like to acknowledge all of the hard work and dedication of the current officers, council members, and committee members. We have all come together in remarkable fashion over the last few months and it’s been a pleasure to serve with you.

As we all know, AFOS suffered the tragic loss of Dave Simpson earlier this year. With the sudden passing of our Executive Director, the officers and executive council were left to run the Society’s day-to-day business operations which gave us insight into how much time and effort truly goes into running AFOS. When Dr. Pattison came on to serve as our interim ED without the benefit of any turnover, we were forced to examine our most basic processes from the ground up. The bottom line is that we have found many areas in which we can improve and this brings me to what I’d like you all to know are my goals for the upcoming year:

1. Ensure that the selection process for our next executive director is completed and that our selection has the benefit of proper turnover with the interim.
2. Work with the new ED and the council to reorganize our membership rosters. Even with the website automation, our roles are in desperate need of a member by member review. This will be a time consuming process, but a vital one for our organization. During this process, we will propose changes to both our by-laws and those of the AOA in order to help us align with other affiliates and expand our rosters.
3. Develop and implement appointment letters, Conflict of Interest Statements and a mentorship program for our committees and new executive council members. When I first joined AFOS’ committee structure 9 years ago, I became the membership chair. This appointment transpired with a handshake and a binder turnover; I was both the chair and the only member of the committee. Today, the membership committee, along with many of our other committees, are made up of more than 10 members and there is no shortage of applicants for available seats. This is a very exciting prospect because we have considerably more brain-power working toward a better AFOS. As we add these eager doctors to our committee structure and promote others up into the leadership ranks, we want to ensure they have all the tools they need to function effectively and in the best interests of AFOS.
4. My final goal will be to create a 5-year plan for AFOS with the help of the new ED and officers. Although we will spend a portion of the upcoming year rebuilding, I think it is very important to revise our long term goals and make them known to all.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you all for serving our great nation and again, I look forward to representing you in the coming year.
What I Have Learned – Parting Thoughts From Your Interim Executive Director

By the time the next Newsletter is due, which should be just before the FSO Meeting in Atlanta, you should have a new Executive Director in place. I hope that no one ever has to take over under the unfortunate circumstances that I did, but the result has been that I have learned a lot and wanted to share with you some parting thoughts.

First, this job is difficult and time-consuming. The ED is just one person who manages everything, unless he or she is lucky to be married to someone like I am, and has to juggle a lot of items at the same time. Sometimes you may not be the most important thing at that moment. I went through hurricanes, power outages, lost internet and taskings from just about everyone. So, I apologize if I did not always respond in a timely manner but I did what I honestly felt was my best. Most folks who know me know that I have a passion for Federal Service and especially Federal Service Optometry. People may not always like my style but I do get results. So, please be patient with the new ED. Give him or her time to figure things out and help him or her out and offer advice whenever you can.

The most difficult part of the job was listening to all of those who are behind in their dues and why they have not been paying them. All of us who are paid members have earned the right to voice our opinion but please learn your facts first. Do not listen to the diatribes of the few. I think that they just talk for their own sake but, in AFOS, we are all equal no matter what the rank and so we all have the same voice. Do your own research and come to your own conclusion please. For the most part, I understand, but the reality is that I was also part of the problem and want to use this column to clarify some points about AFOS and our relationship with AOA which I am going to call the un-truths. And, remember, I am one of those senior members so please read what I say but do your own research and come to your own conclusions. I do not have all of the facts that may be most important to you.

One of the interesting things that happens to the ED is that they become part of the International Association of Optometric Executives. This is a group that share ideas, thoughts, and advice and has been great in helping me get through this effort. The other thing is that they have educated me as to why things are happening from the perspective of the states. The reality is that we are very sheltered in the Federal Service. We get paid the same whether we see patients or not and we do not have to be concerned about Insurance Panels or paying the bills. We do our job and get rewarded for it. That is not true of our counterparts.

The reality is that there are real battles going on with Ophthalmology and Insurance Plans to cut their expenses by reducing payments and, in most states now, optometrists are concerned. I have seen a lot of dialogue about change from OD to Optometric Physician or the like and did not understand the point. Folks, it is about reimbursement. In some plans apparently “Physicians” get paid more that Doctors which absolutely amazes me. If you follow the legislation that Congress has been enacting, a lot of times you will see that the wording states “physicians” and AOA has to try to get optometrists included in the scope of the bill. The same issue is true about Board Certification. I think the biggest debate is whether Insurance companies and Medicare pay more to “Board Certified” practitioners or whether having a Board Certification available will result in the dual payment system. Also, apparently some hospitals are requiring Board Certification for privileging. If you follow the Medicare Incentive programs, you will see that the ABO has been approved as a certification body under the PQRS and ABO has been accepted as a certification body. For us is federal service, it means nothing. Again, we get paid the same either way. For our civilian counterparts, being called an optometric physician and being ABO certified means that they make more money. As I used to say about being a Fellow in the Academy for the military (Something AOA helped us obtain) for a little bit of time and effort you get paid more. It appears that Board Certification may result in the same for our civilian counterparts. I do not know all of the details but what I do know is that Dental has

(Continued on Page 4)
the same issue and is offering a Board Certification and even offers and Oral Exam Review Course at Lackland AFB every year. Go to abgd.org to find out more about the Dental Program. How is General Dentistry different from General Optometry? Also, the other complaint is that we are being forced to do this. If you go to the website of the ABO, you will see in the first sentence that, “Board Certification is a voluntary process.” If you go to the ABCO site, you will see that they also say that they, “do not set the criteria for licensure, competency to practice optometry, or the scope of the optometric practice. These are determined by the laws of each state.” So, what is my advice to each of you regarding Board Certification? If you are staying in federal service, it is probably not necessary to be Board-certified unless you want to do it. However, if you are planning on practicing outside of federal service in the future, my recommendation is that you see how your state is handling these issues. On a side note, I became a Fellow in the Academy before the military offered “Board Certification Pay” simply because I wanted to be able to obtain licenses in states and thought that it may help me in getting those licenses and civilian jobs since it validated my credentials so to speak. How is what I thought back then different from what is being said about the ABO exam now? I leave that answer for you to decide. Do your own research and come to your own conclusions.

Also, remember that my past life was as the Specialty Leader for Navy Optometry so was part of the problem in that we did not do a good enough job of letting the rest of you know what we did with the AOA. One thing that is interesting is that the AOA sits down with our Leaders, the senior folks in Federal Service, and those of AFOS early in the year and we discuss and establish what the important issues are for us in the coming year so that we all are on the same page. Folks, the AOA does not do that for any other affiliate. They recognize our importance to the profession and its advancement and also recognize that our concerns are sometimes different than those of state affiliates so they want to make certain that our needs are getting the attention that they deserve. In addition, often there were items that I could not bring up through Navy channels or items that concerned another federal organization and their optometrists. On numerous occasions, I went to the AOA for assistance and they always came through. These items can never be discussed because of the political nature of them but I do know that we would not be where we are without the AOA.

People also tell me that the AOA does not do anything about increasing our pay and that the $100 professional pay is a joke. The reality is that they are fighting for us every day and that stupid $100 is legislated. The AOA is working to get us more all the time and, again, gives us the time to sit together and discuss what we are going to be asking for every year. I am following this editorial on the next page with a list of things that AOA has accomplished for us in the past. Again, this represents only part of the list since many things simply are not for public discussion. If you look at where Optometry is right now, I think that membership should be important to those of you continuing to practice. That decision is yours. The rules will be changing regarding membership so, do your homework and make the right decisions.

AFOS is and will be important to me in the future so I am and will be at your service. Even if I am not in this role, feel free to ask me my thoughts if you want to since, after all, I am just a member of AFOS and the AOA – the same as the rest of you and with the same voice.

Finally, let me thank my wife Julie for all of her help. She is the one who puts this Newsletter together and has had to deal with all of my frustrations.

Enjoy your holidays.

Happy Holidays from Mike and Julie Pattison!!

Moving?

Please go to our website at www.afos2020.org and log on and go to “Update Profile” and make the appropriate changes — if you are an AOA member, an e-mail will automatically be generated with the changes and sent to the AOA
AOA has been committed to federal service optometrists for years and that commitment continues to this day which is reaffirmed in a statement from the AOA President Elect Ronald Hopping, OD, MPH: “Optometry is a family. This is important because our profession has been successful because each part of the family of Optometry has supported each other. AFOS is a very important part and highly valued member of the family of Optometry. I respect and truly appreciate the great care Federal Service Optometry has provided to our country’s Service members and their families, our Veterans and our Native Americans. I am personally proud that Optometry serves our country so well.” As you may know, the AOA has a proud and active history of advocating for optometrists in federal service. Below is a short list of legislative activities highlighting AOA’s long history of bringing advancements to uniformed and VA optometry.

95th Congress 1977-78
- Special pay for military and PHS Commissioned Corps optometrists (pay had expired under law)
- Public Law 94-581 established the Director of Optometric Service position in 1976 and then VA optometrists were transferred into Title 38 which previously only included dentists and physicians

96th Congress 1979-80
- Military optometrists awarded appropriate constructive service credit (O-3 entry)
- VA mandates preventive eye health provisions

98th Congress 1983-84
- CHAMPUS (now TRICARE) covered routine comprehensive annual eye exams

100th Congress 1987-88
- Trial test of administratively separate field services for Army optometry
- I H S scholarship for optometry
- “Eye and vision care” placed in law at the top of the priority list in Title II of the Indian Health Care Amendments legislation

101st Congress 1989-90
- Separate field services test for Army, Navy and Air Force
- Retention special pay and board certified pay for military optometrists

102nd Congress 1991-92
- Eye care study supports separate services; Congress directs DoD to continue separate services for Army, Navy and Air Force

103rd Congress 1993-94
- Congress directs additional VA expansion in Optometry Service
- Determination of constructive credit for Reserve optometry officers

104th Congress 1995-96
- Retention and board certified special pay for PHS optometry officers

105th Congress 1997-98
- Authority to repay education loans extended to commissioned optometry officers

106th Congress 1999-00
- Extension of provisions of special pay, board certified pay for military and PHS optometry officers

107th Congress 2001-02
- Increased Retention Special Pay

108th Congress 2003-04
- Congress directs Navy to implement Retention Special Pay for Navy optometrists

109th Congress 2005-06
- Expansion of VA low vision optometry and VICTORS

110th Congress 2007-09
- DoD/VA Vision Center of Excellence

111th Congress 2010-2011
- VA Blind Rehabilitation Center named for Dr. Rob Soltes

AOA has worked with AFOS to preserve and advance federal service optometry and we will continue to advocate together on your behalf as FSOs face the challenges of practicing in the current political and economic climate. Your membership in AOA has lead to AFOS becoming the 11th largest affiliate so please continue to support both organizations!
Greetings from warm and sunny Tucson, Arizona!

I am proud to serve as your President Elect for the next 12 months and am looking forward to working with our President, Executive Council, Committees and Executive Director in moving AFOS from the 11th to the 10th largest affiliate of the AOA. Breaking into the “Top 10” was a shared goal of the late David Simpson and me since my early years in the AFOS leadership were with the Membership Committee. I also have had the privilege of serving on the AOA Federal Relations Committee (FRC) since April 2011 and as part of my duties, I am the facilitator of the bi-annual Section Chiefs’ Meeting. As a member of the FRC, I have also been involved with developing positions and action programs on federal legislation and agency regulation as related to the profession of optometry. I would like to recognize other AFOS members who currently serve on AOA committees:

- Andrew M. Archila, O.D. member, Quality Improvement Committee
- Norma K. Bowyer, O.D., M.S., M.P.H. member, OPTOMETRY Journal of the AOA Review Board Committee
- Kara C. Gagnon, O.D. Vice-Chair, Vision Rehabilitation Section
- Angela N. Musick, O.D. member, Membership Development Committee
- Margaret M. Read, O.D., M.B.A. member, Quality Improvement Committee
- Stuart P. Richer, O.D., Ph.D. member, Health Promotion Committee
- Joan A. Stelmack, O.D., M.P.H. member, Council on Research
- Gregory S. Wolfe, O.D., M.P.H. member, Clinical and Practice Advancement Group Executive Committee
- Chair, Health Promotion Committee

AOA has been committed to federal service optometrists for more than 30 years and that commitment continues to this day, which is reaffirmed in a statement from the AOA President Elect Ronald Hopping, OD, MPH: “Optometry is a family. This is important because our profession has been successful because each part of the family of Optometry has supported each other. AFOS is a very important part and highly valued member of the family of Optometry. I respect and truly appreciate the great care Federal Service Optometry has provided to our country’s Service members and their families, our Veterans and our Native Americans. I am personally proud that Optometry serves our country so well.”

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Greetings from the Continuing Education Committee

CONTINUING EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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<th>Branch</th>
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<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>Lt Col Anthony Jarecke, OD, MBA, FAAO (Chair)&lt;br&gt;Capt Justin Sandholm, OD</td>
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<td>Army</td>
<td>Maj Jason Hales, OD, FAAO&lt;br&gt;Capt Ina Lee, OD, FAAO</td>
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<td>Navy</td>
<td>CDR Kevin Jackson, OD, MPH, FAAO&lt;br&gt;LCDR Tyson Brunstetter, OD, PhD, MBA, FAAO, FAsMA (Vice Chair)</td>
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<td>Public Health</td>
<td>LCDR Greg Smith, OD, FAAO&lt;br&gt;LT Christopher Cordes, OD, FAAO</td>
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<td>VA</td>
<td>Scott Slagle, OD, FAAO&lt;br&gt;Joni Scott-Weideman, OD, FAAO&lt;br&gt;<strong>Angela Musick, OD, FAAO (Past Chair)</strong></td>
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The Continuing Education Committee is happy to report the success of AFOS’s 43rd Annual Meeting. If you didn’t attend, the meeting was held in Boston at the Hynes Convention Center. In response to our member’s request, we are expanding the number of CE hours offered at the annual meeting from 4 to 8 hours. To do this, we developed a new lecture series called the Dave Simpson Memorial Lecture Series as a tribute to Col Dave Simpson and his dedication to AFOS. Carl Zeiss Meditech graciously sponsored this inaugural event and contributed to its success.

The Dave Simpson Memorial Lecture Series was held on Monday night and featured 3 of our fellow AFOS doctors as lecturers. Dr. Feeser discussed the ARMD disease process and treatments including dietary, pharmacological, and surgical. Drs. Uyesugi and Zambrano presented an overview of how Optometry services have been incorporated into a multidisciplinary team of providers already established as the C5 clinic at Naval Medical Centers. Dr. Fingeret ended the lecture series talking about glaucoma and the factors that contribute to its progression. All lectures were well received and based on the overwhelmingly positive reviews the Dave Simpson Memorial Lecture Series will become an annual event.

AFOS was able to offer 5 CE hours on Tuesday, the day of the Annual Meeting. Dr. Cavallerano discussed peripheral retinal disorders and the clinical thought process of both treatment and referral. Dr. Lonsberry then presented on Ocular Urgencies and Emergencies. He explained the diagnostic and management approach to a variety of conditions. Dr. Lonsberry finished up the day presenting a variety of cases during his grand rounds discussion. All lectures were outstanding and received overwhelmingly positive reviews.

The AFOS Continuing Education Committee is hard at working securing speakers for our upcoming Federal Services Optometric Meeting in Atlanta. This meeting will also provide 8 hours of CE. We are pleased to announce 3 of our tentative speakers. Dr. Sharpe will be lecturing on Optometry’s role in the Emergency Department. The AOA will be sponsoring a lecture on ARMD and Dr. Madonna’s Topic is yet to be determined. So, please mark your calendars for the FSO meeting on Wednesday, February 29th.

Outlines and handouts will be posted on the AFOS website as they are finalized by each speaker. Printed handouts will not be available at the meeting, so please feel free to print a personal copy from the website and bring it to the lectures if desired. We will continue to use paper sign-in sheets which will be sent around the room to verify attendance. A record of attendance will be submitted to ARBO based on these sign-in sheets, so please don’t forget to sign in. Hard copy CE attendance certificates will be traded for evaluation certificates near the door at the end of each lecture. Please keep checking the AFOS website (www.afos2020.org) for additional updates.

Lastly, I’m sorry to say that Dr. Scott Slagle is stepping down as Co-Chair of the CE Committee. Don’t worry he isn’t going far; he will still be a member of our committee. I would like to thank him for his guidance, professionalism and tireless efforts over the last year. His contributions have improved the quantity and quality of our CE. We are also losing Dr. Mike Davis, a very active and dedicated member. He will surely be missed. On a positive note, I’m extremely happy to announce that Dr. Tyson Brunstetter was appointed Vice-Chair of the CE committee. I’ve already had the pleasure of working with him and his “can do” attitude will be a great asset to the committee. We are looking forward to the New Year and providing you highest quality continuing education available.
I was privileged to participate as a TIER 3 augmentee to the RDF-4 in the Pine Ridge, South Dakota RAM event at the end of August, 2011. For those who aren’t familiar with RAM (Remote Area Medical), it is a non-profit organization that provides medical care (mostly primary medical, dental, and optometry services) to remote areas of the US, allowing underserved populations to receive free care. While RAM generally supplies all of the necessary equipment, they rely mostly on volunteers to provide the services. In this case, the RAM event relied heavily on RDF-4 to provide the manpower. The deployment/training mission to the Pine Ridge Reservation came at a very opportune time for many of the residents there, as Pine Ridge has had a difficult time keeping their dental and optometry departments staffed (Pine Ridge does have a very nice IHS hospital, but it is often short-staffed, and from my understanding, has not had an optometrist for over a year). We saw mostly Native Americans (Oglala Sioux), but the event was open to anyone and everyone.

RAM brought their portable optometry equipment (phoropters, projectors, slit lamps, etc.), as well as their huge inventory of frames (very nice frames, by the way) and lens fabrication truck. RDF-4 and RAM volunteers set up the equipment on Tuesday and Wednesday in the Boys and Girls Club in Pine Ridge. For optometry, we divided the equipment into four rooms (an entrance testing room, a refraction room with five phoropters/charts, an ocular health room with two slit lamps, and an optical dispensary with hundreds of frames) and split the workload accordingly. Because we only had four optometrists, we trained other RDF-4 members (a couple of nurses, a lab tech, a PA, a pharmacist, etc.) to do the entrance testing, tonopen, and to place dilation drops, which after the first couple of hours of seeing patients and getting the flow down right, really worked very well. Then, we had two optometrists doing refractions and two doing ocular health evaluations. The limiting factor in the number of patients we saw was really the lens fabrication. After the patients picked their frames, the frames were immediately sent to the fabrication truck in the parking lot, where the lenses were cut and finished and placed in the frames (only a handful of very high prescriptions could not be filled on site). The RAM operation is especially cool in that regard, as patients can walk away with their glasses on the day they are seen, for the most part. We saw patients on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and part of Sunday. The medical unit completed 1300 patient encounters for 730 total patients that included 567 medical encounters, 374 dental encounters, 359 optometry encounters with 329 pairs of eyeglasses made on site.

For me, the event was an eye opener. This was not the first RAM event for Drs. Scott, Farrar, and Zubel. They are pros at this point; in fact, Dr. Zubel is so comfortable with these events that I’m pretty sure he has his name marked on at least one of the phoropters, and I know he has his refracting chair marked, as it immediately recognizes him and holds him in what I call the “inverted-reclined refracting position.” Sleeping in bunks/cots, taking showers in portable units, wearing BDUs, eating every day at the equivalent of a mess hall (the food was actually quite good), and riding a bus for 45 minutes each morning from the barracks to the RAM site and back again definitely made me feel like I really was “in the field.” The work was tiring but rewarding, and I encourage all to volunteer for similar events. Seeing Mount Rushmore the morning of our departure, combined with the work, meeting other officers, and seeing the stunning vistas and landscapes of the Badlands National Park everyday, made for a very rewarding mission overall.
The AOA is pleased to announce that the AOA mobile app is now available for download in the app stores for Apple iOS, Android, and Blackberry.

Search for "AOA." Be sure to rate the app and leave a positive comment in your respective app store.

We are optimizing the app descriptions for SEO and making minor text formatting improvements. Members will soon be able to search "American Optometric Association" and other keywords. Additional minor improvements will be pushed to the app shortly. We will begin marketing the new app to members beginning next week.

This is our second venture into the mobile arena (Optometry’s Meeting app was the first) - additional enhancements and functionality will be introduced next year.
We are at the end of another extremely busy calendar year and Christmas and the Holidays are fast approaching. I want to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a safe and enjoyable Holiday Season and a Happy New Year. Thank you for all the hard work and dedication in taking care of the best patients in the world and providing the leadership and cutting edge clinical care and performance that keeps us at the forefront of our profession. TJL

Currently in Theater

Iraq: MAJ Youykham Chanthavilay, CPT Coleman Anderson, SFC Timothy Johnson, SGT Aaron Diaz, SGT Michael Simon- sen, and PFC Brittany Lee

Afghanistan: LTC Deb McNamara, 1LT Amy Dao, SSG Demeteres Files, and SGT Tiffany Cogburn

Kosovo: Currently not filled: ERMC optometrists are providing interim support

The Carolinas Federal Service Optometric Society – “Lifts off the Ground”

Despite significant weather issues with Hurricane Irene, the “Carolinas Federal Service Optometric Society” had its inaugural meeting on Friday, 26 August 2011. CPT Larry Plaxco and COL Carol Rymer spearheaded the project which emphasizes bringing Federal Service Optometrists together from within a common geographical region.

The goal of the kickoff event was to initiate a quarterly forum to exchange unique and common clinical issues, concerns, and depths of knowledge amongst the group of Federal ODs within North and South Carolina in the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Reserves and Veteran’s Administration clinics with potential CE opportunities. There are other areas throughout the world with similar well-established assemblies offering the same common focus: Alamo Triservice Optometric Society (ATOPS) in San Antonio; Front Range Optometric Society (FTOPS) in Colorado; Hawaii Triservice Society (HTOPS) on Oahu; and the National Capital Region Federal Optometric Society (NCRFOS).

There was substantial interest in the formation of this group, especially bridging the VA and Reserve Forces into the membership. They were fortunate to have the new WAMC Vision Rehab Optometrist from Fort Bragg, Dr. Amy Chang, provide a COPE approved lecture on “Visual Consequences of TBI”. Next meeting is scheduled for the early part of December where they will elect officers and finalize their bylaws.

(Continued on Page 11)
LTC Jeffrey Blunden was promoted on 28 July 2011. His wife Abby pinned on the new rank. He was honored to have in attendance the 62nd Med Bde and 56th MMB staff and commanders and COL Neil Glenesk. He was especially proud to have his wife and two boys at the ceremony.

MAJ Jennifer Filiatreau was promoted on 29 Sep 2011 at Schofield Barracks Health Clinic, Hawaii.

Eight Army Optometrists sat for the oral examination and earned Fellowship in the AAO.

Our newest Fellows pictured with COL Lantz - Left to Right: MAJ Jason Moran (Wiesbaden Germany), MAJ Greg O’Brien (Fort Knox), CPT Cesar Costales (Fort Benning), CPT Kayla Vickers (Fort Benning), COL Lantz, CPT Jennifer Meadows (Fort Jackson), CPT Christopher Alferrez (Fort Sam Houston), CPT Bret Lehman (Fort Bragg), Not pictured: CPT Abby Vanderah (Fort Jackson)
Resident Posters at AAO

MAJ Kochis, CPT Johnson, and CPT Silva presented the following posters at the American Academy of Optometry conference in Boston:

MAJ Stefan Kochis, OD - Doc I Can't See, is it My Steroid? - Saturday, 15 October 2011

CPT Lee Johnson, OD, MS - Testing and Optimizing the Calculation of Retinal Contour from Peripheral Refractions (Poster E -04), Thursday 13 October 2011 (1330 to 1530) and Clinical Ocular Manifestations of Subclinical Sarcoid, Saturday, 15 October 2011

CPT Frances Silva, OD - Herpes Simplex Virus Stromal Keratitis, Saturday, 15 October 2011

Army Optometry Welcomes Thirteen New Optometrists/67F Officers:

CPT Johnetta Askew
CPT Seth Baldwin
CPT Andrew Bodwell
CPT Cassie Brown
CPT William Garrison
CPT Lee Johnson
CPT Chynna Chandler
CPT Mark Medley
CPT John O’Brien
CPT Justin Pao
CPT Elizabeth Sall
CPT Frances Silva
CPT Toan Trinh

Fort Bliss, TX
Fort Bliss, TX
Stuttgart, Germany
Fort Sill, OK
Fort Gordon, GA
Fort Sam Houston, TX
Fort Knox, KY
West Point, NY
Fort Bragg, NC
Fort Hood, TX
Schweinfurt, Germany
Fort Bragg, NC
Camp Casey, Korea
VA Optometrists attending the recent Academy Meeting in Boston were invited to attend the Presidential Awards Reception hosted by the New England College of Optometry on Friday evening, October 14, in honor of the VA Optometry Service’s thirty-five years of excellence in patient care, research, and optometric education.

Dr. Clifford Scott, President of the New England College of Optometry, presented medals to Dr. Kenneth Myers (Founding Director of the VA Optometry Service), Dr. Charles Mullen (Former Director of the VA Optometry Service), and Dr. Norman Haffner (President Emeritus of the State University College of Optometry and former 25 year member of Special Medical Advisory Group for the Department of Veteran Affairs). A posthumous medal was also presented to Major Charles R. Soltes, O.D. for whom the new VA Blind Rehabilitation Center in Long Beach, CA is named. His wife, Dr. Sally Dang, and her family were present to accept the medical. Dr. Dang is our VA Optometrist at the BRC in Long Beach.

Many thanks to Dr. Scott and the New England College of Optometry for hosting this very special and memorable event.

Here are the remarks of Charles F. Mullen, O.D., Former National Director, VA Optometry Service (1990-1996) after receiving his medal:

"Thank you President Scott for your gracious remarks.

I am deeply honored to be awarded the New England College of Optometry’s Presidential Medal in recognition of my tenure as Director of the VA Optometry Service. It is also a distinct privilege to join my distinguished colleagues and long time friends—Drs. Myers and Haffner—in this evening’s tribute to the VA Optometry Service.

As an educator, I am grateful to the VA for its enormous contribution to the clinical training of this country’s optometry students and residents. And as a veteran I am most appreciative of the excellent eye care VA optometrists provide each year to over one million of our most deserving citizens, the Nation’s veterans.

The comprehensive eye care provided to veterans by VA optometrists in collaboration with ophthalmologists is clearly among the best in the United States. Optometry clinics are among the busiest of VA services, providing 1.5 million eye care visits annually.

The VA Optometry Service was the first in the country to develop and implement an effective model of interdisciplinary eye care in a large national system. VA optometrists lead the profession in the management of patients with age related macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma.

(Continued on Page 14)
Prestigious professional journals are replete with publications by VA optometrists affirming VA’s leadership in advancing ophthalmic care. During my tenure as Director, I witnessed the growing importance of VA optometry in the provision of primary eye care and low vision rehabilitation services. However, my experience pales in comparison to the dramatic increase, over the past 12 years, in optometry staff, students and residents including numerous quality improvement initiatives.

The VA’s Eye Care Quality Improvement Program is recognized as one of the most comprehensive and effective in health care. It is a unique system of checks and balances. For overall guidance, the VA adopted the clinical practice guidelines of the American Optometric Association and the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the recognized standards for both professions. The VA’s clinical credentialing and privileging process is precise and meticulously applied ensuring that every clinician’s education, clinical training and licensure are appropriate for the clinical privileges granted. A robust system of clinical reviews, practice evaluations and peer review programs ensure that every veteran receives the highest quality eye care. The quality, timeliness and seamless provision of eye care services by 675 VA optometrists and over 175 residents and fellows is now often cited as the gold standard for optometric care. In addition to primary eye care, optometrists provide rehabilitative care in VA special programs such as low vision clinics, VICTORS programs and blind rehabilitation centers. 65 additional low vision optometric specialists have been appointed in recent years and placement of mid level and advanced low vision programs, in each of the 21 nation-wide VA Integrated Service Networks, is planned.

The Department of Defense-VA, Center of Excellence is an outstanding program for the management of servicemen and women who have sustained significant eye injuries as well as vision problems resulting from traumatic brain injury. At this center, optometrists, ophthalmologists and rehabilitation specialists ensure seamless transition for the patient from military service to the VA.

The innovative Boston VA based Teleretinal Imaging Program has already assessed 700,000 veterans for the risk of vision threatening disorders. Another example of optometry’s leadership and of effective collaboration among eye care providers, primary care physicians and IT personnel.

A special note of acknowledgement to my VA colleagues for your commitment to excellence in eye care and for your dedicated service to our Nation’s Veterans.

Thank you for recognizing my service as Director. It was an honor to have served with so many outstanding optometrists. 

*****

Congratulations to Scott Slagle of Salem VA Medical Center on his Armed Forces Optometric Society’s OD of the Year Award.

William Scott Slagle, a VA optometrist with the Salem VA Medical Center, was awarded “OD of the Year” by the Armed Forces Optometric Society. His dedication to optometry with the Department of Veterans Affairs, as well as within his local community has proven this award was well-deserved. Dr. Slagle is an active member of many organizations including: the VA Optometry Field Advisory Committee, member of the NAVAIO, VA Liaison to the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry’s (ASCO) Residency Affairs Committee, and contributing author of examination questions for the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry’s (ARBO) Optometric Competency Self Assessment module.

Dr. Slagle is an active participant in Virginia state optometry. He is a member of the Virginia Optometric Association and its subsidiary, the Southwest Virginia Optometric Society, where he served as that organization’s Secretary/Treasurer.

At the Salem VA Medical Center, Dr. Slagle serves as the Optometry Residency Supervisor, offering monthly lecture forums for the students and residents on systemic health subjects, such as radiology, neurology, hematology and oncology.

Dr. Slagle has been a member of AFOS since 2000 and a member of the AOA since 1995. He has been a member of the AFOS Continuing Education Committee since 2006, and has served as Chair of that Committee since 2009. He is also active within the AOA by maintaining Consultant status for the AOA’s Accreditation Council on Optometric Education, where he has worked on multiple residency site visits.

The NAVAIO wishes to extends its sincere congratulations to Dr. William Scott Slagle on his AFOS OD of the Year Award and his continued commitment to optometry!
American Optometric Association Annual Eagle Award

We are pleased to announce that this year’s American Optometric Association Eagle Award was presented to Theresa Zerilli, O.D. and Christine Burke, O.D. for their article in *Optometry: Journal of the American Optometric Association* entitled, *Orbital pseudotumor after an upper respiratory infection: a comprehensive review*. Drs. Zerilli and Burke are Staff Optometrists with the VA Connecticut Healthcare System. The Eagle Award is presented annually to the VA Optometrist(s) who authors the most outstanding article for *Optometry: Journal of the American Optometric Association* for that year as selected by its Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Paul Freeman. The Eagle Award is traditionally presented by Dr. Freeman at the annual NAVAQ Business Meeting. This year’s award was presented at our Business Meeting in Boston by Dr. David Storer, NAVAQ Vice-President, on behalf of Dr. Freeman, who was unable to attend the meeting this year. Congratulations to Drs. Zerilli and Burke for their accomplishment!

Photos from 2011 Events

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<th>AOA Congressional Advocacy Meeting</th>
<th>AFOS Annual Meeting (2 MAR 2011)</th>
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The AFOS Annual Meeting in Boston was a blast! We recognized the following Hoya Student Travel Grant Recipients at the AFOS Awards Luncheon: Mandy Simmons (University of Alabama at Birmingham), Jeremiah Church (Nova Southeastern University), Sam Rieger and Roya Attarhousseini (both from the Rosenberg School of Optometry) as well as the highly accomplished COL Bdzula Student Award winner, Melanie Zhang (University of California at Berkeley).

A Special Thanks to Hoya Vision Care

I would like to thank Hoya Vision Care and Mr. Mike Elton for generously supporting HPSP students. For the last two years, they sponsored eight $500 Hoya Student Travel Grants. Without their kind support, many AFOS student members would not be able to attend this conference.

AFOS Student Members Connect with their Future Colleagues

The AFOS Annual Meeting is a unique opportunity for HPSP students to speak with both recent grads and highly advanced senior officers about specific duty stations and their future military career. Junior officers can learn valuable career advice by attending “breakout” sessions specific to their service or schedule a private meeting with their specialty leader to ask questions regarding matters such as site selection. Jeremiah Church remarked, “The AFOS meeting was a great time. I enjoyed talking with other members of AFOS, and getting a better idea of what to expect after graduation.” The moments between CE lectures, the exhibit hall, Awards Luncheon, and the President’s Reception allowed student members to connect with their future federal service colleagues.
Our Student Travel Grant Recipients had a positive experience and would like to encourage other HPSP students to attend future AFOS events. Sam Rieger said, "It was a privilege to be able to attend the AFOS annual meeting this year in Boston and meet my fellow "Optometrists in Arms." I learned that everyone has a different story for how they arrived into the Army, Air Force, Navy, or Public Health Service, but we all share the same goal--providing the best eye care and protection for our Service Members. I look forward to attending and learning next year!"

"I really enjoyed meeting Optometrists from around the country and different branches of service. Interestingly, I met Dr. Michelle Aaron and we shared a common link, our mentor, Dr. James Chapman who has also been a past recipient of the AFOS Optometrist of the Year. Dr. Chapman guided Dr. Aaron to success in her career and has been instrumental in my success as a student."—Roya Attarhousseini, Hoya Student Travel Grant Recipient, (RSO)

UPCOMING SECO MEETING NOTICE

MANY OF YOU ARE SELECTING TO PAY AT THE MEETING.

TO MAKE IT EASIER ON YOURSELF AND US,

PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING:

WE DO NOT TAKE CREDIT CARDS.

MAKE YOUR CHECKS OUT TO AFOS.

WE PREFER NOT TO TAKE CASH BUT ALWAYS WILL.

ALSO, REMEMBER THAT WE WILL BE VERIFYING YOUR MEMBERSHIP STATUS SO PLEASE BE PAID UP.

AS ALWAYS, THE FASTEST WAY TO GET THROUGH THE PROCESS IS TO PAY AHEAD OF TIME ONLINE.

THANKS.
CONGRATULATIONS: Thank you for recognizing your colleagues! The selection process was once again very challenging as we had many very deserving nominations. Please join me in congratulating Dr. William Scott Slagle (VA) as our AFOS Optometrist of the Year, Dr. John Kim (AF) as AFOS Junior Optometrist of the Year, Dr. Luis M. Perez (USNR) as AFOS Reserve Force Optometrist of the Year, Melanie Zhang (AF) UC Berkeley for the Bzdula Student Award, and Samantha Rieger (USA) Incarnate Word, Amanda Simmons (AF) UAB, Jeremiah Church (USN) Nova, and Roya Attarhousseini (AF) Incarnate Word for the Hoya Travel Grants.

THANK YOU: Please help us thank COL Carol Rymer for her dedicated service to the Awards Committee and to AFOS! She served as the Awards Chair since 2003. Her leadership will be missed!

We will be selecting a Vice Chair from the committee membership. Once this individual is announced, we will be looking for a replacement to represent his/her service on the Awards Committee. Please let us know if you are interested in serving on our committee.

Awards: The 2012 AOA Membership Awards will be distributed during the FSO meeting prior to SECO. The AFOS awards will continue to be presented at the AFOS meeting prior to the AAO. Award nominations for next year will be due 01 July 2012. Get started now! These awards are highly recognized within the Optometric Community and they are an excellent way to let our folks know that we are aware of their dedication, talent, and devotion to Federal Service and the optometric profession. Visit the AFOS website and review the simple procedure to submit some of our talented doctors: http://www.afos2020.org/AFOS_Awards.asp, an easier format has been incorporated which is aligned with the AOA Awards.

NEW: Beginning in 2013 there will be a change in the awards process. We will be awarding service specific awards. Each service will nominate candidates for a Junior and Senior award. The deadline for these nominations will be 01 December 2012. The presentation to the winners of the service specific awards will take place at the FSO meeting prior to SECO in the Spring of 2013. The winner of these service specific awards will then compete for the Junior AFOS Optometrist of the Year Award and the AFOS Optometrist of the Year Award which will be presented at the AFOS meeting prior to AAO in the Fall of 2013. The process for the ORION Award, the AFOS Reserve Optometrist of the Year, and the COL Bzdula AFOS Student Award will not change and will continue to be awarded at the AFOS Annual Meeting prior to the AAO.

If you have any questions, feel free to LCDR Marrie Read at margaret.read1@us.army.mil or any of the members of the awards committee.
Greetings from cold and windy Chicago!

It was very nice to catch up with many of you at the Annual meeting prior to the American Academy of Optometry meeting in Boston in October. At the meeting in Boston, we implemented the meeting swamp and we were happy to see that our Annual meeting was better attended than in the past few years! You may have also noticed that the CE committee was able to offer more CE at this meeting than at past annual meetings by including CE on the first evening and adding an hour, due to a condensed business meeting, on the second day. As an organization we are working hard to give you the most value for your financial commitment.

In 2011 I have attempted to clarify a few of the confusing points regarding AOA membership and the grandfather clause. To reiterate, no member who joined on or after June 25, 2005 is allowed to be a member of the affiliate but not the American Optometric Association. If your dues lapse, you essentially become a “new member.”

I have also attempted to educate the membership on the value of AOA membership. Remember that the AOA is our political voice. Dr. Aly Wasik has illustrated the many advancements the AOA has brought to uniformed and VA optometry over the years in this newsletter. Please recall that the AOA was instrumental in the negotiations protecting optometry’s scoop of practice when it was threatened by ophthalmology in 2010.

One of my other projects in 2011 was to clean up our membership records. Many membership profiles do not include correct contact information. Please keep your profile up to date on the AFOS website. Communication from AFOS is largely electronic so please be sure that we can reach you. If you change service or leave federal service please let us know. We very much want our membership data to be accurate so we can focus on building our organization.

There’s room on the membership committee. Please contact me if you are interested in any of the open positions below.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Atlanta this winter. If you have questions don’t hesitate to contact me.
Greetings AFOS members! The SECO 2012 conference is now open for registration! Visit afos2020.org to register online. Don’t delay as hotel rooms reserved for AFOS go fast so act now!

2012 is just around the corner so please pay your 2011 dues if you have not done so! Not sure of your 2011 dues balance for 2011? First, log onto the AFOS website at http://www.afos2020.org and update your member profile to include your current mailing address, phone number, email address (preferably home email address). Instructions on how to update you profile is located here. Did you lose your password or login? Then click here to access your lost password.

Want to interact with other AFOS members online? Remember to visit us at our AFOS Forum at http://www.afos2020forum.org. Also, visit us at our AFOS Facebook page here. Remember to “friend” us on Facebook to get you the latest info on AFOS events and activities!

Also, if you would like to share news or announcements on our website, let us know. We are your tool to publicize your latest organizational updates.

Lastly, we also need your feedback on how we are doing. Have an idea? Would you like to see improvements? Let us know and drop us a line!

Maj John Kim
Chair, Marketing and Communications Committee
john.kim@misawa.af.mil

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<tr>
<th>Branch</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>Maj John Kim, OD, FAAO, (Chair) (<a href="mailto:john.kim@misawa.af.mil">john.kim@misawa.af.mil</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maj Rich Yoo, OD, FAAO (<a href="mailto:rich.yoo@spangdahlem.af.mil">rich.yoo@spangdahlem.af.mil</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Capt Chris Alfererez, OD (<a href="mailto:alferec@yahoo.com">alferec@yahoo.com</a>)</td>
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<td>LCDR Tyler Miles, OD, FAAO, (Vice-Chair) (<a href="mailto:tyler.miles@med.navy.mil">tyler.miles@med.navy.mil</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td>Patrick Till, OD (<a href="mailto:patrick.till2@va.gov">patrick.till2@va.gov</a>)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ian Raden, OD, MBA (<a href="mailto:ian.raden@va.gov">ian.raden@va.gov</a>)</td>
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Articles for this newsletter were not received for the following; however, Committee updates were received as follows:

### Facility Support Committee

**John Dziadul, OD**

#### FACILITY SUPPORT COMMITTEE

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<td>VA</td>
<td>Nancy Wong, OD</td>
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<td>John Dziadul, OD (Chair)</td>
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### Licensure Committee

**LCDR Michael Feeser, Chair**

#### LICENSURE COMMITTEE

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### Paraoptometric Committee

**Dr. Darren Rhoton**

#### PARAOPTOMETRIC COMMITTEE

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<td>Assistant: Jenette Cantrell</td>
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<td>Assistant: Susan Yee</td>
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Articles were not received from the following:

- **USAF**
  - LTC Michelle Aaron

- **Abstracts**
  - LCDR Michael Davis

- **NAVY**
  - CAPT Penny Walter
Diamond AFOS Sponsors
($10,000 + Year)

Platinum AFOS Sponsors
($5,000 + Year)
Platinum AFOS Sponsors (Continued)

($5,000 + Year)

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optos

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ESSILOR

Canon

WILEX

HIGH VELOCITY PROTECTION

Gold AFOS Sponsors

EMRlogic systems, inc

Walman Instrument Group

Kowa

US SAFETY

DISPENSERS OPTICAL SERVICE

PAY YOUR DUES ON-LINE!

Debit Card, Credit

PayPal

AFOS members can now pay their AFOS and AOA dues on our website at www.afos2020.org
Register now on our website at www.afos2020.org for our FSO meeting in 2012. See you there!

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2011 DUES STRUCTURE

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NOTE: AFOS dues are due in full on 1 Jan. AOA dues may be paid in full or quarterly. Quarterly AOA payments of $200.50 are due on 1 Jan, 1 April, 1 July and 1 Oct. You may now make your dues payments online 24/7 with a debit or credit card by logging on and clicking on “Pay Membership Dues”. If you prefer to pay by check instead of online -- Make checks payable to AFOS and send all payments to: AFOS, 4936 Ten Oaks Road, Dayton, MD 21036-1121. DO NOT SEND DUES PAYMENTS TO THE AOA.

The dues owed by each member are no longer printed at the top of your mailing label.

Your dues’ history for 2010 and 2011 is now available for viewing by logging on the AFOS website and clicking on “Pay Membership Dues.”

NOTE: We are working on sending your statements by e-mail. Please make sure your profile is current.

“Contributions or gifts to the American Optometric Association are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for income tax purposes. However, they may be tax deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses subject to restrictions imposed as a result of association lobbying activities. The American Optometric Association estimates that the non-deductible portion of your AOA 2011 dues - the portion that is allocable to lobbying - is 9.5%.”