



Lions District 410W Sight Newsletter

Welcome...

A quick introduction, I am Peter Daniel your new District Chairperson for the Sight Portfolio for District 410W. I am relatively new in the District, having joined Gordon's Bay Lions Club in July 2020. I was however a member of the Standerton Lions Club in District 410E for over 20 years and have previously done the District Chairperson for Diabetes Awareness and also for Hearing. I am passionate about Sight and I hope that I can instill some of my enthusiasm in the Lions Clubs of this District.



At the International Convention in 1925 Helen Keller was the keynote speaker. Most Lions at the time were familiar with her well-publicized story. Some Lions in the audience had already been involved with service projects for the blind. But witnessing Keller share her heart and soul for the plight of the blind brought the reality of being visually impaired crashing home for everyone present. The Lions and their guests were captivated.

Keller saved her most stirring words for the end of her speech with the following words: "Will you not help me hasten the day when there shall be no preventable blindness; no little deaf, blind child untaught; no blind man or woman unaided? I appeal to you Lions, you who have your sight, your hearing, you who are strong and brave and kind. Will you not constitute yourselves knights of the blind in this crusade against darkness?" Needless to say Lions took her words to heart and Vision or Sight has remained one of a key pillars of Lions Service to this day.

ALONE we can
do so LITTLE;
TOGETHER we can
do so MUCH
-HELEN KELLER



How does a Lions Club become involved in Vision related projects? Probably the easiest way is the providing of spectacles to needy children and adults. At first this might seem to be quite an intimidating project to become involved in, but it is actually quite easy. Many optometrists would gladly help their local Lions Club with 1 or 2 free screenings a month as part of their so-called “social responsibility”. The Club then needs to go to Lions BrightSight on the web (<http://www.lionsbrightsight.co.za>). Click on “Place a Club Order for Spectacles” and download the prescription form, which can then be taken to the participating optometrist. Once the form has been completed it can be scanned and emailed to the BrightSight office at manager@brightsight.co.za – the office manager is Kirsty MacKenzie and she is extremely helpful. The spectacles when ready will then be sent to a business address in your town via Seabourne Express at no charge. The price of single vision spectacles is R200, bifocals cost R500 and multifocals are R700. The turn around time for getting the spectacles to your Club is around about one week.

Many Clubs are good at collecting old frames for recycling and then getting these to the BrightSight office in Benoni. This is great but most important is to note that this Multiple District Project is in the business of providing spectacles to needy patients. The office needs to do about 250 pairs of spectacles a month for the project to be financially viable. Unfortunately, because of the Covid-19 pandemic this target has not been reached, resulting in the project running at a loss over the past year. However, with the support of the Clubs in District 410W I am sure we can turn this situation around, but each Club’s support is vital. One area of concern that has been brought to my attention is that the frame received from BrightSight is inappropriate for that particular patient. A possible solution which has worked well for the Gordon’s Bay Lions club is to take a photo of a frame which the patient likes (either their present frame or one of the optometrists stock frames) and send this photo with the optometrist’s script to BrightSight and the office manager Kirsty will do her best to choose a similar frame. My Club’s patients were in all cases delighted with the spectacles they received.

I would encourage your Club to become involved in Sight or Vision related projects and if I can be of any assistance my cell is 0832540437 and my email is peterdaniel@mweb.co.za - I would also like to encourage each Club to appoint a Lion responsible for vision in their Club and then email or Whatsapp that person name to me so that I know who to contact in your Club for Sight. At least if I get a name from your Club I will know that you have read my newsletter !!