

PRESS RELEASE

Stanton Lions Provide Vision Care *2008-2009 School Year*

Stanton California, August 29, 2008:

Stanton Lions' *Sight and Hearing Committee* announced that it would provide vision care to needy children in and around Stanton. The committee mailed letters to each school that serve children from Stanton requesting referrals of students who need glasses or visual therapy, but cannot afford the cost.

There may be many students in our area may be unable to succeed in school because they have vision problems.

Students may need corrective lenses necessary for reading or seeing the chalkboard. Other students may need vision therapy to read. Although Orange County is thought of as a

wealthy community, there are many families who cannot afford vision care for their children. After paying for the necessities, (food, rent, etc.) families do not have money left over for a new prescription. Even families with health insurance might have problems. Their plan may have a high deductibles or co-pays. Alternatively, a child may break his or her glasses and their insurance may not pay for new glasses within a year. And many families may not qualify for the state of California sponsored plans.

The letter sent to all local schools stated that "in most cases we [Stanton Lions Club] can pay for the examination, glasses, and vision therapy for your students in need. This is possible because the Stanton Lions Club raises funds for the needy

in our community. Furthermore our community partners, the Boys & Girls Club of Stanton and local doctors, provide insurance and services at a reduced cost." An application was included along with the letter.

Recently, the Stanton Lions have also been helping many older adults who are unable to afford a new prescription. The Stanton Lions also collect used glasses which are distributed in Mexico. They cannot be re-used in California for legal reasons.

Sight and Hearing Committee member David Parikh explained "we just want to help those who are visually impaired. If a child is sitting in the classroom and failing because they do not have access to a pair of glasses that's a shame. The child will eventually have to be held back a grade or drop out of school. Obviously, we won't pay for fashion frames or contacts, but no one should be unable to function because they cannot afford glasses. After we sent our letter last year, we provided for glasses for a few children. Hopefully, we can help some children this year."

Lions earn money to fund this program through donations and fundraisers such as mint sales, postage stamp collections, pancake breakfasts, and selling food at community events.

There is a one page application which was included with the letter. It is also available at www.stantonlions.org/HELP.pdf . Assistance is based on need and family income. People who may not qualify for with the State because they do not have a Social Security Number or permanent address are encouraged to apply. Basically, the only requirement is that the applicant has a working phone and speaks some English, or has an English speaking friend/relative/social worker who has access to a phone.

Parikh stated that "the Stanton Lions want to help as many people in our community as we can. Hopefully we will be able to help a lot of people this year. If we have to do more fundraising activities, that's fine with the Lions."

Stanton Lions is a not-for-profit community organization that holds two lunch meetings a month. They have been an involved in improving

the local community since 1947. For more information see www.stantonlions.org.