



RAYJONSHARECARE

e-bulletin

Rayjon Eyeglass Program – Working to Provide Better Vision since 1995

Imagine having very poor vision and not having access to corrective lenses. The *miracle* of restoring vision begins when someone donates a pair of used eyeglasses.

Eyeglass donations come from everywhere: with a network that extends east to Ottawa and the St. Lawrence; northward, including North Bay & Orillia; the GTA; and throughout all southwestern Ontario. Notable contributors include Sarnia optometrists, an annual van load from Tecumseh, and the Sydenham Lions Club.

Then twice monthly, from September to June, a dedicated crew gathers to sort, wash, catalogue and pack the donated eyeglasses.

Perhaps the following examples will help to illustrate the effort that is generated by a team on an eyeglass trip.

During a May 2015 trip to Haiti, the clinic was hosted by Rayjon and the Apostolic Church of Lagarenne near Gilbert. The team faced many challenges, including washed out roads, but despite this they provided a 4-day clinic for 367 patients and dispensed 288 pair of eyeglasses. Because so many of the patients speak Creole the team hired local translators to assist. Many patients also received sunglasses, glass cases, cleaning cloths, and eye drops, of which the latter has been generously donated to the eye clinics by Alcon Canada for many years.



Dr. Darrel Stewart (volunteer since 1999) & Marjorie MacMillan (in pink, a volunteer since 1995)

Similarly, in November 2015 a 24-member team held a successful clinic in Ocoa, in The Dominican Republic. They provided vision tests for 840 patients and provided 765 pair of eyeglasses. 64 patients were placed on a medical referral list. Another 16 patients with very poor vision had specially manufactured eyeglasses prepared in Canada, which were sent back to them. Essilor Canada was the generous donor that provided the lenses.

The Eyeglass Program would not be possible without so many loyal volunteers and supporters. Doctors provide their equipment, time and skills to make each clinic a success. All the volunteers pay their own expenses for the trip.

There is always a need for Doctors and trained fitters and there is always a need for donors of glasses and financial assistance. Interested supporters can write *Eyeglass Program* in the left corner of cheques sent to Rayjon Share Care, PO Box 2484, Sarnia, Ontario N7T 7T1. Specific inquiries can be made to Joanne Atkinson (tomjoanneatkinson@gmail.com).

Here is how some of the funds have been spent. The program maintains a capital account to cover the cost of replacing large items like the lensometers, auto-refractors and computers in case they are damaged, lost in flight or just wear out, as has happened with one lensometer.

While team members pay their own expenses the program pays for the cost of preparing and transporting the eyeglasses and supplies for clinics.

A new, compact, lightweight, and therefore cheaper and easier to transport, hot-air heater, used to adjust frames, has replaced the old sand heater.

New tools have been purchased for the eyeglass fitters and some of the old-style, torn and yellowed with age, eye charts have been replaced.

The eye doctors make referrals for patients and there are many names on lists who require cataract surgery. Unfortunately this has not always successfully resulted in them receiving surgery. On the other hand, thanks to the generosity of donors the project team is at times able to provide some funds for transportation of patients.

Joanne Atkinson, Manager of the Rayjon Eyeglass Program, and all the trip coordinators, and team members wish to thank all who have helped make the program a success.

RAYJON Celebrates Thirty Years of Sharing and Caring. We invite you to share a favourite memory of lasting impression of your Rayjon experiences. [E-mail to: rayjonsc@gmail.com] We will publish some of these comments at a later date during our anniversary year.



30th Anniversary Event: Save Friday, October 14th on your Calendar. A special event at the Sarnia Riding Club (980 Riding Club Ln) is being planned from 7:00 – 10:00 pm. Keep your eyes on [Rayjon Share Care Facebook](#) and the [Rayjon website](#) for 30th anniversary highlights. Come celebrate with us!

Rayjon Trip Information Session

If you are interested in participating in a Rayjon Awareness Trip to either Haiti or the Dominican Republic during March Break 2017, please attend the Information Session Sunday, **October 16th**, 1-3 p.m. @ Grace United church.

Teenagers 16 & older, and all adults are welcome.

For more information, contact either Bryce McGarvey @ 519 542-1542 or Joanna Giresi @ 519 869-2659

2016 Rayjon Pastafest!

The 7th annual Rayjon Pastafest will be held Thursday, **November 3rd**, at the Dante Club, 1330 London Rd. from 5-7 pm. Eat in or take out.

In addition to having a great Italian meal and the opportunity to have dinner with friends, there's something for everyone: more than 10 Gift Baskets and lots of Silent Auction packages to bid on; Haitian and developing world art and jewelry for sale; Rayjon Gift Cards to buy as Christmas or Teacher's gifts; information about the Rayjon projects in Haiti & The Dominican Republic.

Ticket prices: Adults \$12, Students \$10, Children (11 & under) \$8, and Family of 4 (2 adults, 2 Children) \$35.

For tickets contact:

Joan Nienhuis: 519-542-3893 or joan_nienhuis@hotmail.com

Anne Marie Parizeau: 519-542-8150 or anneparizeau@hotmail.com

Join us for a fun evening to support ongoing projects in Haiti.

Thank You!

To our many donors, we must say again a tremendous thank you. With your donation you make a lasting change to the lives of people in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

To Donate Online:

www.Rayjon.org

One time or monthly options

Tax receipt and Record of your online donations immediately available

Mail Cheques To:

Rayjon Share Care, PO Box 2484, Sarnia, Ontario N7T 7T1.

To Purchase or Distribute Rayjon Coffee:

- Coffee - \$10/12 ounces (please call Mary: 519-541-0142) Organic, Fair Trade, 100% Arabica coffee, fine grind or beans, decaffeinated, medium roast or dark roast. Available to community organizations, churches, schools and service clubs to sell in support of communities in Canada as well as in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.
- Vanilla - \$3/2 ounces; \$6/4 ounces (please call Brenda: 519-344-3755)

Beautiful Gift/Memorial donation cards - receipts issued for donations of \$20 or more (please call Karen: 519-542-4247)

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