



humanity in motion

rotarians ophthalmoscope initiative (ROI)

press release october 2006

www.roisight.org/gift4sight

Dear Editor,

Public appeal – Donate an ophthalmoscope for Christmas



A thoughtful, and feel-good gift idea for a friend, that will contribute in helping to save sight, lives and livelihoods for millions in less developed countries.

Sight is the sense that we fear losing the most. A child that goes blind in developing countries is twice as likely to die before his or her 13th birthday.

There are over 37 million blind in the world and this is increasing by some 2 million each year. Surprisingly, some 75% of impending blindness is curable or treatable if diagnosed and treated in time ... which in most cases it's not.

The Rotarians Ophthalmoscope Initiative or ROI operates under the umbrella of VISION 2020, THE RIGHT TO SIGHT, in association with Sightsavers International and other global eye-care charities.

For just £27.50 you can donate this global award winning UK manufactured OptyseTM lens free ophthalmoscope ... and leave Stevenage Grange Rotary Club and Sightsavers to handle global distribution to the most needed areas. In just 5 months since it started ROI units are already operating in 31 developing countries.

So, if you're stuck for an idea and wish to make a difference why not think about making a donation and present or send a certificate of donation. Now that would be different.

By doing so, not only will you provide an ophthalmoscope that literally can be used in the field, but you will also free up scarce charitable resources to undertake more cataract and similar operations.

So if you would like to save sight and needless suffering for so many, why not contact your local Rotary Club, email stephen@sgrc.org or fill in the donation form on www.roisight.org/gift4sight where you will find lots more information, and a video jointly narrated by former Prime Minister Sir John Major, VISION 2020, THE RIGHT TO SIGHT Ambassador, and novelist Ken Follett.



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Background

Stevenage Grange Rotary Club's involvement in this is interesting. Having seen an earlier prototype of the lens free ophthalmoscope the Club initially provided support to the local inventor, retired surgeon Dr Roger Armour.

Following manufacture, the Club saw the opportunity to use the product to help create awareness of preventable blindness programmes, negotiate a much reduced price with the manufacturer for charitable donation, and set up a global distribution chain. It agreed to fund 200 units to enable field testing by eye-care charities in less developed countries. Following clearance, in June 2006 by the US FDA & VISION 2020; THE RIGHT TO SIGHT, the Initiative sprung to life.

We are promoting the Appeal through www.roisight.org/gift4sight in 8 languages.

The product

The Optyse™ or pen sized ophthalmoscope, was invented and designed by Roger Armour a retired Surgeon who lives in Hitchin, Hertfordshire. It was developed by Team Consulting Limited. It is produced and marketed by Ophthalmos Ltd of Cambridge, England. Further details can be found on www.ophthalmos.co.uk

Being robust, lightweight and low cost, the Optyse™ can be used in the field with minimal training, by visiting GP's, health care professionals or aid agency workers/volunteers.

Further details

Please see www.roisight.org or contact Stephen

Named personalities

Both Sir John and Ken Follett will be well known to you. Sir John is an enthusiastic supporter of VISION 2020, which aims to eliminate preventable blindness by 2020.

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