

# *A message from James Bartel*

Dear Friends:

Health is the gift of life.

As a young man I watched helplessly as my father died at 59 years of age. An undetected tumor on his liver eventually caused his untimely death. I also watched my mother suffer and die from a stroke at the age of 63. She had an undetected blockage in her carotid artery. Even though it was her third stroke, in those days doctors could not easily examine arteries for blockages, so she suffered and died a cruel death.

Today, thanks to ultrasound testing, people do not have to suffer and die prematurely. I was too young and inexperienced to give my parents the gift of life, but it is not too late for me to help others. That is why I helped start the Lions HealthFirst Foundation.

Lions have been helping people with vision problems for about 80 years. Free vision examinations, free eye glasses, even free surgery to low-income people who just can't afford proper health care.

Las Vegas Lions remain dedicated to raising money for the UMC Lions Burn Center and the Lions SightFirst Foundation and are always looking for ways to help people in their time of need or suffering.

Now, thanks to the sponsorship of the Las Vegas International Lions Club, a new project intended to have a positive impact on people's health or longevity has been created. Called Lions HealthFirst Foundation (LHF), its purpose is to make ultrasound testing for early detection of health problems available to everyone, especially those who cannot afford the high cost of preventive health maintenance.

Seniors, or anyone with a family history of heart or circulation problems, cancers, cysts, gallbladder or kidney stones, are invited to come to our office for tests performed by certified sonographers using state-of-the-art equipment.

Because of our working relationship with various senior advocate groups and the Clark County Senior Centers, we also bring these tests into most neighborhoods to reach the people who cannot travel for whatever reason. We welcome patients who come in with a doctors prescription. However, a prescription is not required. We are encouraging people to take an active role in protecting their health.

The Foundation's goal is to be testing seniors at the rate of 2,000 per year in 2008. By 2010, our goal is to test 10,000 people each year.

I want to thank our sponsors, donors and those dedicated professionals in the medical community who have contributed to help make this event a success and make the Foundation an important step forward in health care. We are living up to the Lions motto of, "We Serve," by helping those friends and neighbors who need our help today.

Thank you,  
James Bartel,  
President

