1. Announcements:
   a. Open VA Optometry Staff Positions
      i. Dr. Townsend comment: Please see the link below for open optometry positions available.
      ii. Dr. Townsend just got word of a new position in Biloxi, Mississippi for a low vision rehabilitation optometrist. If interested, please contact Marsha Garret at marsha.garret@va.gov or (228) 523-4648.
      iii. [http://www.vacareers.va.gov/index.cfm](http://www.vacareers.va.gov/index.cfm)
   b. VHA Mission & Vision Statements
   c. VHA Directive 2010-056, Means Test and Geographic-based Means Test Thresholds for Calendar Year 2011
      i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive provides the Means Test (MT) Thresholds, Medicare Deductible Rate, and Child Income Exclusion for calendar year 2011. In addition, this Directive provides an Internet link to the United States (U.S.) Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) income limits for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 for use by VHA in calendar year 2011.
   d. VHA Handbook 1000.01, Inpatient Bed Change Program and Procedures
      i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook establishes procedures for the implementation of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) VHA’s inpatient bed program and any change impacting the inpatient beds.
   e. VHA Handbook 1162.02, Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (MH RRTP)
      i. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook establishes the procedures and reporting requirements for the Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (MH RRTP) bed level of care.
f. Dr. Townsend comment. These attachments are the updated list of the optometry VISN mentors and consultants. Thanks to all the volunteers!

2. Optometric Education Programs - Drs. Messer/Slagle
   a. The Office of Academic Affiliations released announcements for their affiliated residency allocations. They are certainly thankful for their increased support as the optometry service now has grown to have 179 post graduate training positions funded through the Office of Academic Affiliations.
   b. The OAA report can be found on their support center web page: http://vaww.oaa.med.va.gov/Reports.aspx?dbid=1
   c. If there are any programs that have made a pre-arranged match agreement with a WOC applicant (Military etc), please notify Dr. Townsend’s office so that the Office of Academic Affiliations funding may be temporarily distributed to another program. There is no risk of funding loss related to redistribution in this manner.
   d. There are 2 clinical Fellowships with open enrollment seeking qualified applicants. These are post-residency programs in polytrauma and TBI rehabilitation. The contacts are:
      i. Tampa, FL – Chrystyna Rakoczy (Chrystyna.Rakoczy@va.gov)
      ii. Palo Alto – Heidi Wilgenburg (Heidi.Wilgenburg2@va.gov)
   e. There will also be research fellowship positions opening at the beginning of the academic year in Boston and Palo Alto. Birmingham also hosts 2 fellowship positions. Please discuss these wonderful opportunities with your current residents as they are planning their career goals.
   f. Dr. Townsend comment. ORMS has been notified about the new positions. If you have not notified ORMS about a change in your residency allocations, please contact them.

3. Optometry Field Advisory Committee - Dr. Selvin- unavailable for comment.

4. Optometry Recruitment Representatives - Drs. Bennett/Gay
   a. Dr. Gay comment. All representatives should be expecting an email about active participation for their files. No other new announcement.

5. Infection Control/Reusable Medical Equipment Reprocessing - Drs. Horn/White
   a. Dr. Townsend comment. For those that have not had the opportunity to work with Dr. White in the area of reprocessing reusable medical equipment, he is an excellent resource and our national resource in this area.

6. Teleretinal Imaging Program - Drs. Cavallerano/Selvin
   a. Dr. Townsend comment. Earlier this week, in a meeting in Tampa, FL, there were representatives looking at the future of the teleretinal imaging
program to include screening for macular and optic nerve disease. There was a lot of good progress made. The program will continue to grow to reach more veterans and triage them appropriately.

7. DoD/VA Vision Center of Excellence & Eye Injury Registry - Dr. Barker - unavailable for comment.

8. TBI Vision Rehabilitation - Drs. Gagnon/J. Kirby – unavailable for comment.

   a. Dr. Townsend comment. The hope is that this will be coming out the second quarter of the fiscal year.

10. Optometry Quality Improvement - Dr. Norden – unavailable for comment.

11. VA Systems Redesign/Wait Times - Dr. Ficarra – unavailable for comment.

12. VA Research Announcements & Solicitations - Dr. Mancil – unavailable for comment.

   http://vaww.research.va.gov/funding/solicitations/default.cfm#All_ORD

13. VHA Optometry Service Websites - Drs. Cordes/Ficarra/Hamilton
   a. Dr. Townsend comment. The websites had been promoted at the end of December. They are currently in the process of revising many of the pages. The education and training pages have been revised. This was a priority because students are planning to perform residency training so the latest information is now available.
   b. They hope to have everything revised and fully operational well before the end of the fiscal year.


15. VA Residency Trained Optometrist Directory - Dr. Wang
   a. Dr. Wang comment. She is continually updating the directory and is continually promoting the Research and TBI fellowships.

16. AFOS Report - Dr. Wasik
   a. Dr. Wasik comment. AFOS is in preparation for the annual meeting, March 1st and 2nd in Atlanta, prior to SECO. The registration is open on the website AFOS2020.org. The featured speakers are Jim Timmons and Marie Fingeret.
   b. A reminder to pay your annual AFOS and AOA dues. You can pay your dues online through the website with PayPal. If you have not gotten a new username and logged onto the website, please send an email to the contact listed on the website and the executive director will respond with new account information.
   c. In preparation for the annual meeting, AFOS is conducting a survey to gain feedback from the members about the potential change of the annual
business meeting that is usually conducted before SECO to having it conducted before the academy meeting. This may make it easier for VA optometrists to participate in leadership roles in AFOS.

17. NAVAO Report - Drs. Kawasaki/Storer

a. Dr. Kawasaki comment. January is the NAVAO annual membership drive month. Current members: Please login to the NAVAO website and renew your membership before the January 31 deadline, after which a late fee will apply. Please encourage other optometrists at your facility to join NAVAO or renew their membership if they have not done so already. We appreciate your support of our organization!

b. The NAVAO strongly encourages all eligible candidates to register for the next ACMO administration on Friday, June 3, 2011. Please visit their website at www.optometry.org for details. ACMO registration was opened several months earlier this year so that candidates would have a better chance of reserving a spot at their desired testing site. The deadline to register for the ACMO exam is May 3, 2011.

c. We are pleased to announce that this year's American Optometric Association Eagle Award was presented to Dr. Joseph Pruitt and Dr. Pauline Ilsen for their article in *Optometry: Journal of the American Optometric Association* entitled *On the frontline: What an optometrist needs to know about myasthenia gravis.* Dr. Pruitt is a Staff Optometrist with the Minneapolis VAMC and a member of the NAVAO. He is also a member of the NAVAO Newsletter Committee. Dr. Ilsen is the Associate Chief of the Optometry Service at the West Los Angeles VA Healthcare Center and also a member of the NAVAO. The Eagle Award is presented annually to the VA Optometrist who authors the most outstanding article for *Optometry: Journal of the American Optometric Association* for that year as selected by its Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Paul Freeman. The Eagle Award is traditionally presented by Dr. Freeman at the annual NAVAO Business Meeting. This year’s award was presented at our Business Meeting in San Francisco. Congratulations to Drs. Pruitt and Ilsen for their accomplishment!

d. The Winter 2011 edition of our newsletter will be posted to the website soon. Members will be notified by email when the newsletter has been posted. We would like to thank Dr. Tomasini and her committee for all their hard work!

e. All of the FAQ sheets in the members area of our website have been revised and updated. Many thanks to Dr. Brett Zwolensky, NAVAO Director of Technology, for coordinating this project and to our authors for their generous contributions including Dr. David Yang, Dr. Daniel R. Eckermann, Dr. Angela Musick, Dr. William Denton, Dr. Dianne Kowing, Dr. Kevin J. Mercado, Dr. Minna Huang, Ms. Joyce L. Urbeck, Ms. Jean Redd, and Dr. Jason Powell.
Dr. Townsend comment. He wanted to extend a “thanks” to all the volunteers for the AMSUS meeting the VA is hosting and especially for all those who helped create the optometry section program. Dr. Ryan and Dr. Verinelli will be work as co-chairs to help get the program up and running. He encourages VA optometrists to attend this meeting that will be held in San Antonio, TX, November 6-9, 2011. This will not conflict with the academy meeting in October.