

The Prairie Doc Perspective

Crystal clear swimming pool

By Richard P. Holm M.D.

Cataracts are the leading cause of worldwide blindness, and result from the clouding and browning of the natural lens. It is like the difference between swimming with goggles in a crystal clear pool versus in an algae-blooming prairie lake in August. People with cataracts progressively lose their vision as their lens opacifies, mostly a process due to aging and sun-damage.

More than 2600 years ago, a physician from India was the first to write about cataract surgery. He described using a curved needle to push back completely clouded over lenses into the vitreous fluid in the middle of the eye, out of the field of vision. This reportedly would return some vision for people completely blinded in that eye by a cataract, and he called it "couching."

The vitreous is the sack of fluid that separates the iris, pupil, and lens at the front of the eye from the retina or light sensitive nerve

blanket that catches the image in the back of the eye, which in turn sends the photo message to the brain. Pushing or couching cataracts back and hopefully to the side into that vitreous would allow light through to the retina, however the vitreous would be disrupted, could possibly become infected, and there would be no lens to focus the light. Still this would be better than nothing.

Couching cataracts eventually spread to China, Arabia, Africa and Europe, but it is not difficult to understand why this procedure was used only as a last resort. Other methods to remove the lens completely from the eye, without disrupting the vitreous, gradually were developed during the Middle Ages and up unto today. But until we learned how to control infection in the mid 1800s this was still very dangerous and not commonly done.

Eventually very thick external glasses were devised that would replace the lost natural lens, and starting in the

1940s these removable glasses began to be replaced with lenses that are surgically implanted into the eye to replace the removed cataract.

Now the surgery to extract opaque and diseased cataract lenses is much better, and keeps improving. And the lenses we implant continue to advance as well.

It is like cleaning out all that algae, and swimming in a crystal clear pool.

Dr. Rick Holm wrote this Prairie Doc Perspective for "On Call," a weekly program where medical professionals discuss health concerns for the general public. "On Call" is produced by the Healing Words Foundation in association with the South Dakota State University Journalism Department. "On Call" airs Thursdays on South Dakota Public Broadcasting-Television at 7 p.m. Central, 6 p.m. Mountain. Visit us at OnCallTelevision.com.

DENR requests water quality data for 2014 integrated report

The South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources requests water quality data as part of its process to complete a biennial assessment of South Dakota's lakes and streams.

The 2014 Integrated Report must be completed and submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency by April 1, 2014. The report provides an assessment of the quality of South Dakota's surface water resources and identifies the impaired waters that require a total maximum daily loads (TMDL).

A total maximum daily load calculates the amount of pollution a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards along with supporting assigned beneficial uses. Once TMDLs are determined, local, state and federal activities can be directed toward improving the quality of the waterbody.

The department's 230-page 2012 Integrated Report can be viewed online at <http://denr.sd.gov/documents/12irfinal.pdf>.

To develop a comprehensive list, the department is soliciting water quality data to help determine the quality of South Dakota's waters. Chemical, physical and biological data will be considered. Beach closure information, including date, duration and water quality results is also requested.

Persons or organizations having water quality data should contact Shannon Minerich at (800) 438-3367 or by e-mail Shannon.Minerich@state.sd.us by Aug. 23, 2013.

Water quality data can also be sent to Shannon Minerich at: South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources; 523 East Capitol Avenue; Pierre, South Dakota 57501-3182.

USD welcomes China delegation at second American Visiting Institute for Chinese Entrepreneurs

The University of South Dakota is sponsoring the second American Visiting Institute for Chinese Entrepreneurs, July 7-10, at the University of South Dakota.

Dr. Chuck Staben, USD provost, will introduce Professor Bingquan Lu and speak about their friendship and building a "bridge" between South Dakota and China. Also participating will be South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard, the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED), the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, Valiant Vineyards, Sanford Health, Citibank and Raven Industries.

The Institute will provide a delegation of 12 business leaders from China, including

Professor Lu, with information about investments in the United States. The four-day session will include lectures, tours and demonstrations of South Dakota's economic capabilities as well as other activities. Lu, president and chief researcher of Beijing Bo Zhi Hang Research Institute of Commercial Real Estate, is considered a leading expert on business development.


Institute presenters include Mitchell Fillet, co-director of Fordham University's Center for Entrepreneurship and Steve Kirby, a founding partner of Bluestem Capital Co., Sioux Falls. Fillet will present, "The Acquisition of Capital... Going Public and Staying Private," while Kirby will address "Private Equity: Realizing the

Entrepreneurial Dream." Gov. Daugaard is also scheduled to speak at an Institute completion ceremony at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, July 10 at Farber Hall, when the Chinese delegation will receive certificates for the four-day professional learning experience.

"The University of South Dakota is honored to host Professor Lu and his delegation," Staben said. "Mr. Lu believes South Dakota has numerous investment opportunities, and the Institute is designed to further explore those opportunities, and augment cooperation between China and South Dakota."

The Institute is organized and supervised by Provost Staben and Dr. Ling Zhang, USD International Coordinator.


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