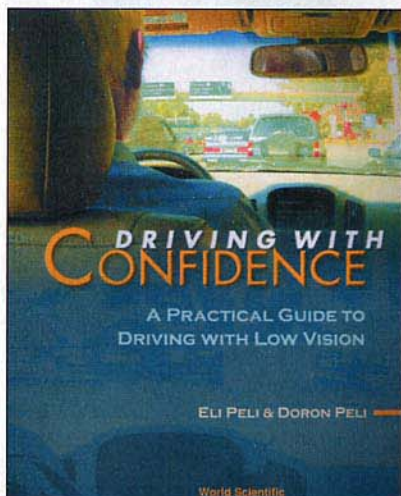


to use and, for its stated purpose as a "diagnostic guide to aid the examiner in making the correct diagnosis," well worth the investment.

*Kathleen F. Freeman, O.D.  
Sewickley, Pennsylvania*



## *Driving with Confidence: A Practical Guide to Driving with Low Vision*

Peli E and Peli D. River Edge, N.J.: World Scientific, 2002. Softcover, 192 pages, \$18.00

Visual requirements for driving are not fully understood by eye care practitioners, vision scientists, licensing authorities, or the general public. Because of this, individuals who have less than "perfect vision" are often restricted in their driving privileges, up to and including being denied licensure to drive a motor vehicle. *Driving with Confidence* was written to address many of the issues experienced by patients who have low vision and, while most of the text is designed for the lay reader, any professional who's involved with caring for

the visually impaired population might do well to take advantage of some of the resources that are listed in the text.

The first 80 pages address many of the issues a visually impaired driver might be faced with, starting with a discussion of the basic question of whether driving is a right or a privilege. This is followed by a chapter discussing the basics of vision and how vision relates to the driving task. Descriptions of parts of the eye, as well as some of the diseases that can cause decreased vision, are then briefly reviewed. Once that's been established, the reader is encouraged to answer questions that might help determine whether a person with a visual impairment is a suitable candidate for driving. If the answer in the reader's mind is "yes," the remaining chapters are designed to prepare the prospective driver about how one might best accomplish safe driving with a visual impairment, with or without the use of low vision devices. The narrative is followed by six appendices, beginning with a description of how federal legislation applies to driving and the visually impaired individual. This is followed by a listing of resources one might use to gather information about the types of devices that are available for driving, as well as information as to where they might be ordered.

I think what could have been the most important section of the book—especially for eye care practitioners—pertains to the state visual requirements for driving (see Appendix E). As I reviewed this, however, I was somewhat confused by the information provided for Pennsylvania, my home state. As a low vision practitioner,

I am aware that Pennsylvania does not allow bioptic driving, but does grant a license to individuals with 20/100 or better and 120 degrees of visual field. In reviewing the table listing states that allow bioptic driving, Pennsylvania is included. Also, in the specific state visual requirement description for Pennsylvania, this is restated. I found this table and listing to be confusing. However, bioptic driving is, I believe, permitted (for visually impaired Pennsylvanians) only if one passes the visual requirements for driving with conventional lenses. Given this confusion, it would make sense for eye care practitioners to use this Appendix only as a guide to further research the language in the state in which a visually impaired individual wishes to drive.

Further, Pennsylvania is a duty-to-inform state, but it was not listed as such in this Appendix. However, the authors use a disclaimer that "not all states provide information for the three tables above," again suggesting that the reader should carefully investigate the actual requirements from the licensing authority in those states that are at issue.

In the concluding chapter, a bioptic telescope driver states, "Know where you are going, know yourself and your limits, drive slowly, and don't put yourself on the road more than you have to."

Those are words both fully sighted and visually impaired drivers should take to heart for the safety of everyone. While not a definitive text on the topic, this book helps the reader begin to understand and appreciate the impact of visual impairment on driving.

*Paul B. Freeman, O.D.  
Sewickley, Pennsylvania*