

Say What?
Unusual projects prove
successful.

'Half-Helen'
Keller-inspired girl grows
up and serves.

LION

Destination: Japan

Fabulous Fukuoka hosts the
99th International Convention



Not getting the sleep you need? Is your pillow the problem?

On its 10 year anniversary and with over five million satisfied customers, MyPillow® has been selected the *Official Pillow of the National Sleep Foundation!*

How Well Did You Sleep Last Night?

Did you toss and turn all night? Did you wake up with a sore neck, head ache, or was your arm asleep? Do you feel like you need a nap even though you slept for eight hours? Just like you, I would wake up in the morning with all of those problems and I couldn't figure out why. Like many people who have trouble getting a good night's sleep, my lack of sleep was affecting the quality of my life. I wanted to do something about my sleep problems, but nothing that I tried worked.

The Pillow Was the Problem

I bought every pillow on the market that promised to give me a better night's sleep. No matter how many pillows I used, I couldn't find one that worked and finally I decided to invent one myself. I began asking everyone I knew what qualities they'd like to see in their "perfect pillow", and got many responses: "I'd like a pillow that never goes flat", "I'd like my pillow to stay cool" and "I'd like a pillow that adjusts to me regardless of my sleep position." After hearing everyone had the same problems that I did, I spent the next two years of my life inventing MyPillow.



Mike Lindell
Inventor of MyPillow®

MyPillow® to the Rescue

Flash forward ten years and MyPillow, Mike Lindell's revolutionary pillow design, has helped 5 million people improve the quality of their sleep. MyPillow has received thousands of testimonials about the relief MyPillow has brought to people who suffered from migraines, snoring, fibromyalgia, neck pain and many other common issues.

Lindell has been featured on numerous talk shows, including *Fox Business News* and *Imus in the Morning*. Lindell and MyPillow have also appeared in feature stories in *The New York Times* and the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. MyPillow has received the coveted "Q Star Award" for Product Concept of the Year from QVC, and has been selected as the Official Pillow of the National Sleep Foundation.

MyPillow's patented technology can help with all of the most common causes of sleep loss and allows you to adjust it to any sleeping position. You can even wash and dry MyPillow as easily as your favorite pair of blue jeans!



"Until I was diagnosed with various sleep issues, I had no idea why my sleep was so interrupted throughout the night. I watch Imus each morning and heard endless testimonials about MyPillow. I took his advice and ordered a MyPillow. Now I wake up rested and ready to conquer the day ahead. Thank you for helping me remember what it's like to sleep like a baby!"

- Jacqueline H.



Unprecedented Guarantee and Warranty

I do all of my own manufacturing in my home state of Minnesota and all materials are 100% made in the U.S.A. I'm so confident MyPillow will help you, I'm offering an unprecedented 60-day money back guarantee and a 10-year warranty not to go flat! I truly believe MyPillow is the best pillow in the world and that if everyone had one, they would get better sleep and the world would be a much happier place.

Michael J. Lindell

Michael J. Lindell
CEO, MyPillow, Inc.

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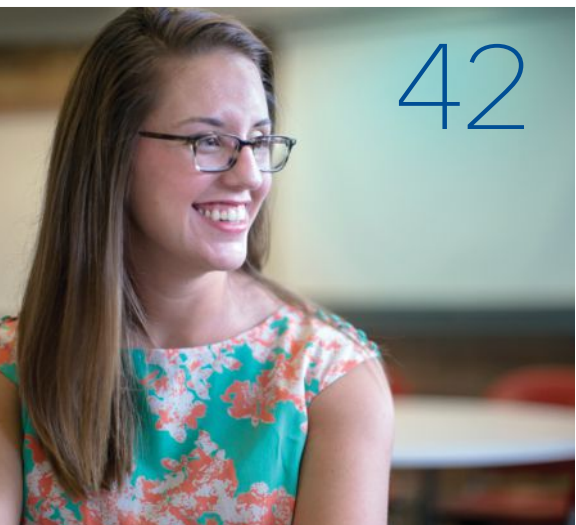
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On the cover:

Japanese Lions who are planning the international convention gather in Fukuoka at the Kushida Shrine, founded in 757. (Front, from left) Past International Director Yasumasa Furo, chairperson of the Host Committee, and Past Council Chair Takenori Kitajima, chairperson of the Executive Committee, wear Happi coats, traditional Japanese outfits worn when carrying the portable shrine. (Back, from left) Norihito Nakagawa, vice chairperson of the Parade Committee, Koji Onishi, chairperson of the Parade Committee, and Taisuke Yamamoto, vice chairperson of the Public Relations Committee, wear shirts with the convention logo.

Photo by Katsuaki Tanaka

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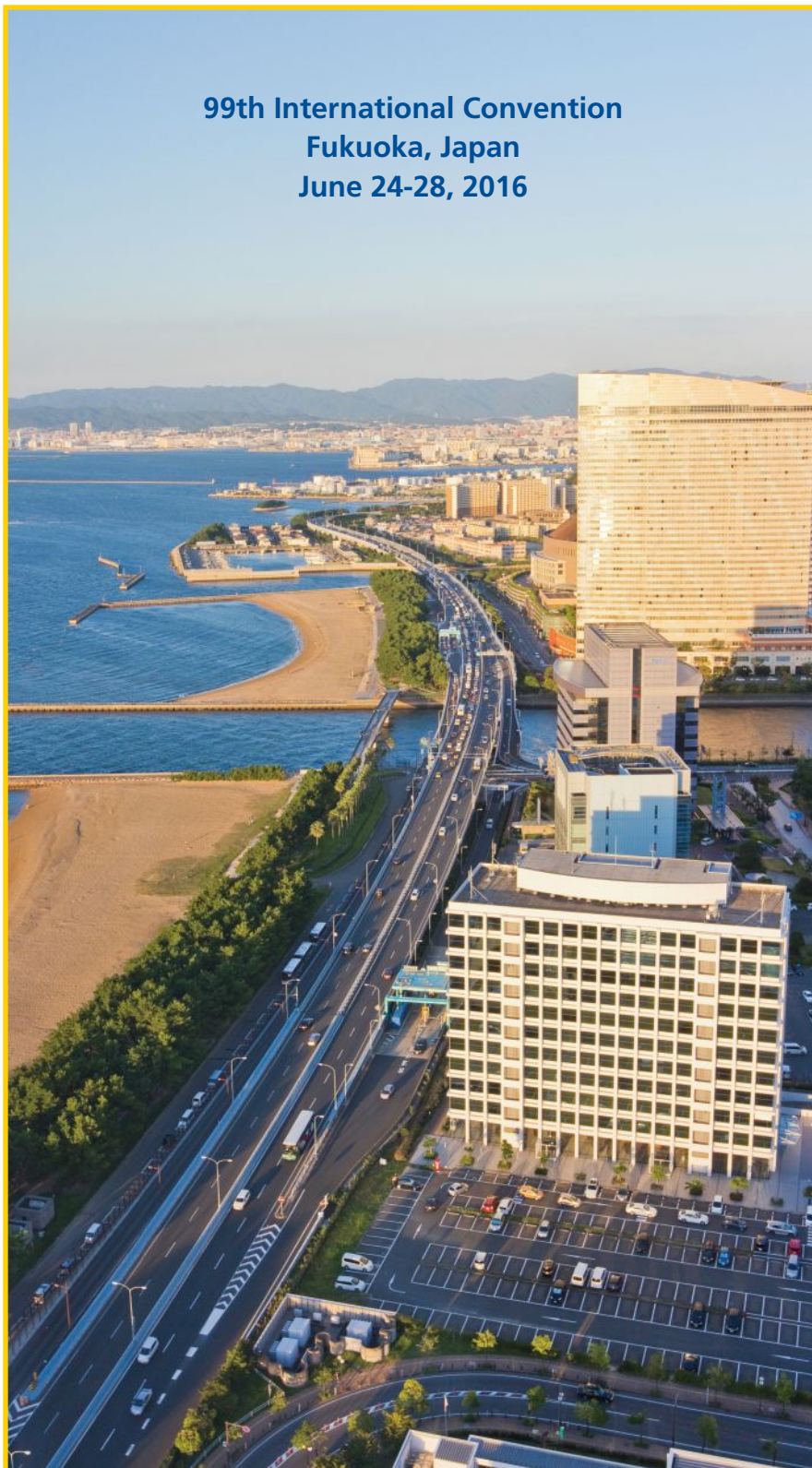


Girl Scouts and Lions in Ohio team up.



Enhance your digital LION experience. Click on “HELP” in the toolbar above for instructions on how to make the most of the digital LION.

99th International Convention
Fukuoka, Japan
June 24-28, 2016



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STATEMENT OF
LIONS CLUBS
INTERNATIONAL:

*“To empower
volunteers to serve
their communities,
meet humanitarian
needs, encourage
peace and promote
international
understanding
through Lions
clubs.”*

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For change of address, non-receipt of the magazine and other subscription issues, contact 630-468-6982 or MemberServiceCenter@lionsclubs.org. For all other inquiries call 630-571-5466. Have a story idea or photo? Want to comment on a story or make a suggestion for LION editors? Contact the LION at lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org or at 630-468-6909 or 630-468-7023.

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Fukuoka residents are known for the Hakata Dontaku Port Festival and other civic celebrations.

Convention: Your Best Week Ever as a Lion

Japanese have a word for our culture of hospitality—*omotenashi*. You'll experience *omotenashi* while shopping, dining or really at any public place. At a department store an attendant in a well-tailored uniform may welcome you at an elevator bank with a bow and polite greeting. After pushing the call button, he or she will direct you to the arriving elevator with arms held at a perfect 90-degree angle. It's highly choreographed and highly welcoming. When dining out at a nice restaurant, the staff may stand in a line and bow at the end of the meal and escort you to the sidewalk. The graciousness stems from *omoiyari*, an acute sensitivity to other people.

You can experience this wonderful culture of hospitality if you attend the 99th International Convention in Fukuoka June 24-28. But as a Lion you will feel a sense of welcome even warmer and more embracing than the average tourist. Do you know the feeling of camaraderie and the sense of pride that arises when you attend your Lions meeting or do a service project alongside fellow Lions? That feeling is multiplied exponentially at a Lions international convention. Being alongside Lions from around the world is incredibly uplifting and affirming.

You can be a great Lion and enjoy the fellowship of Lions without attending an international convention. But you'll appreciate being a Lion in a new, profound way and

understand the vast, important scope of Lionism by taking part in the annual convention.

Convention is the opportunity to be with like-minded people from around the world. You can march in our grand parade, listen to inspiring speakers, hear the latest news about Lionism, delight in world-class entertainment, help decide the future of our association and learn proven strategies about successful projects, public relations and membership drives. It's five days of unparalleled fun, fellowship and fruitful learning.

Japanese Lions are feverishly preparing for a most memorable convention. Japan is a place where Lionism is particularly strong. Lions here are among the first to respond to any disaster worldwide; their service projects in Japan are strikingly effective and creative. You can bet your bottom yen that the *omotenashi* and *omoiyari* of Japanese Lions will provide you with one of very best experiences of your entire life.



山田 実純

Dr. Jitsuhiro Yamada
Lions Clubs International President

Chicago Doctor Invents *Affordable* Hearing Aid Outperforms Many Higher Priced Hearing Aids

Reported by J. Page

CHICAGO: A local board-certified Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) physician, Dr. S. Cherukuri, has shaken up the hearing aid industry with the invention of a medical-grade, affordable hearing aid. **This revolutionary hearing aid is designed to help millions of people with hearing loss who cannot afford—or do not wish to pay—the much higher cost of traditional hearing aids.**

**"Perhaps the best quality-to-price ratio in the hearing aid industry" – Dr. Babu,
Board-Certified ENT Physician**

Dr. Cherukuri knew untreated hearing loss could lead to depression, social isolation, anxiety, and symptoms consistent with Alzheimer's disease. **He didn't know why hearing aids were so expensive when the prices on so many consumer electronics like TVs, DVD players, cell phones, and digital cameras had fallen.**

Since Medicare and most private insurance plans do not cover the costs of hearing aids, which can cost between \$2,000-\$6,000 for a pair, many of the doctor's patients could not afford the expense. Dr. Cherukuri's goal was to find a solution that would help with the most common types of hearing loss at an affordable price, similar to the **"one-size-fits-most" reading glasses** available at drug stores.

- **Designed by a Board-Certified Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) Doctor**
- **Doctor-Recommended, Audiologist-Tested**
- **★★★★★ Top Rated Hearing Aid Online**
—Thousands of Satisfied Customers
- **FDA-Registered**
- **Save Up To 90%**
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- **Batteries Included! Comes Ready To Use**
- **100% Money Back Guarantee**



He evaluated numerous hearing devices and sound amplifiers, including those seen on television. Without fail, those were found to amplify bass/low frequencies (below 1000 Hz) and were not effective amplifying the frequencies related to the human voice.

Inspiration from a Surprising Source

The doctor's inspiration to defeat the powers-that-be that kept inexpensive hearing aids out of the hands of the public actually came from a cell phone he had just purchased. **"I felt that if someone could develop an affordable device like an iPhone® for about \$200 that could do all sorts of things, I could create a hearing aid at a similar price."**

Affordable Hearing Aid with Superb Performance

The high cost of hearing aids is a result of layers of middlemen and expensive unnecessary features. Dr. Cherukuri concluded that it would be possible to develop a medical-grade hearing aid without sacrificing the quality of components. The result is the **MDHearingAid PRO**, well under \$200 each when buying a pair. **It has been declared to be the best low-cost hearing aid that amplifies the range of sounds associated with the human voice without overly amplifying background noise.**

Tested by Leading Doctors and Audiologists

The **MDHearingAid PRO** has been rigorously tested by leading ENT physicians and audiologists who have unanimously agreed that the **sound quality and output in many cases exceeds more expensive hearing aids.**

DOCTORS AND PATIENTS AGREE: "BEST QUALITY SOUND" "LOWEST AFFORDABLE PRICE"

"I have been wearing hearing aids for over 25 years and these are the best Behind-the-Ear aids I have tried. Their sound quality rivals that of my \$3,000 custom pair of Phonak® Xtra digital ITE." —Gerald L.

"I have a \$2,000 ReSound® Live hearing aid in my left ear and the MDHearingAid® PRO in my right ear. I am not able to notice a significant difference in sound quality between the two hearing aids."

—Dr. May, ENT physician

"They work so great, my mother says she hasn't heard this well in years, even with her \$2,000 digital! It was so great to see the joy on her face. She is 90 years young again." —Al P.

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TRIAL**



Proudly Assembled in the USA
from Domestic & Imported Components.



[The Big Picture



A Leveled Playing Field



Mr. Rogers said it best about the value of play: "Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning." Underprivileged children often miss out on play and miss the chance to develop their minds. In Bangladesh, mindful of the importance of feeding the soul as well as the body, Dhaka Central Lions distributed food to children in need and then treated them to a day of spontaneous, semi-supervised fun at Shisumela Park, a sprawling theme park with rides and attractions.

[The Big Picture



Holiday Spirit

With spending money provided by Lions and shopping assistance and advice rendered by Leos, 21 visually impaired students had a blast filling their red carts with gifts at a Target in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. Haddonfield and Pennsauken Lions and Leos took part. The students were from the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. (Clockwise from above) Danny Nguyen, 17, celebrates



Photos by Paige Ozarowski Haedo

a purchase with James Mayor, 12. Brian Howard confides in Santa. Abrian Tigeleiro, 9, marvels at a Christmas toy. Sam Goetz, 17, helps 10-year-old Thomas Burns. "Lots of smiles—it was a terrific event," says Tom Baird, president of the Haddonfield Lions Club. Reilley Connelly, president of the Leo club at Haddonfield Memorial High School, told the Courier-Post, "It touches hearts every year to help the students get what they can for their families. We don't really have any blind or visually impaired students at our school, so we really don't get to interact. They care so much about you, so it's great to give back and help when we can."

First Roar

EDITORS PREPARE FOR DIGITAL LION

Twenty-three editors from LION magazines worldwide recently met in Germany to discuss the transition to digital versions of the magazines. Lions' International Board of Directors decided last June that each of the 33 official editions of the LION, including this magazine, be limited to four printed issues each year beginning January 2018. "The younger generation wants digital," International President Dr. Jitsuhiro Yamada of Japan told the editors. "You will be able to read the LION on the bus or train. We are moving in the right direction." The headquarters LION (this edition—primarily for Lions in the United States and Canada) will



Albert Ettmayer, editor of the Austrian LION, makes a point at the LION editors meeting in Germany.

debut a new and improved digital magazine later this year, in conjunction with monthly print issues until becoming a quarterly print edition in 2018. The 33 official editions are printed in 21 languages; the editions run the president's column, LCIF stories and other material in the headquarters edition while also carrying stories on local Lions' projects and concerns. LION editors meet every three years to share ideas. The meeting in Augsburg, Germany, was held to coincide with the annual Lions' Europa Forum.

Watch the three
Leo videos:

• Italian Leos

• Tanzanian Leo

• Chilean Leos



ITALIAN LEO CLUB WINS VIDEO CONTEST

In a video, in a style reminiscent of a cheesy TV commercial, excited Italian Leos quickly pass the box of the board game they created from one to another and shout out its value. The game, Let's Play Different, teaches schoolchildren to accept those with disabilities. The video is fun, creative—and prize-winning. It recently won first place in the video contest sponsored by the Leo Club Program of Lions Clubs International. As part of its #RaiseYourVoice campaign, LCI asked Leo clubs worldwide to create a video on a cause the club is passionate about. LCI received 33 videos from 16 nations. Second place went to Nethmini Hapuarachchige of Tanzania; she made a heartfelt plea to support children especially orphans and those with special needs. They need to be educated but also "should have our love and compassion," she says in the video. Third place went to the Punta Arenas Cruz del Sur Leo Club in Chile for its video describing members' commitment to service. "I feel in my heart the spirit of service," says a Leo.

Photo by Svend Due Mikkelsen



Photo courtesy of The Carter Center/Becky Brookshire

A mural on a building in Mexico shows a distribution of Mectizan, a medication that helps eliminate river blindness.

MEXICO ELIMINATES RIVER BLINDNESS

Mexico has become the third country to eliminate onchocerciasis, known as river blindness, The Carter Center announced. In 2013, Colombia became the first nation verified by the World Health Organization to be free of river blindness, and its elimination in Ecuador was confirmed in 2014. LCIF has provided The Carter Center with millions of dollars in grants to fight river blindness, and local Lions clubs provide logistical support and help mobilize communities to receive ivermectin. Other partners in the disease eradication include the Pan American Health Organization, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Merck (which donates the medication). River blindness is caused by the bites of flies that live near rivers and transmit parasitic worms. The disease, besides its debilitating personal effects, takes an enormous economic toll, preventing people from working, harvesting crops and caring for children. Some 600,000 people in Latin America had been at risk of contracting the disease. Lions and The Carter Center continue to work against river blindness in Brazil and Venezuela and in large swaths of Africa.

FOUR STARS FOR LCIF

For the fourth consecutive year, Charity Navigator, an independent charity evaluator, recently awarded LCIF four stars, the highest ranking a charity can receive. Based in New Jersey, Charity Navigator evaluates the financial health, accountability and transparency of more than 8,000 charities to help donors be better informed about where they give. Only 8 percent of the charities it has rated have received a four-star rating for four consecutive years. "The rating confirms what many Lions already know—LCIF is a great way to make a difference in the lives of people," says LCIF Chairperson Joe Preston of Arizona. "Our foundation is adept at maximizing the value of the donations it receives from Lions." Go to lcif.org to donate or learn more.



Supported by LCIF, Lions in the Philippines deliver supplies after a typhoon.



Overheard

"Hello. I'm Johnny Cash."

—Tribute artist James Garner at a Johnny Cash concert sponsored by Loma Rica Lions in California.

"It was a miraculous thing. It's impossible to believe what they really do for me. They do what they're trained to do, but I swear this dog knows me better than I know myself. I wasn't doing anything before I got the dog. It gave me a lot of confidence. I changed from someone who stayed at home most of the time to where I would get out and go because I wanted to."

—Lion Pauline Ulrey, speaking about Gundy and her seven previous German Shepherd Leader Dogs. Ulrey received her first Leader Dog in 1963, just before starting college. She joined the Southport Lions Club in Indiana in 1988. From the Southside Times.

"They're salty. ... It's the type of food you just have to try. They taste better than they look."

—John Butler, a longtime aficionado of the oyster roast of the Fayetteville Massey Hill Lions Club in North Carolina. From the Fayetteville Observer.



Employees at the Chicago headquarters of Lions Clubs International track gains in membership in 1955.

VIDEO MAGAZINE DETAILS LIONS' GROWTH

So how did an association comprising a handful of Lions clubs grow into the world's largest service club organization? The latest LQ, the Lions Quarterly Video Magazine, focuses on Lions' explosive expansion. The segment is part of LCI's centennial video series in advance of Lions' 100-year anniversary in 2017. The latest LQ also features a Massachusetts club that collected pennies, the upcoming international convention in Fukuoka, Japan, and a new PSA (public service announcement). Be sure to "like" and share LQ on social media. LQ is available on the LCI website, YouTube, iTunes and DVD.

[Watch the new centennial video.](#)

43 Years Ago in the LION



FEBRUARY 1973

A fire gutted the main cottage of Ivy Green, the home of Helen Keller. Tuscumbia Lions in Alabama spearheaded the restoration. "A Shrine Restored" was the headline in the LION. "The home is once more a beautiful memorial to America's First Lady of Courage," according to the LION.

[Read the full story.](#)

By the Numbers

1929

First year of the annual carnival run by Grand Junction Lions in Colorado.



First year of the annual Brown Jug banquet by the Saginaw Downtown Lions for backup players for the rivalry football game between Saginaw High School and Arthur Hill High School in Michigan.

1945

First year of the annual Achievement Banquet of the Old Fort Lions in Ohio honoring outstanding students and athletes.

1938

First year of the annual Halloween parade of the Paxtang Lions in Pennsylvania.



1967

First year of the annual Toys for Tots program of the Dixon Lions in California.



1950

First year of the annual pancake breakfast on Palm Sunday of the Garden Grove Host Lions in California.

1962

First year of the annual Corn and Chicken Dinner of the Fort Atkinson Lions in Wisconsin.

First year of the annual Chicken Fry of the Coweta Lions in Oklahoma.

1944



1961

First year of the annual carnival of the Middle Paxton Lions in Pennsylvania.

1929

First year of the annual Fisherman's Picnic, sponsored by Grand Marais Lions in Minnesota since 1953.

1938

First year of the annual Lions Club Carnival of Orange Lions in Texas.



1960

First year of the annual Special Kids Picnic for children with disabilities held by Grand Island Lions in New York.

1940

First year of the annual Posy Parade, a floral children's parade sponsored by the San Bruno Lions in California since the late 1970s.

- Delicious burgoo, hefty pigs and cows, and elite runners help clubs in Illinois, Indiana and Arizona, respectively, sustain longtime projects (October 2008 LION).

- These clubs belong to the "50-year club"—their projects have lasted more than half a century (September 2015 LION).

Dominique Caissie

Jaffrey-Rindge Lion, New Hampshire

Dominique Caissie signed up for a glass blowing class as an artistic stress-reliever during college and discovered a passion that took her career plans in an unexpected direction. Now co-owner of the family-run Terrapin Glassblowing Studio, Caissie loves being creative every day, while also building community—and even providing a unique Lions club meeting spot.

Won the New England girls' one-mile swim championship at age 14

Is board president of Jaffrey's downtown improvement organization

Volunteers to foster dogs before they are placed for adoption

The Perfect Study Break

In school I always excelled at academics. I didn't take art classes because I didn't think they would help me get into college. I was intimidated walking into my first glass blowing class during my senior year. But it was so fun being creative, and it was a great outlet for me as I prepared for grad school.

An Artist Emerges

I signed up for more classes, and then found myself trying to go to a glass studio whenever I had free time. I realized I wanted glass blowing to be more than a hobby.

Incredible Art Form

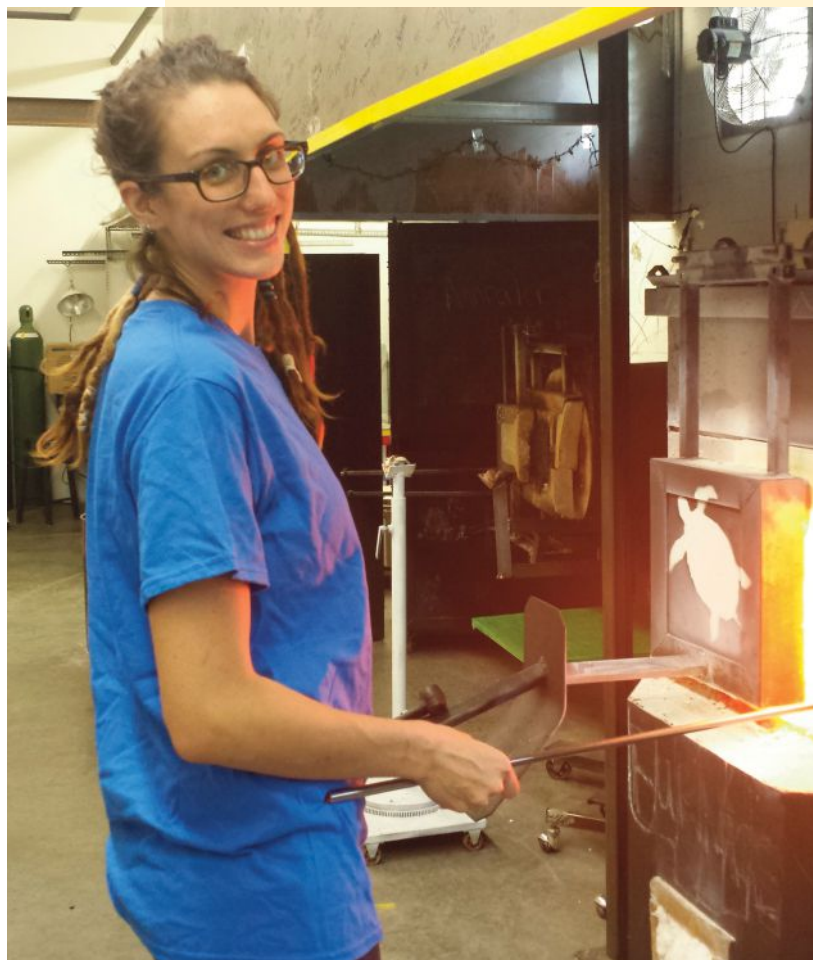
Everything happens at the end of a five-foot rod. The 2,000-degree furnace holds 135 pounds of glass and never shuts off. It's like a sport—it's a test of endurance. If something I try to create fails, I just try again. A vase takes me an hour to make, but it took me seven years to get to that point. I teach classes to people of all ages, and I love that they leave with the sense of appreciation for glass and accomplishment that I feel every day.

All in the Family

I went into business with my parents. It can be scary running a business. I worry that something will go wrong with the equipment or that people will stop coming, but we're in this together.

Unique Relief

I come from an animal-loving family, and we've had a lot of



Dominique Caissie

pets. Sadly, we've lost a lot of pets. We started making little keepsake glass memorial balls with their ashes. People noticed and started asking for them. They're now the most popular items we sell. I work with people to make custom items like paperweights, jewelry or sun catchers. It's rewarding to help ease their grieving.

Good for the Soul

The studio is already bigger than I ever imagined. I'm tired, sweaty and dirty, but happy. I wake up every day and do what I love. It's a lot of work, but satisfying. I just want to see a studio full of happy people being creative.

Do you know a Lion who you think has a great story or deserves a bit of recognition? Email us a brief description of the Lion and the reason you're making the nomination to lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org. Please include "One of Us" in the subject line.

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Members set to get free survival food

Farmers vow to keep up with the demand to supply all Lion members who call toll free and beat the deadline to claim up to four free 72-hour survival food kits.



Thousands have already claimed free Food4Patriots survival food kits. Giveaway ends 02/29/2016.

In a crisis, your number one need is food. But not just any food. What everyone needs is good-for-25-years survival food that you can rely on when the time comes that food is scarce.

Well right now – in what is truly an unprecedented move – 72-hour survival food kits from Food4Patriots are being given away to Lion members as long as they call a special toll-free hotline and beat the program deadline.

“The world is rapidly changing,” explained Frank Bates, a spokesman for the company. “Every day Americans face very real threats. For sure, terrorism is a huge worry. But so are natural disasters like hurricanes, floods, tornados, and whatever else Mother Nature might have up her sleeve.”



Military-grade Mylar pouches ensure these meals stay fresh for 25 years or more.

“IT’S MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER TO BE PREPARED.”

“Hey, we’ve seen what happens when a crisis hits. Stores quickly shut down or looted by hungry mobs. People forced to dig through dumpsters to find anything edible. Thousands standing in line to get a meal from FEMA or some other relief agency.

“That’s not what I want for my family or anyone else’s. Honestly, I believe each of us has a responsibility to ensure

our loved ones will have the food they need to survive an emergency — without having to rely on handouts.”

Experts say that everyone should have at least a 72-hour supply of non-perishable food on hand at all times. Unfortunately, too many people make the mistake of choosing products that were never intended to be survival food. They end up with expensive stockpiles that are too big and too bulky to move, should an emergency force them to leave their homes.

CHANCES ARE, THEIR FOODS WERE NOT PACKAGED FOR A 25-YEAR OR MORE SHELF LIFE. MOST ARE NOT.

And if they were unlucky enough to stock up on MREs, they’ll be depending on a product that can actually make you sick if you eat it for too long.

Food4Patriots survival foods are made of the finest ingredients, grown and packaged right here in the USA. They taste great. They provide the nutrition you need. And they were developed specifically for use in emergencies – although a lot of folks sometimes like them for a quick meal or snack.

Bates explained, “These are home-style meals that we package in airtight and resealable military-grade Mylar pouches that keep them fresh and delicious until they’re needed. Your family will enjoy meals much like they’re already eating every day.”

Every 72-hour kit that’s being given away contains four servings each of such familiar dishes as Liberty Bell Potato Cheddar Soup, Blue Ribbon Creamy Chicken Rice, Travelers Stew, and the always loved Granny’s Homestyle Potato Soup.

The company’s usual price for the 72-hour kit is \$27.00 plus shipping. But members who act quickly can claim as many as four free kits and pay only a \$9.95 fee to help cover shipping and handling for each.

“We’re trying to ensure no members get left out, but they have to hurry because we have a limited supply of the 72-hour kits we can give away,” Bates warned. “Once word got out that we were actually giving away free survival food, our phones have been ringing off the hook. We even had to add extra agents to keep up with the incredible demand.”

There is still time to take advantage of this free food offer, but be aware the program will end no matter what promptly at midnight, February 29, 2016.

HOW TO GET YOUR FREE 72-HOUR SURVIVAL FOOD KITS:

Food4Patriots is committed to giving up to four free 72-hour kits to every Lion member who calls their toll-free hotline. Just give the agent the approval code shown below. Provide your delivery instructions and agree to pay the \$9.95 fee to help cover shipping and handling for each. That’s all there is to it.

Approval Code: 72FREE
Toll-Free Hotline: 1-800-949-3969
Offer Cut-Off Date: 02/29/2016

Please note: Food4Patriots says they will continue to give away these 72-hour kits for as long as their supplies last. Due to media exposure, their phone lines may be busy. Just keep calling and you will get through.

'Touchstone' Stories Released

One hundred stories tell the century-old story of Lions Clubs International (LCI). In advance of the centennial of Lions Clubs in 2017, LCI has written 100 "Touchstone" stories that, in sum, describe what Lions are all about. The stories run the gamut: from Leader Dogs, Leos and Lions Quest to Melvin Jones, Helen Keller and Jimmy Carter. The stories detail the founding and expansion of Lions, the various service projects of Lions worldwide and the culture of camaraderie and fun that permeates clubs. The following Touchstone story and the other 99 are available at lions100.org. Each month the LION will include a Touchstone story as well as the latest centennial news.

Lions Recycle for Sight

The World Health Organization estimates that more than 150 million people suffer from blurred vision due to uncorrected refractive errors such as nearsightedness or farsightedness. The inability to see clearly can prevent children from learning in school, adults from finding work or staying employed and older adults from living independently. Often, a simple pair of eyeglasses can bring the world into focus, but a lack of access to basic care prevents many people in developing nations from getting the treatment they need. Cost is also an issue; a pair of glasses may cost as much as a month's wages.



However, with the help of Lions around the world and the Recycle for Sight program, LCI is bringing clear vision to millions, one pair of glasses at a time.

Through Recycle for Sight, Lions collect new and gently used eyeglasses and sunglasses in collection bins at a variety of locations in their communities: libraries, doctors' offices, schools, sidewalks, banks and retail stores. The glasses are then shipped to the nearest Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center, where employees or volunteers sort the glasses, clean them and determine their prescription strength. After carefully packaging the refurbished spectacles, Lions store them until they can be distributed through humanitarian missions to developing nations.

Lions and professional eye care specialists sometimes screen thousands of children and adults during sight missions, providing them—free of charge—with prescription lenses, frames and ultimately a better quality of life. Lions also distribute recycled glasses to nonprofit organizations focused on eye care, as well as to optometry college groups, religious organizations and military assistance groups.

Eyeglass recycling, one of the most popular activities for Lions around the world, dates back to the 1930s. Similar to today, Lions gathered glasses in their communities and gave them to those most in need. For example, in the early 1960s, the Hayes & Harlington Lions Club in England collected more than 20,000 pairs of glasses for those with vision impairment in India.

In 1994, Lions Clubs turned their longtime efforts into an official program under the name Recycle for Sight. With a common identity and common format, the program has continued to expand.

Each year, Lions collect about 30 million pairs of glasses. Clubs in Australia and Japan annually send 500,000 pairs of glasses to six recycling centers in Australia. Over the past decade, more than 3.5 million pairs of eyeglasses from these centers have been shipped to locations including India, the Middle East and tiny islands in Indonesia. By employing people from local correctional facilities, several of the centers are fostering rehabilitation by teaching skills that people can use after they leave prison.

The Tokyo Sangenjaya Lions Club partnered with a national retailer to collect glasses for Australia's recycling centers in 2013. "Seeing Lions work in packaging these eyeglasses, I realize how much we consume and throw away that is still in usable or even perfect condition," says one local businessman. "These eyeglasses will change someone's life."

"Thank you," a 94-year-old man in Honduras cried after receiving a pair of Lions recycled glasses. "I can now read my Bible—the first time in 15 years."

For more than 80 years, Lions have been collecting, sorting and cleaning eyeglasses, and distributing them to those in need.

Hurray for Hollywood!

Bingo used to be big for Moncton Lions in New Brunswick, Canada. Then casinos started going up, and club revenue went down. New member Beth Peterson, a fan of game shows, had an idea. The club's first Hollywood Game Night Corporate Challenge drew 12 teams, which dressed in costumes, themed outfits, feathered boas or matching T-shirts.

Teams competed in Charades, Pictionary, Blindfolded 5-Letter Words, Link in the Chain and How Do You Doo Singing. "A player has to keep singing doo-doo-doo to a tune until somebody on the team gets the song title," Peterson explains. She admits she had a favorite team: "That would be the Cereal Killers, complete with bowls and spoons."

The event was staged in the Lions' spacious clubhouse, where Bingo had been held. The 32-member club enlisted more than 30 friends to help manage the teams and serve refreshments. The On-Airheads, a team of five disc jockeys, won the top prize, a \$1,000 donation to the charity of their choice. With Lions matching the prize, a \$2,000 donation was given to the Friends of Moncton Hospital. The

Boys and Girls Club of Moncton received \$1,000, and \$200 was also given to a pet rescue organization.

Twelve feet of snow covered the ground the night of the event. "We had to find some indoor activities that

will make some money for us when the snow starts falling," says Peterson. "One of the guests told us that she had so much fun, she didn't want to leave. She said, 'Sign me up for the club!' We did."



A team of nurses give it their all during the "How Do you Doo Singing" game. Even feathered boas couldn't give them an edge, and they lost.

Lions Lead Camp Cleanup

When the Girl Scouts put out a call for help to clean up Camp Sacajawea in Missouri, Lions answered—and standing with them was an entire community of volunteers. "When we explained the needs of the camp, folks had a pretty hard time saying no to us," says project chair Lion John Meehan.

Lions have been active in Sedalia since 1938. The Girl Scout camp had been a vital part of the community since 1942, and its hiking trails and campsites had become littered with debris and fallen trees from years of storms and little maintenance. Hiking trails throughout the camp's 30 acres were considered hazardous, and the camp was in danger of being closed.

Meehan coordinated work parties at the camp for 18 months. Volunteers from throughout Pettis County brought in heavy duty equipment to tackle the overgrown and unkempt acreage. Dead trees were cut up and hauled out. Twelve cords of wood were hauled out, stacked and sold after being removed from hiking trails. Profits were donated to the camp. What couldn't be cut into firewood was burned by the fire department.

There are now four hiking trails and three clearing campsites for Scouts and the community to use. "The usual amount of people we had working on a day was about 20, and they were spread out all over the woods," says Meehan. Lions intend to keep the land clear and safe by organizing yearly work parties.



Volunteer Katie Hauser (foreground) hauls out deadwood cut by Sedalia Lions Matt Moulton (left) and John Meehan.

These Monkeys Mean Business

If Lion Carmen Presti had his way, Wilson Lions in New York would be adding some new tail twisters—complete with actual tails—to liven up club meetings. After all, the primates he cares for at The Primate Sanctuary he owns with his wife, Christie, have been involved in fundraising for Lions for the last four years. And it turns out that monkeys mean business when it comes to fundraising. “I think we’ve prob-



Carmen Presti and Sarah collect donations from passing cars.

ably increased donations by 30 percent by having [capuchins] Sarah and Emily help us. You know, I think if I had a dollar for every time I heard somebody say, ‘Hey, you’ve got a monkey on your back!’ our donations would double,” says Presti with a laugh.

Content to sit on Presti’s shoulders, they stop traffic while club members ask for donations to fund service activities. “We only have one traffic light on a main corner in Wilson, so it’s the only place people have to stop their cars. You just can’t drive by a monkey. Kids are always making their parents give us a dollar or two so they can talk to the monkeys,” he says.

They march in parades with Lions, and love to hand out bananas to cyclists participating in the Tour de Cure event to raise awareness and funds for diabetes research. “Wilson is one of the stations where riders stop on the way from Buffalo to Alcott,” explains Presti. Lions volunteer at a way station to distribute water and, yes, bananas, to cyclists. Surprisingly, the capuchins readily hand over their favorite fruits to riders. “No, it’s not a problem at all for them to give up those bananas,” Presti says. “They know there’s always more.”

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*Prices are per person, double occupancy and do not include taxes & government fees of \$159 per person. Add-on airfare is available. \$150 per couple savings on select tour departures, offers expires 2/29/16. Seasonal surcharges and single supplements may apply. Ask your Travel Consultant for details.

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CZECH REPUBLIC

Old Eyeglasses, A New Concept

Across Europe in 29 nations last year thousands of schools, civic groups and cities held events and hosted projects as part of the European Sustainable Development Week. Lions in Prague jumped right in, promoting eyeglass recycling, a concept new to most Czechs.

Bank employees and customers donated more than 2,000 eyeglasses at 42 branches of the Komerční Banka, a leading bank in the Czech Republic. “We were extremely pleased with the project,” says Eva

Zouzalova of the Prague Strahov San Giorgio Lions Club, which organized the initiative. “Recycling of eyeglasses is not done here. People don’t even know they can be recycled. Eyeglasses are thrown in the rubbish.”

Czech Lions transported the eyeglasses to a Lions eyeglass recycling center in northern Italy. After being cleaned, repaired and measured, Italian Lions shipped the eyeglasses to several nations including Kenya, Mozambique, Zambia and Cambodia. An influential agency, Flagship

Communications in Prague had promoted the recycling free of charge for the Lions.

Sponsored by the European Union, the first-ever sustainable development week focused on waste and resource conservation, biodiversity, green jobs/training, climate change and social inclusion.



Sandra Zouzalova, director of Flagship Communications, proudly displays some of the eyeglasses collected by Lions in Prague.

NEW ZEALAND

Puppets Help Kids Deal with Feelings

Puppets Zak, Lucy and Jo play together, bicker, confide in each other, squabble, make plans together and learn to accept their differences. Their dramas mirror the lives of schoolchildren, which is why a child counsellor takes them to perform at schools.

“Using puppets is an ideal way to connect with the children,” says Lesley Bates. “The puppets work well to bring the children out of their shells and explore emotions without embarrassment.”

The Feilding Host, Feilding Manchester and Feilding Kowhai Lions clubs sponsor the school visits by the Social Socks puppets. “I get brilliant support from Lions. I was blown away. They are such lovely groups of people,” says Bates.

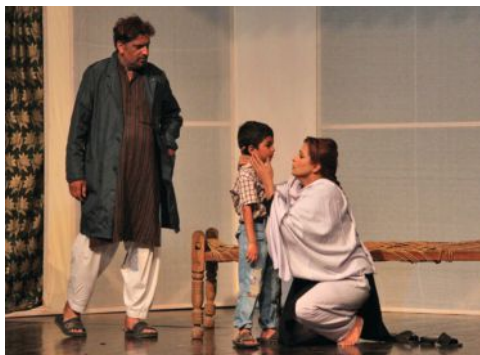
Students play with the sock puppets they made as Lucy looks on.



PAKISTAN

Child Labor Drama is Dickensian

A sensitive, intelligent young boy in Pakistan, Yasir is forced by his father, a drug addict, to quit school for a job in a dirty, noisy workshop. Yasir dutifully trudges off to work, but one day, remembering his school days, he breaks down and weeps bitterly.



Yasir's mother comforts him before his father sends him off to work.

That's the plot of "Little Hands," a piercing drama on child labor sponsored by a Lions club, produced by a Lion, written by a renowned Pakistani writer and staged at the well-appointed auditorium of the Pakistan National Council of the Arts in Islamabad. Pakistan has one of the world's highest rates of child labor, and the 90-minute drama with professional actors was performed on June 12, the World Day Against Child Labor.

"Our children and youths [who work] are unable to get a proper education and are involved in various type of abuse," says Iftikhar Ahmed, charter president of the Islamabad City Lions Club. "I think the performing arts is a good medium to

convey messages to the public. We can increase our membership and convey a good image of Lions."

Ahmed, the show's producer, outlined his general ideas for the script for Aslam Mughal, the playwright. The play drew about 500 people including officials from UNICEF and the U.S. embassy.

The play is grim but ends on an upbeat note. Shaken by the death of another child who works, Yasir's father has a change of heart. Yasir's return to school becomes a reality when a Lion financially assists the family. Yasir completes his schooling and joins the Lions to stamp out child labor.

AUSTRALIA

Manure Is Not Wasted

The dung of the earth is supporting flights of mercy and healing. Or as the local newspaper put it, "Manure is not such a crappy idea."

The Murgan Lions Club bags and sells manure to green thumbs. Proceeds go to CareFlight, which provides quick-response medical care for remote injured and ill people through a fleet of helicopters and planes.

The manure is courtesy of the cows of dairy farmer Col Sippel, a Lion since 1974. One day while contemplating his cows' prodigious output, "I got a brain-wave that we should be selling manure," he told the Toowoomba Chronicle. The club sells nearly 40 bags weekly.



Photo by Fairfax NZ



Fabulous Fukuoka

Long a port of entry, our convention city in Japan will be a gateway to fun and fellowship for Lions.

BY TIM HORNYAK

Fukuoka looks like no other big city in Japan. Five major rivers divide its center, and numerous canals contribute to a teeming network of scenic waterways. The city's delightfully varied bridges include the Najima Bridge and its elegant 1930s stonework, the sleek, modern lines of the Aitaka Bridge (at 1,400 feet, the longest sea bridge in Japan for pedestrians and bicycles) and the orange-yellow tiled Deai Bridge, which encourages people to loiter at picnic tables—no wonder its name means “bridge of encounters.”

At the Deai Bridge and elsewhere, easygoing buskers croon away in the evenings. Traditional *yakatabune* party boats, decked out with colorful lanterns, go up and down the Naka River as passengers feast on *sashimi* and *sake*

under the glare of neon lights from the nightlife district of Nakasu Island. That's the kind of laidback feel Fukuoka can pull off.

Yet Fukuoka also bustles as a center of commerce and culture. Its airport is the one the world's three busiest. Located on the southernmost main Japanese island of Kyushu, Fukuoka is one of the closest places in Japan to the Korean peninsula and China. For centuries, it served as a clearing-house for goods and cultural imports from the continent into Japan.

Both peacefully enchanting and busily engaging, the capital of the Fukuoka Prefecture is a wonderful choice for the Lions' 99th International Convention. Tens of thou-

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(Above) The Hakata Gion Yamakasa festival, which runs after the convention ends from July 1-15, signals the coming of summer in Fukuoka. Colorful floats are a festival staple. The festival is centered on the Kushida Shrine (cover photo).



Fukuoka's parks (above) and waterways (below) give the city an at-ease ambience.





Fukuoka Tower

2-3-26, Momochi-hama, Sawara Ward

Built in 1989 for the Asian Pacific Expo, Fukuoka Tower is 767 feet tall and clad in reflective panels. An observation deck affords panoramas of the city and the Genkai Sea, which is especially picturesque at sunset. A short walk from Hilton Fukuoka Seahawk hotel, the tower is adjacent to TNC Hosokaikan, which houses RoboSquare, a showcase for some of the cutting-edge personal robots developed in Japan.

Five Must-see Sights

Fukuoka Castle Ruins, Maizuru Park and Korokan Historical Museum

Jonai, Chuo Ward

Built by samurai warlord Kuroda Nagamasa in the early 17th century, Fukuoka Castle was the seat of the Kuroda lords for centuries until it was torn down in the 1870s when Japan abandoned feudalism. Some of its enormous stone walls and wooden gates still remain, along with a few of the 47 yagura turrets, the most impressive of which is the long white Tamon yagura. The surrounding Maizuru Park explodes with cherry blossoms in spring, but makes for a pleasant strolling spot year-round. Also in the park is the Korokan Historical Museum, which exhibits the ruins of a state guesthouse, the Korokan, that received imperial embassies from China from the 7th to the 11th centuries. Scale models of the buildings give visitors an idea of the grandeur of the original structure.



Fukuoka Castle

Tenjin

Tenjin is Fukuoka's bustling heart, packed with luxury goods shops, department stores, electronics retailers and a 1,900-foot-long underground arcade of more than 100 stores. The architecture is sometimes striking—compare the giant, staircase-shaped Acros Fukuoka building, which has a forest growing on its "steps," to the stately French Renaissance-style design of nearby Kihinkan Hall, built in 1910.



Tenjin

Kushida-jinja Shrine

1-41, Kamikawabata-machi, Hakata Ward

This Shinto sanctuary traces its history back to the opening of Hakata port in the 8th century. It has an imposing main gate and a sweeping, wing-like roof over its main hall. The shrine is associated with the Hakata Gion Yamakasa festival and houses one of the towering floats on its grounds. The equally good Hakata Machiya Folk Museum and Hakata Traditional Craft Center, which exhibits Hakata dolls and textiles, are nearby.

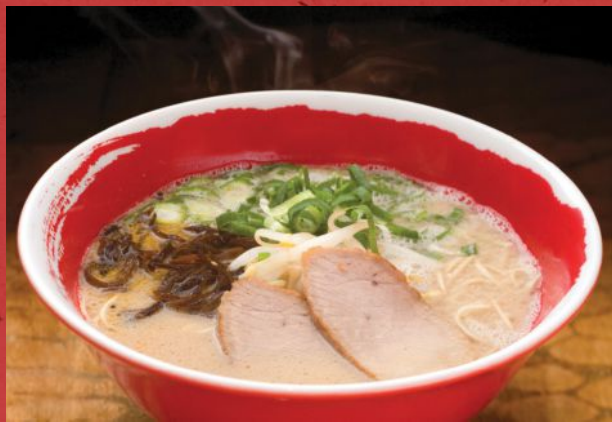
Fukuoka City Akarenga Culture Center

1-15-30 Tenjin, Chuo Ward

This elegant red-brick Victorian building in Tenjin was once the Kyushu branch of the Nippon Life Insurance Company. An example of Western architecture from Japan's era of rapid modernization, it was completed in 1909 and designed by architect Kingo Tatsuno, whose masterpiece is the Queen Anne revival grand façade of Tokyo Station. Today the two-story structure has charming Art Nouveau interior décor, a small library and temporary exhibits such as model ship displays.



A Hakata doll at the Hakata Traditional Craft Center



Fukuoka's food is legendary: from (clockwise) Hakata ramen and mackerel sashimi to motsunabe and pan fried gyoza.

sands of Lions worldwide will gather in this city of 1.5 million from Friday, June 24 to Tuesday, June 28.

Lionism is robust in Japan and especially Fukuoka. Japan has 124,353 Lions in 3,120 clubs, and Fukuoka, the nation's sixth-largest city, has 2,097 Lions in 42 clubs. The clubs are highly active and creative in service. The commitment of Japanese Lions to service is perhaps best exemplified in their astounding support of LCIF. Japanese Lions have contributed more than \$300 million to LCIF, more than any other nation and more than one-third of all funds granted by the foundation.

Facing the Korea Strait dividing Japan from the Asian continent, Fukuoka is situated near the top of Kyushu Island, north of the cities of Nagasaki, Kagoshima and Kumamoto. The largest city on Kyushu, it serves as a gateway to the island for travelers arriving by airplane, bullet train, ferries and cruise ships. With South Korea's Busan a mere 133 miles from Fukuoka compared to more than 620 miles to Tokyo, as well as increasing numbers of Asian tourists, this metropolis and port sometimes feels more a part of continental Asia than Japan's chain of islands.

The city also is remarkably compact. Fukuoka Airport and Hakata Station, the terminus of the bullet train line from Tokyo, are only minutes by subway from the Tenjin shopping district. Hakata Port, which hosts facilities such as the Fukuoka Convention Center (a Lions' convention

venue) and ferry terminals, is a quick taxi or bus ride away. If you want a quick getaway into the hinterland of Fukuoka Prefecture—to visit the grand Shinto temple at Dazaifu or the beautiful old canal town of Yanagawa—Nishitetsu Fukuoka (Tenjin) railway station is within easy reach.

Amid the modernization rush in 1889, the towns merged under the name Fukuoka, but Hakata was preserved in the ward and train station name. While it was devastated by U.S. air raids in 1945, Fukuoka rebuilt itself while preserving many of its traditional Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines.

Some of the many signs of pride that locals take in their history include the newly built Sennen no Mon (Thousand-year Gate), a masterpiece of modern woodworking craftsmanship that marks the entrance to Hakata's temple district, and the Hakata Gion Yamakasa festival, a celebration held every July in which large traditional floats, weighing more than a ton each and featuring elaborately crafted Hakata dolls, are paraded through the streets on the backs of men clad in traditional *happi* coats.

To Japanese living elsewhere, Fukuoka tends to mean one thing: food, especially *ramen*. The city is often associated with the Hakata version of this popular noodle dish, and Hakata ramen refers to thin noodles in a cloudy broth based on pork bones, often topped with slices of roast pork and leek. This hearty brew is served up in the city's famous

Continued on page 27



Chusuke

Chusuke

Showa-dori Street by Bank of Japan (location may change)

Long before food trucks became all the rage in other cities, Fukuoka had yatai eateries on wheels, and Chusuke is one of the best. Poke your nose in, find a seat and rub shoulders with locals dining on everything from ramen and gyoza dumplings to yakitori chicken skewers and liver with Chinese chives. Look for the stall's bright red awning outside the Bank of Japan's Fukuoka branch office.

Five Great Places to Dine

Ramen Stadium

Canal City, 1-2 Sumiyoshi, Hakata Ward

Tucked away on the fifth floor of the sprawling Canal City Hakata mall, Ramen Stadium has eight shops serving up regional variations on Japan's beloved ramen noodles. Kizou, for instance, specializes in beef tongue ramen from the Sendai area of northern Japan, while Kagoshima Ramen Fukkoku Shokudo's bowls feature Kagoshima kurobuta roasted black pork.

Yorozu

2-3-32 Akasaka, Chuo Ward

This delightful bar full of cherry wood slabs and copper boilers is devoted to Japanese tea. Owner Suguru Tokubuchi dons a lab coat as he goes about meticulously roasting and pairing teas with traditional Japanese wagashi sweets.



Yorozu

Yanagibashi Market

1-5-1 Haruyoshi, Chuo Ward

Known as "Hakata's kitchen," this modest collection of stalls upstream from Nakasu along the Naka River overflows with seafood of every description, from mackerel, bonito, whale and fish cakes to seasonal favorites such as grilled oysters and bamboo shoots. A branch of the local independent coffee shop chain Manu Coffee is by the exit.



Yanagibashi Market



Ramen at Ichiran

Tonkotsu Ramen Ichiran Honten

5-3-2 Nakasu, Hakata Ward

If you have time for just one bowl of ramen in Fukuoka, try Ichiran. They've remained true to their tonkotsu (pork bone broth) ramen from their establishment decades ago. It's especially interesting if you're visiting alone, because part of the restaurant is devoted to individual booths where you can slurp noodles to your heart's content; don't be afraid to ask for second helpings of noodles (kaedama) but be sure to save some broth!

yatai outdoor stalls, a sort of old-timey casual dining experience that has become increasingly rare in other Japanese cities.

Other specialties include *karashi mentaiko*, spicy, salted cod roe sometimes added to rice balls or pasta; *mot-sunabe*, which is a powerful hot pot of beef or pork tripe, peppers and cabbage in a miso broth; *mizutaki* chicken and vegetable stew; and *tetsunabe gyoza*, a pint-sized, local version of Chinese pot stickers stuffed with pork, green onions and cabbage. Being by the sea, the city naturally overflows with excellent sushi, *sashimi* and seafood of every description—try a *kaisendon* of *sashimi* salmon, scallops, sea bream or mackerel over rice, and you'll get a taste for what locals love.

You'll find the people of Fukuoka friendly and refreshingly polite. As with Japanese throughout the country, it's not unusual for them to go out of their way to help travelers by guiding them down a street, helping decipher a menu or navigating a railway connection. Even if they may some-

times be shy about their limited English (speaking slowly always helps), Japanese are often very curious about what visitors think of their country. Icebreakers like personal introductions can lead to many interesting conversations and cross-cultural friendships.

Fukuoka residents will readily admit they'll go crazy for the latest thing—be it a luxury clothing store or a new sweets shop—until the next big thing comes along. But one thing that doesn't change is the warmth and hospitality that locals extend to visitors from inside and outside Japan. They're curious to know what travelers think of their seaside city, with its canals, street food, noodle shops and a proud history of international relations. So grab a pair of chopsticks and dig in to Fukuoka's rich soup of culture and cuisine!

Tim Hornyak is a freelance writer based in Tokyo and co-authored the Lonely Planet guidebooks to Tokyo and Japan.

- Lions gathered in Japan in 2002. Read about the "record-setting international convention" (October 2002 LION).
- Japanese Lions are equal to nearly any challenge: they help their nation recover from the devastating earthquake and tsunami (May 2015 LION).
- Watch an exciting promotional video on Fukuoka.

Easy Excursions

These destinations can be seen in one day via rail on a Nishitetsu Dazaifu & Yanagawa Sightseeing Ticket Pack (2,930 yen, US\$24 for adults; 1,420 yen, US\$11.50 for children)

Dazaifu

Dazaifu City was once an administrative center that ruled the whole island of Kyushu for 500 years. Today it's most known for Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine, a majestic Shinto sanctuary devoted to Sugawara Michizane, a 9th-century statesman who is revered today as a god of learning by students throughout Japan. The approach to the shrine is lined with teashops selling umegaemochi, a roasted rice cake filled with red beans; one of the best shops is Kasanoya. The Kyushu National Museum is housed in a hill behind the shrine and exhibits treasures such as Buddhist statuary, hanging scrolls and samurai swords. Dazaifu is a roughly 30-minute train ride from Nishitetsu Fukuoka Station with a change at Futsukaichi.

Yanagawa

Yanagawa was a castle town near the shores of the inland Ariake Sea, situated south of Fukuoka City. The castle is gone today, but its hundreds of kilometers of canals and moats remain. Some of them are plied by old-fashioned boatmen who pilot donkobune, low-flat-bottomed boats pushed along by poles. The 30- to 70-minute donkobune cruises are called kawakudari (going downstream) and they're a great way to time travel back to a slower, more relaxed age—you might hear the boatmen break out into song. The local specialty of grilled eel (unagi) is best enjoyed at the stately Ohana estate, once the home of Yanagawa's ruling Tachibana clan. Its Shukeitei restaurant overlooks the exquisite Shotoen garden, which has centuries-old pine trees and a central pond designed to evoke Matsushima in northern Japan. Yanagawa is about 45 minutes from Nishitetsu Fukuoka Station by express train, and a taxi or bus is required to get to the kawakudari canals.



The Kyushu National Museum includes this 19th-century painting by an unknown artist.

THE WORLD IN FOCUS:

PHOTOGRAPHY *and BLINDNESS*

BY TAMMY RUGGLES

When I was a little girl I spent countless days playing with my siblings and cousins on my grandparents' farm. We climbed trees, jumped creeks and took walks with our dogs. It seemed there was always a camera around, and I was drawn to taking pictures at an early age. I was in awe that a simple, little device like a camera could make time stand still for an eternity.

I had begun wearing glasses when I was 2. Since my family didn't have a lot of money, the local Lions club helped pay for them.

I didn't know I would slowly lose my vision. My mother later told me she suspected I had a vision problem by the way I held my little children's books up close to my face and by the way I grabbed her hand at night to get around. It turned out I had night blindness, which is a hallmark of the vision problem I had. Retinitis pigmentosa gradually destroys the retina, the camera of the eye.

As a teenager my vision worsened, but it didn't seem to be a big deal. Wearing thick glasses and sitting in the front of the class to see the blackboard were things that



were part of who I was, so I was accustomed to it. At night it didn't seem to be unusual for me to have to hold onto someone's arm or sleeve to navigate the darkness.

I learned how to make adjustments over the years—physically, mentally, and emotionally. I set the negative aside and got on with my life.

Photography was something I understood as an art form, just as sketching and writing were to me. The thought of being a professional photographer never occurred to me. It was something I did for fun, like my other hobbies.

As I grew into adulthood, my visual impairment made the things I loved to do—writing, reading, sketching, and taking pictures—more difficult. I could no longer read regular print without some form of magnification or large print, pick out the North Star or see pictures clearly in a magazine or book. The photos I'd saved over the years became blurry little squares and rectangles of color. I knew they were of my family, my friends, my pets, bowls of fruit, patches of flowers or my grandparents' farm, but I could barely see them.



November Tree



Harrison Pond

At age 40, I had the hardest time grappling with vision loss because along with some sight I lost my social work career and my ability to drive. My eye doctor told me I was legally blind; my visual acuity was 20/200. I thought that being legally blind meant that you couldn't see at all. What it really means is that you have a little vision. I didn't realize how bad it was because I'd never had perfect vision to compare it to, and the vision loss happened so gradually that it was easy to get used to.

My sense of value and purpose was challenged. I leaned on Social Security because I had a son to bring up by myself. His dad died in a car accident and left us no money. My independent nature was rocked. I couldn't sketch anymore, and taking photos seemed pointless, difficult and ridiculous. What was the use of taking pictures if I couldn't see them?

The answer came years later in two parts. I realized that technology could allow the visually impaired to do many things we couldn't do before. Technology had enabled me to write on a computer, sketch black and white pictures with the help of a 47-inch computer monitor, and view family photos in a way I hadn't since I was a young girl.

Secondly, I realized that photography was more than taking pictures for myself alone: It was taking pictures so that other people could see them. I would depend on the viewer to interpret and judge the photos.

I slowly began to believe that I could bring photography back into my life.

A simple point-and-shoot was good for a video camera. I could operate that with no problem. One button could tell a visual story. But would the same technology work for me as a photographer? It didn't take long for me to find out that it would.

I bought a nice little camera and began to take pictures of subjects I'm fond of: nature, rural scenery, objects that I would encounter on a walk or that someone would point out.

The blurry images that my physical eyes saw were captured by my camera, and then enlarged on my monitor. I see best in high contrast, so I prefer black-and-white pictures. Sometimes I have to guess if a picture looks right or is pretty or interesting. Sometimes it takes other people to tell me how they look. And sometimes I'm sure they're just plain off-center or weird-looking—like the picture of a farm I was taking, not realizing until it was pointed out to



Small Farm



Walking Thru Hay Bales

me later that the corner of a round hay bale was in the lower right-hand corner. My son said the “accidental hay bale” made the picture look more interesting than it would have been without it. This is where the viewer comes into play—with interpretation, comments and opinions.

When I decided to get serious about photography two years ago, I chose a Sony camera because it was affordable. I couldn’t see to focus the lens, so I had the camera set to auto-everything. I just turned the camera toward the woods, snapped photos, pressed the zoom button and

snapped again and again. I snap as I walk, turning my camera up, then down, then left, then right. If I walk with someone, this person often tells me to aim my camera toward a barn or fence, or a field, or some interesting clouds in the sky.

The main feature I look for in a camera is point-and-shoot. Extra features, buttons, and settings are nice, but I can’t see the camera to change the settings. As long as it’s on auto-focus and there is only one button to use, I feel that I can take pictures. I never physically adjust my lens to focus.

Since my photos have received compliments, and have been published, I've come to believe that it isn't a camera that makes a good picture—it's the subject, and, in my case, how contrasting it is.

After I took a bunch of pictures with the Sony, I decided to sell it and downsize to a simpler model that was easier to carry with me all the time, and one that came without all the extra settings and features. It was a Polaroid, fit into the palm of my hand, pocket, or purse; and I used on the auto setting until it malfunctioned. One day it just wouldn't turn on. That led to my inexpensive Nikon camera.

Looking back, I think the Sony was more camera than I needed, but it was a good one to start with because it took pictures that people admired. I myself can't see any difference in the quality of photos taken by various cam-

eras, but other people can, especially editors at publications. I want the photos to be of good quality, but this doesn't necessarily mean they have to come from an expensive camera.

When people ask me, "How can you see what to shoot?" the answer is that I use my remaining vision. I see the world in a blur, but when I walk closer to something, I can make it out a lot better. Simply put, I see better close up than I do far away. I can assume that the big dark square across the field is a barn and when I walk closer to it I can actually see by its blurry shape that I was right.

My better vision as a younger person helps me to identify things around me. I know what trees, barns, flowers, roads, hills, and creeks look like because there was a time when I could see these more clearly. I saw them for years and know what they look like.



Untitled

Let's say I'm traveling with someone and he or she points out a rosebush beside the road. I may not be able to see it clearly with my eyes, but I can turn my camera toward it, with the person guiding my camera in the rosebush's direction, and snap a picture. This is why I say my camera sees for me. It sees things that I don't. I can even press the zoom button to capture a close-up, even though my eyesight can't tell the difference.

Many times I have a companion look at the display to check the picture—is it centered? Is it so off-centered that I shouldn't use it? Should I take it again? How does it look?

There are other times I take photos by myself. I randomly shoot pictures in different directions on purpose, then hurry home to see what I've caught. It's exciting, because I like finding what my eyes have missed, like a patch of wild pumpkins growing at the edge of the woods, or a

piece of petrified wood, or a fossil. My large computer screen enlarges the images that are too hard to see with my eyes. It's so breathtaking to be able to see a piece of log that I've stepped on, or a leaf that brushed my hair, or a small waterfall that I heard but couldn't see.

I take a lot of images that, once I get a look at them on the computer, are too dark, too light, too plain, too boring, or don't have enough contrast to be interesting to me. Maybe I've cut the corner off of a house, or my finger was too shaky on the shutter, or the random shots were just too random or similar. Sometimes I'll have my son, or friend, or other family member look through them to see which ones look OK, and which ones I should delete.

I do a lot of deleting, and only preserve the ones I think would be interesting to others, or publishable.

Since the age of 40, my visual acuity has decreased to





20/400. This is medically classified as severely visually impaired, but not completely blind. My world gets blurrier and blurrier. Brown, purple, blue and green sometimes look the same to me, as do pinks, reds and oranges.

If you turn the lens of a camera until it's so out of focus that you can't distinguish a person's eyes, ears, nose, or mouth ... well, this is how I see. I can't identify my own family unless they're a few inches in front of me. I can identify them at a distance if they are speaking, however, because I know their voices.

When I look at a tree, I see a tall, blurry shape that my mind recognizes as a tree, but I can't see the sharpness of the bark, or the individual leaves on it. I just know it's a tree and take a picture. Most of the time I can't tell what kind of tree it is until I view it on my large monitor.

Because I was born with an artistic nature that I've tried to nurture over the years in spite of my visual impairment, I experience and interpret the world as an artist. I've read and studied different art books and artists, took four years of art classes in high school and another two or three in college. My experience as an artist tells me that, without having to see it clearly, an old barn, sunshine through the trees and a hay bale, are things that might have aesthetic appeal to certain viewers.

In this respect, I don't think I'm much different from other photographers. It all comes down to the photographer's individual taste and style, and trying to translate that with a photograph. But a photographer can only convey so much. It takes the viewer's interpretation to complete the artistic experience.

Like most photographers and artists, I would like for my pictures to tell a story, evoke an emotion, entertain or inform. I enjoy it when people tell me that my photos make them feel something. One person viewing a picture of some woods brings fond memories of their father who was a logger, while another person viewing the same picture makes them feel uneasy because it reminds them of a time they felt very alone or afraid.

Like some photographers, I use photography as a vocation as well as an artistic pursuit. For me, photography is as much of a job as social work was. I take it very seriously, and I try hard to use it to earn income. I believe we're given skills and talents to use in everyday life. Earning money from photography is no different than earning money from laying bricks. If people like your work, there is compensation. You just have to keep looking for opportunities. It's like being a door-to-door salesman, knocking on doors to sell your wares.

I've been told by several people that my images are moody or somber. I do like to visit the dark side of art now and then, just as I like to visit the happy side of art. Like people, art is multifaceted, multidimensional and reflects many moods. It's easy to see the appeal of a picture of a bright summer day. But we have to look a little harder to find the appeal in the branches of a dying tree. I tend to go for the simple, unusual, ambiguous or moody, which invites an experience, an interpretation.

My world is simpler and more easily defined in high contrast, or black and white. Since my retinas are affected, this is the way I see best, and I really can't explain it beyond



Travis is Ruggles' grandson.

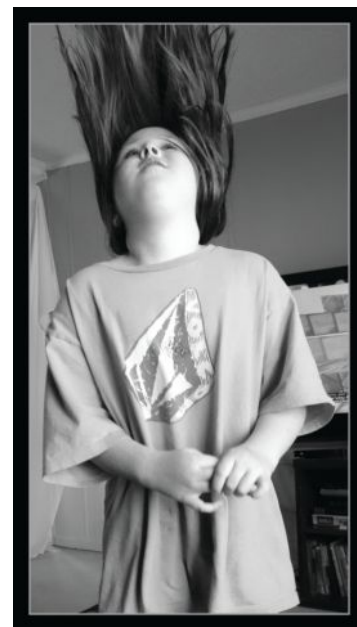
that. Other visually impaired people who say the same thing. To me, the starkness in an image is easier to see.

When it comes to subject matter, I tend toward nature shots. It's not that I don't love taking pictures of people. I do. But the people that I normally take pictures of (family and friends) get tired of being on camera. I live in a rural area where there aren't a lot of people around and transportation is limited, so it's out of necessity, practicality, and convenience that I go take a walk and take shots of non-human subjects. A tree is a tree. It doesn't have to pose. It won't move. It won't get bored. But it will say something.

When taking pictures of people, I tend to go for the candid shots. Those are easier to capture a person's personality. I don't have to guess so much as to whether I'm getting a portrait centered. Or if there are unwanted shadows crossing the face. Or someone blinks at the wrong time. Or what their expressions look like. Or if they are even looking at the camera.

A few of my photographs have been published in literary journals and art magazines, and people tell me that my photography is good. That makes me feel like trying photography again wasn't a mistake. But the best part of it all is that other visually impaired people can realize that they too can find a way to be a photographer.

Ruggles lives in northern Kentucky. Her photos have been published in art magazines and literary journals.



Destiny is Ruggles' granddaughter.

CLEVER, CRAFTY *and* ANYTHING BUT CONVENTIONAL

Clubs get creative in serving their communities. They may not raise a ton of money or dramatically change lives, but these projects touch people's hearts, provoke a smile or help a person get through a tough day.

BY JAY COPP

Contest Rains Supreme

Everyone in Hoquiam, Washington, talks about the weather, but they also do something about it. Less than 15 miles from the Pacific and at the base of the Olympic Peninsula, Hoquiam is one of the nation's rainiest places. The hamlet averages 68.30 inches a rain annually (Hoquiam's 8,400 residents like to be exact when it comes to rain, as you shall soon learn). The average U.S. town gets 37 inches. So residents put on their galoshes, tote their umbrellas and submit their guesses for the Rain Derby of the Hoquiam Lions.

A Lions' project since 1949, the derby awards \$1,000 to the person who comes closest to guessing the average annual rainfall. Last year a contestant hit it on the head with a guess of 59.62. Two others made the same guess. The tie was broken by the one who came closest to guessing the rainfall amount in December. He would have won a bonus of \$4,000 if he had exactly predicted the December figure: no one has ever done that. Guesses must be made by October 31.

Five derby tickets cost \$5. The club usually sells several thousand chances. Unless you have a tee time,

rain is often looked upon kindly in Washington. A lack of rain contributed to massive forest fires last summer, and the state relies on hydroelectric dams. "People get nervous when it does not rain," says Mel Thompson, who, as president, is the Lions' presiding rain man. But too much rain can lead to a personal

downfall. The Lions publish the predictions before the contest ends to build suspense, and one year Thompson was eating out on New Year's Eve. "Hey, I think you're gonna win," someone excitedly told him. Later that night a deluge hit. "That wiped me out and about 1,000 other people," Thompson recalls with a grin.



Photo from Jones Photo Historical Collection

Rain Derby officials check a rain gauge in the early years of the contest when it was run by local charities instead of Hoquiam Lions.



The Lions Clubs Fishin' Hole is good to go again.

Gone Fishin'—Again

The ol' fishin' hole outside tiny Holyoke, Colorado, was a popular spot for fathers and their children. The boys and girls could catch trout, bass and catfish in the lazy 3.5-acre pond while standing safely on a railed bridge. The fishing was enhanced by the serenity of nature: a stand of willows graced the shoreline and deer, ducks and even cranes made appearances. Then slugs of unsightly algae built up, killing oxygen and fish. Who you gonna call? Well, the Holyoke Lions, who painstakingly built the pond in 1991. Using GPS imaging, the Lions aerated the water and remedied the algae buildup without resorting to problematic chemicals.

Cleaning up the Lions Club Fishin' Hole, as it's called, was far easier than building it. The Lions had stretched a liner over a massive sand pit, filled the hollow 1/2 inch a day through a pump that reached down into the water table and placed 1,700 tons of rock to prevent erosion. The effort has been worth it. "We love to see kids having a good time," says Lion Larry Stein. "I think that's part of being a Lion—enjoying what you accomplish."

Winter Fun, Whether It Lingers or Not

Punxsutawney Phil, meet Fenwick Flossie—far bigger, much funnier and more accurate, it turns out. Each Groundhog Day for more than 20 years Fenwick Lions in Ontario trot out the six-foot-tall Fenwick Flossie, who emerges from a manmade snow lair that backs up to the Lions clubhouse. "I put my hand out first. That really gets the kids going. When they get really loud, I come out," says



Fenwick Flossie mingles with children after completing his weather prediction duty.

Lion Bill Farion, 77, a retired police officer who has worn the furry costume for two decades. Farion plays it straight. If he sees his shadow, he crawls back into his burrow, signifying six more weeks of winter. Of course, he is tipped off beforehand to make sure

he knows what to do. "A Lion usually tells me if the sun is out," he says. Farion typically enters the lair before the busloads of younger schoolchildren arrive at Centennial Park. But if he is running late he can enter from the clubhouse. "They can't see me get in," he explains.

The groundhog costume is stifling hot; even in the cold Canadian winter Farion sweats heavily while wearing a light jacket. But it's worth it. The children laugh and drink hot chocolate. The Lions raise no funds but get the satisfaction of entertaining hundreds of children, and increasingly, crowds of adults. Farion gains something, too. "If I get it wrong [his prediction], I hear about it," he says. "But I'm better at prediction than Punxsutawney Phil. I know—we keep track."

A Bridge to a Beloved Past

There isn't a movie called "The Bridges of Brown County." But perhaps there should be. Dozens of old covered bridges, many no longer open to cars, grace rural Brown County in Ohio. Among them is picturesque McCafferty Bridge, built in 1887 and stretching 167 feet across the Little Miami River. People drive to the McCafferty Bridge and many others to take wedding and family photos there or simply to admire them. And some are willing to fork over \$60 for a painting of one and perhaps give it to a loved one for Christmas. The Georgetown Lions Club can vouch for that. In 2001 the club commissioned James "Skip" Werline, a renowned local watercolorist, to paint six of the county's bridges including the late, great Eagle Creek Bridge, washed away in a 1997 flood. The club sold each original for \$1,500, made 300 prints of each and also sold matching acrylic ornaments. The profit margin was good and the demand was even better. "There's not a whole lot left," says President Lena Bradford. "We made some pretty good money." And made or at least preserved some pretty good memories.

Ramping Up Service

East Hampton in New York may conjure images of affluence and celebrities, and it's true that Lions on the eastern tip of Long Island serve in one of the wealthiest zip codes in America. But not everyone is well-off. "Not by any



Built in 1880, the Brown Covered Bridge was one of six bridges painted for the Georgetown Lions Club.

stretch of the imagination—there are working-class people here," says President Bob Schaeffer. So when people in need face mobility issues because of age or accident, Lions step up. East Hampton Lions have built deconstructable aluminum ramps at 32 homes since 2006. Its 14 ramps currently are in use. It takes a few hours for a crew of three Lions to put up or take down the ramp. "We can pretty much tell [if people need Lions' help]. It's a small community," says Schaeffer. The club recently learned it is receiving a \$5,000 federal grant to purchase three more ramps.

Lions built a ramp for Amanda Lee, who suffers from Guillain-Barre syndrome. Installing the ramp were (right) Lion Karl Avallone and Justin Lawrence, son of Lion Thom Lawrence. Avallone and Lawrence originated the program in 2006.



Preserving the Precious Past

History is in the air and on the ground for Lions in Thurmont, located in Maryland 20 miles from Gettysburg and 10 miles from Camp David. “I can hear the three [presidential] helicopters fly over my house [on the way to Camp David],” says Lion Joann Miller. Just outside her kitchen window is a remnant of local history: the well-worn groove of the former tracks of the Thurmont Trolley, which from 1886 until 1954 whisked residents to other cities. It once was the key to mobility, transporting nearly 3.8 million riders in Frederick County in 1920 alone. So when a few years ago Lions asked the mayor of their quaint town of 7,000 what they could do to improve it, he nodded at the decrepit old power station for the trolley near the town’s main square. Lions commissioned a local artist, Yemi, a renowned illustrator born in Nigeria, to paint murals for the box-like substation.

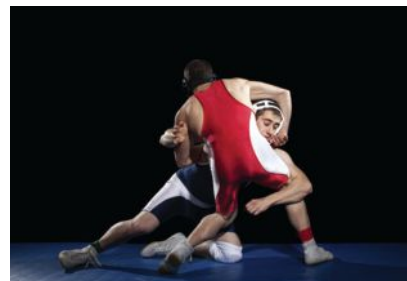
Miller, whose grandfather was a trolley conductor, chaired the two-year endeavor. The end result celebrated Thurmont’s history: the five murals, each about 5 1/2 feet by 9 1/2 feet, show Main Street, Cunningham Falls, the old iron works, covered bridges and more. Three small helicopters poke out of one mural. Lions raised the \$35,000 needed from a \$15,000 state grant, \$5,000 from the Ma-

sonic lodge, \$5,000 from Lion Nancy Dutterer, a donation jar and fundraisers. The club also sold Christmas ornaments based on the murals and a picture book of the project. “It’s like a jewel box of history,” says Miller of the murals. “It exceeded our expectations.”

Going to the Mat

Lemoore Lions in California are crime stoppers. They do it preventively—through the sport of wrestling. Kings County received a \$50,000 grant as part of the state’s Community Recidivism Reduction Grant. Five local groups received \$10,000

including the Lemoore Lions Club, which is using the funds to purchase a 40-foot by 40-foot wrestling mat for the Police Activities League (PAL). Lemoore is a small city of 25,000 located in a rural farming county. “Juvenile crime is a problem here like everywhere,” says Steve Rossi, the club secretary who is a commander in the Lemoore Police Department. “If we can get the at-risk kids interested in



Lions Nancy Dutterer (left) and Joann Miller co-chaired the Mural Committee in Thurmont. Photo by Lion Albie Little



sports, with its sense of teamwork, leadership and accomplishment, the hope and goal is that they'll stay with the program and stay out of trouble." The vice president of PAL is Sergeant Jim Chaney, also a Lemoore Lion.

Blind Get a Feel for Art

Nearly 20 years ago artist Linda DiFranco of Florida was frustrated that fellow Lion Danny Koster, who was blind, could not appreciate her drawings of zebras. So she began working in clay. Thus was born her club's MindSight art project in which painters, sculptors, quilters and basket weavers present their tactile art to the blind. "It bothered me I couldn't share my art. It became an obsession," says DiFranco of the Gainesville Noon Lions. "Every person has that creative gene. The problem is that in museums you can't touch anything." Actually, with MindSight and museums now, touching is what it's all about.

The home of the project, renamed Access Art, now is the Harn Museum of Art at the University of Florida; blind people take tours as volunteers describe paintings and participants hold tactile versions of the paintings created by volunteer artists. The project has become a collaboration of many groups besides Lions including students, artists

and the National Federation of the Blind. The project has come full circle in that the visually impaired who experience the art have been inspired to create their own. Lenora McGowan, blind since birth, recently displayed eight of her paintings, which drew admirers. "I think about love every time I meet somebody," McGowan told the Ocala Star-Banner. "And I think with my art I can show love."

Dignity Amid Death

Wedding gowns are transformed into "angel gowns" by the Garvois Arm Lions Club in Missouri. Inspired by the efforts of Texas-based NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Units) Helping Hands, the club secured 37 donated wedding gowns and transformed them into 327 lovely gowns to be given to parents whose babies were stillborn, premature or died after being in intensive care. "A lot of times the baby is handed back to the parents wrapped in a towel. A gown gives some dignity to it," says Lion Melana Malecky, the club's seamstress. (Lion Doris Naes deconstructs the dresses.)

Malecky, who once sewed baby toys and sold them online, knows the heartache of infant loss. Her sister lost a day-old baby, and two sons and their wives also grieved from an infant loss and a miscarriage. "A wedding gown is a woman's most prized possession," says Malecky. "A mother realizes the love behind it when it's given away." So far, the club has given 20 of the gowns to hospitals in the Kansas City area. "Some [parents] will save it. Some will lay their baby to rest in it. We don't know. We don't want to know," says Malecky. "We'll never meet the parents who get the gowns. Our satisfaction is knowing what it meant for them."



A University of Florida student (sitting) and a museum volunteer help Maxine Stallings, who is visually impaired, appreciate a textured painting of a palm tree.
Photo courtesy of the Gainesville Sun



The angel gowns are made from wedding gowns.

Many clubs do unusual projects.

- "Toying with the Police" in Canada is among the 10 Outside-the-Box Successes (April 2013 LION).
- "Unusual Fundraisers are Uncommonly Successful": clubs leverage mini-golf and Monopoly (June 2008 LION).



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HALF HELEN, WHOLE HEART

With help from clubs in Hawaii and Texas, Lion Chelsea Elliott, 25, has screened 10,000 children for eye disorders in just two years through her nonprofit Half-Helen.

BY STACIA HERNSTROM

A 7-year-old named Hector stands on the purple stripe of the rainbow rug in his second-grade classroom in Austin, Texas. He grins, two teeth missing, as 25-year-old Chelsea Elliott tells him she's about to take his picture. She clicks a button, and he looks into the camera's laser-like swirl of red, green and blue lights. "Cool!" he says. "It's like a video game!" In two seconds, it's done, and Hector is back to circle time.

Chelsea Elliott is determined to save children from the disabilities she has.



But in those two seconds, Elliott has captured a detailed picture of Hector's eyes and screened him for six common eye disorders. The data is the result of a Spot Vision Screener, which looks like a hybrid of an iPad and a Polaroid camera. In Hector's case, the camera identifies astigmatism and nearsightedness. Over the next two weeks, a mobile vision clinic will come to his elementary school, where a pediatric optometrist will give him a complete eye exam and fit him for his first pair of glasses. All for free.

If she'd had access to the same kind of technology and screenings when she was a child, Elliott likely wouldn't be blind in one eye and deaf in one ear herself.

That realization drove Elliott to start the Half-Helen Foundation when she graduated from college in 2012. Named for what she began calling herself after studying Helen Keller in fourth grade—"Helen Keller was completely blind and deaf," she told her family, "and I'm half that. I'm Half Helen!"—the organization has provided high-tech vision screenings and follow-up eye care for more than 15,000 students in just two years.

A Crusader is Born

"Chelsea really believes in what Helen Keller said about joining 'the crusade against darkness' at the Lions Club international convention 90 years ago," says her mother, Lion Teresa Elliott. "She lives at home with us and makes almost nothing—she's willing to give up her independence to do the work she cares about."

"I don't remember what it's like to see with both of my eyes and hear with both of my ears," says Elliott, a

Slowly, they coped and adapted. Elliott figured out where to sit at school so she could hear the teacher and see the chalkboard. She learned to play volleyball and basketball with just a 90-degree field of vision. And she met other children with disabilities through the Texas Lions Camp, which she started going to each summer when she was 7.

The camp was a "utopia" for Elliott, remembers Teresa. "Even though every child had something 'wrong' with them, it didn't matter. Camp week was an escape from the reality they faced every other week in the year." When she was 16, Elliott became a camp counselor. (She now serves on its board.) And when she graduated from high school, she became a Lion herself, joining the West Austin club.

"The Lions club has been part of Chelsea's life since she was born," says Teresa. "When Chelsea's blindness was diagnosed, we realized we had made connections and relationships that became such a strong support system at a time when we really needed it."

Two decades after Elliott's diagnosis, Lion Doris Treadwell (whose late husband Morris had discovered Elliott's unilateral blindness) told her about the Spot camera at a West Austin club meeting. Elliott researched it online, called the company to learn more about it and made a presentation to the Austin West club, whose members voted to purchase the \$8,000 camera for Half-Helen. Then with additional donations she also purchased two audiometers to conduct traditional hearing screenings when needed at schools.

"That purpose I had been waiting for her to find for 20 years," remembers Teresa, "was finally happening!"

'Helen Keller was completely blind and deaf, and I'm half that. I'm Half Helen!'

finalist for the 2015 CNN Heroes program. "But other kids don't have to go through what my family and I did. We have the technology now to identify potentially serious problems like mine." With a network of supporters and volunteers at Lions clubs in Texas and Hawaii, that's exactly what Elliott is doing.

The support started long before she founded Half-Helen. After Elliott failed a preschool vision screening, Teresa sought the advice of an optometrist she knew through the Austin West Austin Lions Club, which she and her husband had joined after they moved to Texas in the 1980s. He discovered the blindness in Elliott's left eye, ruled out cancer and guided the family through consultations with six doctors until they got a diagnosis: Coats' Disease, which causes the blood vessels in the back of the eye to leak until the retina eventually detaches. A year later, they learned Elliott was also deaf in one ear.

"We could have shut down. It was devastating, on top of everything else we'd been dealing with," says Teresa. "But I remember holding her and thinking that, somehow, something good had to come from this."

Spot On

With the technology all lined up, Elliott hit a roadblock. Texas had not yet approved the Spot camera for use in public schools. While she screened children in local charter schools and waited for a state policy change, she began researching other communities across the country with children in need of screenings. She landed in Hawaii.

Hawaii had discontinued mandatory school vision and hearing tests in 1995 because of budget shortages. The state also ranked below the national average on most Department of Education assessment metrics, statistics that can sometimes reflect students' inability to see or hear test instructions and questions. Elliott began emailing Lions clubs and schools on the state's eight main islands about the possibility of conducting Half-Helen screenings there.

She made contact with the six clubs in Maui and flew out to make a pitch for a program called Maui 528, named for the number of hours it would take to screen each of the island's 21,119 students. She and Jackie Yamamoto, president of the Maui club, presented the idea to Mayor Alan Arakawa and screened children in his office so he could see

the Spot camera at work. With his endorsement, Elliott, Yamamoto and the other Maui club presidents launched Maui 528 in June 2013.

Later that year, Elliott began commuting between Hawaii and Texas. In the two years since, she and the Maui Lions clubs have screened children at 25 local schools.

“Maui needed Chelsea’s help,” says Yamamoto, who is also a Half-Helen board member. “I was there to see one of the first children we screened get her glasses, and I continue to feel Chelsea’s enthusiasm. Her story has inspired us as Lions to do even more for the children in our community.”

And Elliott’s sights are “absolutely” set on expansion. Besides Hawaii, seven states still do not require vision screenings (and no state completes them with Spot camera technology). Just as she did in Maui, Elliott is likely to find a built-in support system and network of volunteers at any of the 46,000 Lions clubs across the globe.

Living with blindness and deafness, even partial, has given her something people with intact senses often lack—perspective, ironically. “Vision screenings aren’t sexy or edgy,” says Elliott. “People think, ‘Oh, you can’t see? Well, get a pair of glasses.’ But it’s much more than that. We can prevent so many things, and what we can’t prevent, we can catch early and treat. It’s high-impact and low-cost.”

“Everything she’s been through has motivated her and given her the strength to get on a plane, go to a strange place and talk to people she doesn’t know day in and day out,” says Teresa. “My strong, creative girl who was always the center of attention when she was four has finally fought her way back.”

Stacia Hernstrom writes, blogs and trampolines in Austin, Texas. She’s pretty sure queso is the cure for writer’s block.



Elliott tests a child’s hearing.



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Convention Registration and Hotel Reservation Form

Deadlines

- **May 1, 2016:** Deadline for advance registration and hotel reservation. Registrations after this date will be processed in Fukuoka
- **May 1, 2016:** Deadline to submit a refund request for registration, housing and/or ticketed event cancellation.

REGISTRANT INFORMATION *Please type or print name as it appears on passport/photo ID.*

First Name _____ Family (Last) Name _____ Badge/Call Name _____
 Address _____ City _____ State/Province _____
 Postal Code _____ Country _____
 Daytime Phone _____ E-mail _____

☐ Lion ☐ Lioness ☐ Omega Leo **Club No.** _____ **Membership No.** _____ District _____ Title _____

COMPANION: First Name _____ Family (Last) Name _____ Badge/Call Name _____
☐ Lion ☐ Lioness ☐ Omega Leo ☐ Guest **Club No.** _____ **Membership No.** _____ District _____ Title _____

CHILD: First Name _____ Family (Last) Name _____ Age _____ ☐ Alpha Leo
 CHILD: First Name _____ Family (Last) Name _____ Age _____ ☐ Alpha Leo

☐ This is my/our first LCI convention. ☐ Not my first convention, I've attended _____
☐ Letter of Invitation (If a visa is required for your country of origin) [Club number must be provided above to verify membership]
 The plenary sessions are presented in English with simultaneous translation. Will you require a headset? ☐ No ☐ Yes

PACKAGE A: *Includes convention registration for each registrant listed above plus one (1) hotel room serviced by shuttle buses during convention.*

☐ Before January 8, 2016: Reservation in delegation hotel
☐ After January 8, 2016: ☐ I prefer my delegation hotel ☐ if my delegation hotel is not available, next choice/preference _____
☐ Prefer hotel based on: ☐ room rate of _____ ☐ location near convention center

Arrival date _____ Departure date _____ Number of Guests in Room: _____ Number of Beds Needed ☐ 1 ☐ 2

Special Requirements: ☐ Non-smoking ☐ Wheelchair Accessible ☐ Other _____

** The Hotel deposit is US\$225 for a standard room and US\$350 for a suite. The hotel deposit is not the rate but reserves the room. One hotel deposit per room, not per person. Your deposit will be credited to your hotel bill at checkout.*

PACKAGE B: ☐ **NO ROOM REQUIRED** (Registration only for each person listed above.)

OPTIONAL TICKETED EVENTS *I/we plan to attend the following event(s): (Must be registered to attend)*

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE/TIME</u>	<u>FEE</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>AMOUNT DUE</u>
Melvin Jones Fellow Luncheon	June 27/ 13:30-15:00	US \$70	_____	\$ _____
District Governor/Past District Governor Banquet	June 27/ 20:00-22:00	US \$125	_____	\$ _____

LCI 2016 Convention Smart USB

FREE ☐

The LCI 2016 Convention Smart USB replaces the brochures, handouts, DVDs and more that you would normally carry back home. Enjoy this environmentally smart solution to easily organize and share information.

PAYMENT: Full payment is required with this form. • US currency only. Checks and money orders must be drawn on US banks.

- Only Visa, MasterCard & Discover cards accepted. • Contact LCI for wire transfer instructions.

REGISTRATION FEES

	<u>Adult</u>	<u>Child (17 and under)</u>	<u>Alpha Leo</u>	<u>Omega Leo</u>
Early (before January 8, 2016)	US\$130	US\$10	US\$10	US\$60
Regular (January 9 through March 31, 2016)	US\$180	US\$10	US\$10	US\$60
Late (April 1, 2016 – onsite)	US\$200	US\$10	US\$10	US\$60

Package A:

Registrations: US\$ _____
 Ticketed Events: US\$ _____
 Hotel Deposit: US\$ 225.00
Total Due: US\$ _____

OR

Package B:

Registrations: US\$ _____
 Ticketed Events: US\$ _____
Total Due: US\$ _____

☐ Check ☐ Bank transfer/deposit (copy must be attached to this form) ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover
 Your name as it appears on the card _____ Credit card **must** be in the name of the registrant.
 Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____ Security code (3 digits) _____
 Signature _____

Mail form and payment to: Lions Clubs International Attn: Convention Division • 300 West 22nd Street • Oak Brook, IL 60523-8842 USA • Allow 4 weeks for processing and mail delivery of your confirmation. **Credit Card and Bank Transfer Payments can be faxed to: (1-630) 571-1689 (If you fax, please do not mail original)**

• **Questions? Email us:** registration@lionsclubs.org . **Please note:** Lions Clubs International will be documenting the international convention for promotional purposes. Your participation may be filmed or photographed at this event. Your registration is your consent for use of these images by Lions Clubs International.

LIONS AND ANTHEM TEAM UP ON SERVICE

Maintaining their homes and yards is not easy for those who are blind or have visual impairments. So on a Saturday in October Plant City Lions Club members in Florida teamed up with volunteers from Anthem, Inc. to paint homes and do yard work.

Nearly 300 volunteers from Anthem and other organizations came from all over Tampa Bay to brave a few splatters of paint and lend a helping hand. By the end of the day they had pressure washed and painted 11 homes, trimmed hedges, landscaped yards and planned further work.

The event was part of Volunteer Days—a nationwide service event partnering Lions clubs and Leos in U.S. cities with volunteers from Anthem on projects that promoted health and wellness in the communities where the volunteers live and work.

“It was wonderful working with the Anthem volunteers. As soon as they hit the ground they were grabbing paintbrushes,” says Karen Crumley of the Plant City Lions Club. “They were so ready to help and they were very nice company. Some even stayed around after to help clean up.”

Headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana, Anthem is one of the nation’s largest health benefits companies. With more than 50,000 associates serving more than 38 million members, Anthem has a history of commitment to service and corporate social responsibility.

“We worked side by side with Anthem volunteers to make a real impact in our Volunteer Days communities,” says Lions Clubs International President Dr. Jitsuihiro Yamada of Japan. “This event is a great example of what can be achieved when partners work together to strengthen their local communities.”

Leading up to the October service, Lions clubs worked with local Anthem offices to identify needs specific to their communities and develop appropriate service projects. As part of the partnership, Anthem Foundation donated \$250,000 to Lions Clubs International Foundation to support its humanitarian work.

“As one of the nation’s leading health benefits companies, Anthem and its associates are committed to supporting initiatives that improve the health of our communities,” says Katie Heenan, manager of the Anthem Foundation & Social Responsibility and Volunteer Programs. “We’re proud to have joined forces with Lions Clubs International Foundation and enjoyed volunteering alongside the hard-working Lions to help the communities we all call home.”

The event was deemed a great success. Lions and Anthem volunteers in more than 15 cities tackled projects ranging from park cleanups to diabetes screenings and tree plantings. More than 2,300 Anthem volunteers and their family members registered to participate in Volunteer Days projects with more than 30 separate Lions clubs in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, New York and Virginia.

Anthem volunteers and their families worked with Lions in Norfolk, Virginia, to collect and catalog trash and debris littering beaches. Lions will work with other local groups to measure pollution levels and create strategies to prevent similar pollution.



Other clubs that participated in Volunteer Days: Bon Air-Manchester-Midlothian, Virginia; Brooklyn Downtown, New York; Centerville, Ohio; Cincinnati Host, Ohio; Columbus, Georgia; Corona, New York; Decatur North Decatur, Georgia; Denver Five Points, Colorado; District 26 M2 Lions clubs, Missouri; Englewood, Colorado; Golden, Colorado; Greater West Valley, California; Holland Patent, New York; Indianapolis Washington Township, Indiana; Los Angeles Synergy, California; Louisville East, Kentucky; Lutz Land O Lakes-LLLL, Florida; Maplewood, Missouri; Meriden, Connecticut; New York West Side, New York; Newport News Host, Virginia; Norfolk Little Creek, Virginia; Norfolk Ocean View, Virginia; Norwalk, California; Pike Township, Indiana; Plant City, Florida; Richmond Hill-South Ozone Park, New York; Southport, Indiana; Speedway, Indiana; Tappahannock, Virginia; Virginia Beach Princess Anne, Virginia; Virginia Beach Thalia, Virginia; and Virginia Beach Town Center-Blind, Virginia.



Lions in Illinois Reduce Risk of Diabetes

BY CASSANDRA ROTOLO

When District 1 J was considering new ways to give back to their suburban Chicago community, Lion Jeri DiPasquale had an idea. At age 13, her son had been diagnosed with juvenile diabetes, so her family knew all too well the needs of the diabetic community.

“As a parent, you always try to keep your child safe,” says DiPasquale. “You tell him not to run into the street and not to touch the hot stove. But a diagnosis of diabetes changes everything. You suddenly hold your child’s life in your hands. If you don’t give him his shot, he’s going to die.”



Lion Jim Worden discusses patient education with Julie Sanfilippo (center), a health coach with the Diabetes Prevention Program, and nurse Linda Voght, a certified diabetes educator at Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare in Illinois.

DiPasquale suggested to her club that they support diabetes prevention. The Lions of District 1 J teamed up with Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare (EMH) to develop a diabetes prevention and lifestyle intervention program by securing a \$95,275 Core 4 Diabetes grant from Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF). The project prevents diabetes by providing education and resources to low-income adults at risk of developing the disease.

“We never would have gotten through this without the education and support we got from Elmhurst Memorial

Healthcare,” says DiPasquale. “Thank you, LCIF, for making sure other families have access to this vital resource.”

Diabetes is a growing epidemic in both the United States and worldwide. Some 29 million American adults have diabetes. That includes an estimated 7 million who do not know that they have the disease, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Another 86 million Americans (more than 33 percent of adults) have prediabetes, which puts them at the highest risk of developing diabetes within the next five years. It is predicted that one in three Americans will have the disease by 2050 if current trends continue.

Now, with the help of local Lions, the new Diabetes Prevention and Lifestyle Intervention Program at EMH identifies underserved, financially strained and high-risk individuals who may have prediabetes. Those who screen positive for prediabetes are offered a free consultation with a diabetes educator at the hospital-based Learning Center. They can choose to enroll in a lifestyle-change program, based on the CDC curriculum designed to prevent or delay progression of Type 2 diabetes.

The program aims to educate participants with the ultimate goal of reducing the prevalence of diabetes. This is an expansive community outreach program that helps individuals identify their risks and develop a plan to minimize them.

Local Lions are integral to the success of the program. There are 64 Lions clubs in District 1 J and more than 2,300 members. The Lions function as community ambassadors by advocating for diabetes prevention. They facilitate informational meetings, help collect health data such as weight and BMI (Body Mass Index) measurements from participants, and host fundraising events.

With the help of Lions and LCIF, the target is for at least 65 percent of participants to lose weight, maintain that weight loss and experience a stabilization of the blood glucose level after completing the program. The Lions of District 1 J are working diligently to improve the health of their community and prove that an ounce of prevention is, indeed, worth a pound of cure.

For information on how your district can apply for a Core 4 Diabetes grant, visit lcif.org.

DIABETES IN THE UNITED STATES



DIABETES

29.1
MILLION

29.1 million people have diabetes



That's about 1 out of every 11 people



1 OUT OF **4**

do not know they have diabetes

PREDIABETES

86
MILLION



86 million people — more than 1 out of 3 adults — have prediabetes



9 OUT OF **10** do not know they have prediabetes



Without weight loss and moderate physical activity

15–30% of people with prediabetes will develop type 2 diabetes within 5 years



COST



\$245
BILLION

Total medical costs and lost work and wages for people with diagnosed diabetes

Risk of death for adults with diabetes is



50%
HIGHER



than for adults without diabetes

Medical costs for people with diabetes are **twice as high**

\$



\$

as for people without diabetes

People who have diabetes are at higher risk of serious health complications:



BLINDNESS



KIDNEY FAILURE



HEART DISEASE



STROKE



LOSS OF TOES, FEET, OR LEGS

Serve to Conserve

When Lions plant a sapling, they know they're adding to the millions of oxygen-giving trees around the world that have taken root thanks to Lions. The connection Lions share worldwide is never more apparent than when they engage in environmental projects. Be part of the collective positive impact Lions are making on the planet during the Protecting Our Environment Centennial Service Challenge campaign in April.



Plan for Success

Pulling off a great green project calls for a few key steps, outlined in LCI's Protecting Our Environment Planning Guide (find it in the Member Center at lionsclubs.org).

1. Create a Planning Committee

When the Minneapolis Next Generation Lions teamed up with the Minneapolis Ambassador Lions in search of a community garden project, they created a team of three to lead the way and set realistic goals. "We wanted to be able to follow through. We thought the clubs could take turns with maintenance and not put too much pressure on either club," says Next Generation Lion Ruth Warden.



Minneapolis Next Generation and Minneapolis Ambassador Lions beautify Joan's Garden.

2. Pick Your Project

As the Minnesota Lions' first environmental project, they wanted to take ownership and make a visible impact in a convenient location. After reviewing options with the Parks and Recreation department, the Lions found their perfect fit: the lovely Joan's Memorial Garden at the foot of the historic Stone Arch Bridge, near a popular park path.

3. Publicize Your Project

The Lions share their accomplishments on their Facebook page, but the project itself creates its own publicity. "Thousands of people walk and bike by every year. People stop and ask what we're doing and what organization we are," says Warden.

4. Implement Your Project

The Lions were welcomed by a family who maintains the garden, and they all lend a hand regularly. The clubs also added a social component, points out Warden. "Scheduling the cleanups after work followed by a happy hour brings out the greatest attendance."

5. Report Your Activity

The Lions sought this project to contribute to the Centennial Service Challenge. Their MyLCI reporting adds to LCI's goal of serving 25 million people through environmental projects.

6. Celebrate Your Success

Every outing to Joan's Garden is a celebration for the Lions. "We appreciate the opportunity to care for the garden and the conversations with people who pass by. We're lucky to have such a great project to work on for the environment," says Next Generation Lion Rob Rand.



Centennial Service Eco-Challenge

One-quarter of the Centennial Service Challenge

goal of serving 100 million people is dedicated to environmental protection projects. Take part in the urgent need to help improve the environment. Share your club's project through MyLCI to be included in the centennial goal.

Just a Click Away: LCI Resources

Before planning a recycling project, community cleanup or environmental education campaign, visit LCI's website for extensive resources, planning guides, project ideas and promotional materials.

Calling All Nature Shutterbugs

Do you love the outdoors and have a knack for capturing it on film? Share the beauty and wonder of the natural world through the LCI Environmental Photo Contest. Lions can enter an original photo for the 2015-16 contest by March 1. Find the entry form and see the current winners at lionsclubs.org.



LCI Seeks Legal Protection

BY GANNON CARR, LEGAL DIVISION, LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL

Civic participation is the essence of social equality, and contributing to the national policy discussion has become a fundamental role of nonprofit organizations. Throughout its nearly 100-year history, Lions clubs have provided a strong, collective voice to engage legislators at the local, state and national level. Through advocacy, Lions can inform their elected officials of specific social concerns and help policymakers find solutions to persistent problems.

Lions clubs are involved in a variety of activities that benefit the community interest but, of course, there are certain legal implications associated with volunteer involvement. Although Lions clubs strive to help those in need, volunteers are exposed to the risk of inadvertently injuring someone in the performance of their services. The most significant risk involves bodily injury—people being physically hurt. These claims are particularly troublesome because they involve demands for large sums of money, and subsequent recoveries can be financially devastating for those against whom they are filed.

In 1997, U.S. President Bill Clinton signed the Volunteer Protection Act into law which, generally speaking, provides immunity from tort claims that might be filed against the volunteers of nonprofit organizations. However, the Act does not provide immunity to the organization itself. As you might imagine, legal claims against volunteer organizations have since increased in the United States—forcing many to dissolve or file bankruptcy as a result. This phenomenon can endanger the existence of Lions clubs even as public demand for their services grows.

Recognizing the need to protect Lions clubs and volunteer organizations in the U.S., Lions Clubs International (LCI) engaged Congressman Steve Chabot of Ohio and Senator Mark Kirk of Illinois to develop a bill that would correct this issue and amend the 1997 Act. LCI is pleased to announce that the Volunteer Organization Act of 2015 (“VOPA”) was subsequently introduced into Congress last year. The bill amends the ‘97 Act by expanding protection to volunteer and nonprofit organizations against liability resulting from the acts of individual volunteers.

The bill is supported by a coalition of nonprofit service organizations including but not limited to: Rotary International, Kiwanis International, YMCA and Special Olympics. These organizations represent a cumulative total of 2.6 million American volunteers. The successful passage of this legislation and the fiscal health of Lions clubs and local nonprofit organizations depend on the strength of Lions across the U.S.

LCI is proud to have taken the lead on this important measure, but needs U.S. Lions to lead this grassroots campaign. Please visit LCI’s online advocacy page for additional resources concerning VOPA. Lions are encouraged to use the resources available online to call, write or visit your local legislator and request they co-sponsor VOPA.

Comments or questions concerning VOPA including updates or feedback regarding your local club or districts’ grassroots campaign efforts can be directed to: governmentrelations@lionsclubs.org.



Delegate Form Instructions for the International Convention

Are you serving as the Delegate for your club?

If yes, complete the Delegate/ Alternate Delegate form and return the top portion to Lions Clubs International Headquarters, to the attention of the Member Service Center before **May 1, 2016**. Bring the bottom portion of the form to the convention and present it when you arrive to certify at the Certification area in the convention center.

Before sending the form, be sure a club officer (Club President, Secretary or Treasurer) has signed the form and printed their name on both halves as indicated on form.

Mail form to:

Lions Clubs International
ATTN: Member Service Center
300 W. 22nd Street
Oak Brook, IL USA 60523-8842

Signed, scanned forms can be sent to:

Email: memberservicecenter@lionsclubs.org
Fax: 630-571-1687

To certify for the election, you will also need to bring a government-issued photo ID with your signature.

Are you serving as the Alternate for your club?

If yes, **do not mail your form**. Bring the entire form to convention. You will only need to come to the Certification area in the event you are replacing a delegate. If you are replacing a certified delegate, you will need your signed International Convention Delegate/ Alternate Delegate Form (alternate and officer signatures are required on the form) along with the delegate's gray copy of their Credential Card. If you do not have both of these items or are replacing a delegate who was not certified, you need to bring an authorized

signer with you to the Certification area. A government-issued photo ID and convention name badge will be required for the alternate and officer.

If you have questions regarding this process, contact the Member Service Center.

Email: memberservicecenter@lionsclubs.org
Phone: 1+630-203-3830 • Fax: 1+630-571-1687

International Convention Allowable Club Delegate Table

Membership	Delegates Allowed	Membership	Delegates Allowed	Membership	Delegates Allowed
1-37.....	1	263-287.....	11	513-537.....	21
38-62.....	2	288-312.....	12	538-562.....	22
63-87.....	3	313-337.....	13	563-587.....	23
88-112.....	4	338-362.....	14	588-612.....	24
113-137.....	5	363-387.....	15	613-637.....	25
138-162.....	6	388-412.....	16	638-662.....	26
163-187.....	7	413-437.....	17	663-687.....	27
188-212.....	8	438-462.....	18	688-712.....	28
213-237.....	9	463-487.....	19	713-737.....	29
238-262.....	10	488-512.....	20	738-762.....	30

Delegate count is based on the club's membership as shown by the records of the international office on the first day of the month last preceding the month in which the convention is held as provided in Article VI, Section 2 of the International constitution and Chapter XVII – Membership, Paragraph B.3., of the board Policy Manual.



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International Convention Delegate/ Alternate Delegate Form (Mail to LCI before May 1, 2016)
Lions Clubs International Convention - 2016 Fukuoka, Japan
(Print clearly for quick processing)

Club Identification Number: _____ District: _____

Club Name: _____

City: _____ State _____ Country _____

Select one: ☐ DELEGATE OR ☐ ALTERNATE DELEGATE Member Number: _____



Print Delegate/ Alternate Delegate Name

Signature of Delegate/ Alternate Delegate

The undersigned hereby authorizes that the above named person is an active member and a duly selected Delegate/Alternate Delegate of said Lions Club to the stated Convention of The International Association of Lions Clubs.



Print Officer Name

Signature of Club Officer

Before May 1, 2016, mail this portion to Lions Clubs International • Member Service Center • 300 W 22nd Street • Oak Brook, IL 60523-8842 USA • Email: memberservicecenter@lionsclubs.org • Phone: 1+630-203-3830 • Fax: 1+630-571-1687
After May 1, bring form to the convention

EN

DELEGATE / ALTERNATE DELEGATE COPY



International Convention Delegate/ Alternate Delegate Form
(Bring this copy to the Convention)
Lions Clubs International Convention - 2016 Fukuoka, Japan
(Print clearly for quick processing)

Club Identification Number: _____ District: _____

Club Name: _____

City: _____ State _____ Country _____

Select one: ☐ DELEGATE OR ☐ ALTERNATE DELEGATE Member Number: _____



Print Delegate/ Alternate Delegate Name

Signature of Delegate/ Alternate Delegate

The undersigned hereby authorizes that the above named person is an active member and a duly selected Delegate/Alternate Delegate of said Lions Club to the stated Convention of The International Association of Lions Clubs.



Print Officer Name

Signature of Club Officer

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Anniversaries

FEBURARY 2016

95 Years: Bridgeport Host, Conn.; Coffeyville, Kan.; Indianapolis Downtown, Ind.; Terrell, Texas

90 Years: Brantford, ON, CAN; Medicine Lodge, Kan.; Salem, Ind.; Summit, N.J.; Woonsocket, R.I.

85 Years: Bellwood Antis, Pa.; Bowling Green Noon, Ky.; Georgetown, ON, CAN; Marshfield, Wis.; Middletown, Md.; Newmarket, ON, CAN; Onarga, Ill.; Strawberry Point, Iowa

80 Years: Crystal Springs, Miss.; Douglas, Ga.; Fredonia, Kan.; Magee, Miss.; Moultrie, Ga.; Prattville, Ala.; Preston, Idaho; Salem, Ill.

75 Years: Benton, Tenn.; Clarke County, Va.; Clarksville, Va.; Daly City Host, Calif.; Hallettsville, Texas; Hinesville, Ga.; Kearney, Neb.; Koolaupoko, Hawaii; Lawton Noon, Okla.; Marysville, Mich.; Mercersburg, Pa.; Middlesboro, Ky.; Mount Gilead, Ohio; New Albany, Ind.; Oildale, Calif.; Salisbury, Pa.; Spencer, Wis.; Warsaw, Mo.; Weston, ON, CAN; Woodstock, Va.; Wytheville, Va.

50 Years: Alfred, N.Y.; Avonlea District, SK, CAN; Gastonia Noon, N.C.; Gaylord, Mich.; Glyndon, Minn.; Haltom City, Texas; Hartland, NB, CAN; Houston Memorial, Texas; Kinston Ram Neuse, N.C.; Loudendale, W.V.; Mount Seymour, BC, CAN; Pleasant, Ohio; Sunnyside, NL, CAN; Terra Rubra, Md.; Walnut Creek Rossmoor, Calif.

25 Years: Brooklyn Clarendon Meadows, N.Y.; Bunker Hill, Ill.; Columbia 20/20, Mo.; Denver East, Colo.; Dexter, Iowa; Duck Hill, Miss.; Spring Branch-Bulverde, Texas; Tweed, ON, CAN

Anniversaries are based on the official records of Lions Clubs International. The recorded charter date at LCI sometimes differs from local club records.

View the Higher Key
Awards.

Information

In Memoriam

Past International Director Dr. Sergio Maggi, who served on the international board from 2004 to 2006, has died. He had been a member of the Bari Aragonese Lions Club in Italy since 1980. He was a presenter and speaker at several European and Mediterranean Lions forums and conferences.

[Thank You

A Veteran's Best Friend

In 2004 a roadside bomb blast in Baghdad left Marine Corps Corporal Michael Jernigan with severe injuries and without sight. But upon coming home to St. Petersburg, Florida, the now retired Jernigan says his biggest challenge was something else. "In Iraq, I had a purpose to help 350 million people sleep safely at night. I had no purpose when I came home."

Afflicted with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and frustrated with a white cane, Jernigan received Brittani, a guide dog from Southeastern Guide Dogs. "Not only did she help me get out of the house and back into life, but her companionship helped me so much. I had anxiety and would get close to my breaking point. She would make me pet her—before I knew it, I was in a better mood," says Jernigan.

Wanting to give other veterans the same chance to return to life, Jernigan co-founded the Paws for Patriots program at Southeastern Guide Dogs. The program pairs guide and service dogs with veterans and places therapy dogs into military hospitals. "You can't see the scars from PTSD, but it's very real and it hurts. Having a dog licking your face during a nightmare, having the companionship ... it's life-saving," says Jernigan.

Thanks to a \$25,000 donation—raised from a year's worth of fundraisers—from the Ponce Inlet Lions Club in Florida, one more veteran will heal with a companion like Brittani. A thankful Jernigan will continue working to help wounded warriors. Jernigan says, "I came home from war broken and bloody. Now I get to save people. It's fulfilling to give back."



Photo courtesy of Southeastern Guide Dogs

Michael Jernigan with his beloved guide dog of eight years, Brittani. Brittani is now retired, but the two still enjoy visits.

Lions, has your club heard from a recipient of your service or charity? Tell us about the feedback you've received from those whose lives you've changed for the better. Email a brief description to lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org. Please include "Thank You" in the subject line.

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Hole Lot of Fun

A young boy peers into a fishing hole at the Townsend Broadwater County Lions Club Ice Fishing Derby in Montana.

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