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LION

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top-notch ...
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next summer



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International Convention
Chicago, Illinois
June 30-July 4, 2017**

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meet humanitarian
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POSTMASTERS

Periodicals postage paid at Oak Brook, Illinois 60523 and additional mailing offices. Subscription price, US\$6.00 year, US\$12.00 year mailed outside North America; Single copies, US\$1.00. Send notices of undeliverable copies on form 3579 to LION, 300 W 22nd St Oak Brook IL 60523-8842. "Canada Post Publications Mail No. 40029736 Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: LIONS 2835 Kew Drive, Windsor, ON N8T 3B7."

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Lions from Multiple District 300 Taiwan remove damaged tree limbs after a typhoon. Service is what Lions are all about.

The Meaning of Lions—Same Today as Before

The pages of LION Magazine during the early years of Lions were filled with stories such as “The Purpose of Lions,” “The Meaning of Lionism” and “The Value of Lions.” A businessman’s club dedicated to service was still a novel concept, and it was as if Lions had to convince themselves that they were on the right track. The uncertainty led Lions to question whether Lions Clubs would even survive. “During my lifetime I have seen organizations formed with the highest ideals flourish for a time, then drop into comparative unimportance. Will that be the fate of Lionism? I hope not,” wrote District Governor A. Baker of Cheyenne, Wyoming, in January 1922.

But Lions stayed the course. They stuck with service. Fellowship was part of membership. But service was paramount. “Activities Make the Club” was the headline for a column in 1927 by International President Irving Camp of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. “Show me a club that simply meets and eats, and I will show you a club that has failed to respond to the call of service as invited in the very principles of our great, unselfish organization,” he wrote.

Rapidly approaching our Centennial in 2017, we now know that our forebears were right. Service is what makes a Lion. It’s what we do. It’s who we are. That has never been more evident than over the past couple of years. We

set a goal to serve 100 million people by June 30, 2018, through the Centennial Service Challenge. We asked Lions to hold youth, vision, hunger and environmental projects.

We wondered whether we’d reach the goal because clubs reported serving 8 million people annually to Lions Clubs International (but we knew the true figure was higher). I’m elated to tell you that we recently reached our goal of serving 100 million people. Take pride in being part of an association that lives up to its amazing ideals and that sets goals and exceeds them.

We have so much more we can achieve. There are more people who need us, more opportunities to make a difference and new mountains to climb. Together we can reach new heights in service. So keep serving!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Corlew".

Chancellor Bob Corlew
Lions Clubs International President



100 MILLION SERVED...AND COUNTING!

CENTENNIAL SERVICE CHALLENGE



HOW HIGH CAN WE CLIMB?

LIONS100.org

[The Big Picture



A Dragon in a Sea of Lions



The dragon is a symbol of good fortune in Chinese culture, and two children obviously think it's their lucky day as they greet a dragon leading Lions from China at the Parade of Nations in June at the 99th International Convention in Fukuoka, Japan. Convention coverage begins on page 18. Photo by Darren Miller

[The Big Picture



They Came Before Us

Like old photos? Curious what Lions were like in the 1930s? Or what Lions were up to in the 1950s? Our special centennial issue next month will be filled with remarkable stories about Lions of yesteryear and a multitude of old photos—like this one of the Terre Haute Lions in Indiana. The club chartered in February 1922 just five months before this photo was taken. One of 10 Lions clubs in Indiana then, the 25 members were “men who wanted to get acquainted and associate with their fellowmen and take an



active part in the upbuilding of the town in which they live," according to a story in the LION. At their charter lunch "they roared and sang songs and parodies in real Lion style." Their service began the day after they chartered when they voted to support a boy's club, who were "boys without a chance" and had endured "hard sledding." The support "established the Lions club in high standing among the people of Terre Haute." Photo courtesy of Martin Collection, Indiana Historical Society

CHICAGO TO PLAY CHICAGO CONVENTION

The Association of Lions Clubs was formed on June 7, 1917, at the Hotel LaSalle in Chicago when Melvin Jones convened representatives from 27 men's clubs from several states. The 100th International Convention will be held June 30 to July 4, 2017, in Chicago at McCormick Place, the largest convention venue in North America. McCormick Place is located about two miles from where Lions first gathered. Lions Clubs International is pulling out all the stops to make the Centennial convention memorable, fun and consequential. Chicago, the band, will play the International Show. World figures will address Lions. (Their names will be released once plans are finalized.) The Parade of Nations will march down State Street in the heart of the city. Exhibits, some of them interactive, will showcase the proud history of Lions. A performance stage will allow Lions to display their talents. Tens of thousands of Lions—quite possibly a record crowd—are expected to attend. The LION will release more details once they become available.

FEE WAIVER EXTENDED FOR VETERANS

The waiver of the charter or entrance fee for U.S. veterans of all ages has been extended by Lions Clubs International through June 30, 2017, and now Canadian veterans do not have to pay the fee either. To date, Lions clubs have recognized 1,808 U.S. veterans through the Veteran Pilot Program, which began in July 2013. The \$30 charter or \$25 entrance fee is waived for any qualifying veteran who joins a new or existing Lions club. Eligible persons include Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine and Coast Guard personnel who are retired or were honorably discharged from these services. National Guard and Reserve personnel who were called to active duty for other than training (persons may still be enlisted in these services) and other personnel the U.S. services considered a veteran are eligible. For information, email memberprog@lionsclubs.org.



Chicago's lakefront is a popular spot for both Chicagoans and visitors.

What's a convention in Chicago like? Pretty spectacular.

In 2007 Lions were treated to a ghostly oration from Helen Keller, the melodic hits of Glen Campbell and a rousing gospel choir (Oct. 2007 LION).

In 1967, the 50th anniversary of Lions Clubs, 48,586 Lions and guests attended the convention and heard from illustrious speakers including U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk and film star Dorothy Lamour (July/August 1967 LION).

The parade down Michigan Avenue at the 1953 convention drew a crowd of 300,000, and Helen Keller spoke to Lions (September 1953 LION).



The Lions' expedition climbs Everest.

A LION TAKES ON EVEREST

Lions in Malaysia decided to mark Lions Clubs' centennial by selecting a Lion to climb Mount Everest. James Lee, 68, of the Bahau Lions Club was set to become the oldest person from southeast Asia to summit the 29,029-foot Everest. A mountain climber since his 40s, Lee has scaled more than 20 peaks. On March 31 Lee, Lions Sherine Leong, 40, and Desmond Lee, 56, two sherpas and three journalists began the 70-day adventure. Besides publicizing Lions Clubs, the trek was intended to promote environmentalism and demonstrate the "Malaysia boleh" spirit (Malaysians can do it!). The group climbed to the Everest Base Camp at 17,600 feet before Lee and the sherpas continued the quest alone. They reached Everest Camp 3 at 23,950 feet before high winds and bitter cold (-31 degrees) forced Lee, who knew two climbers who died climbing Everest, to turn back on May 19. "I will be back to complete my task next May, more determined than ever," Lee told the LION. Lee is speaking to youths about his climbing. His climb was partly successful, says Leong. "A person of his age reaching Camp 3 without any health problems tells about the importance of staying healthy," she says. "The news about Lion James turning back made people and the press more curious and concerned, and it created a different kind of platform for him to talk to people about Lions, the environment and staying healthy."



Overheard

"Lions are the greatest people you could ever come across."

—Richard Bernstein, the first blind justice elected to the Michigan Supreme Court, speaking at a meeting of the Berkley Lions Club. From hometownlife.com.

"It's a rain-or-shine event. We have had turnouts when it rains, but my fingers are cramped from being crossed [in hopes that] it would be sunny today."

—Bonnie Hilton, an organizer of a cleanup of 25 spots in Millis, Massachusetts, that was held by the Millis Lions Club and the Millis Garden Club. From the Milford Daily.

"This dress is made of soda cans, water bottles, newspaper and pop-tops."

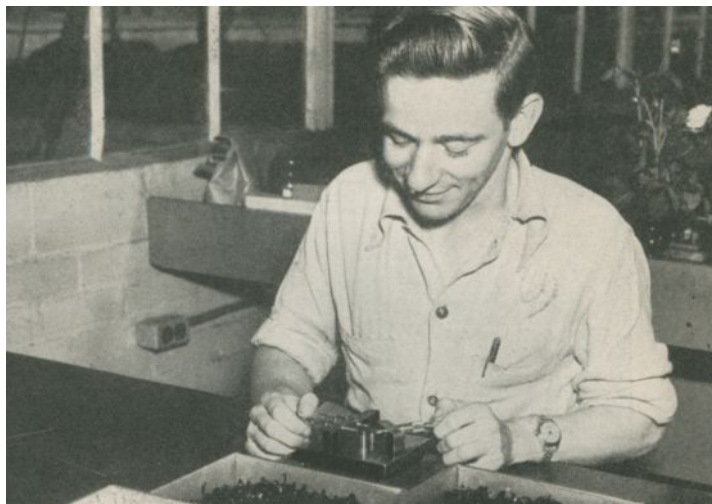
—April Tilton, the first-place winner in the Recycled Trashy Fashion Show of the Ocala On Top of the World Lions Club in Florida. From the Star-Banner.

65 Years Ago in the LION

VIDEO MAGAZINE PROFILES LCIF

The latest LQ, the Lions Quarterly Video Magazine, profiles Lions Clubs International Foundation. The segment is the last in the series of centennial videos. The October LQ also features Lions' aid to refugees, a club in Washington that cleans up marine debris and a "Where Are They Now" story. Be sure to "like" and share LQ on social media. LQ is available on the LCI website, YouTube, iTunes and DVD.

Watch the latest LQ.



OCTOBER 1951

Deaf without speech, Tommy Ingebretsen works at the Friden Calculating Machine Co. in San Leandro, California. The first week of October was National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week. According to the LION, "Lions have been in the forefront of this activity" including a representative from Lions International serving on a U.S. presidential committee on employing the handicapped.

Read the full story from the October 1951 LION.

By the Numbers

150

Scarecrow kits sold by Merrimack Lions in New Hampshire to support the American Diabetes Association.

20

Percent of students at Neah-Kah-Nie High School (enrollment 200) in Oregon who belong to the school's Leo club, sponsored by Rockaway Lions.



19

Years uniforms were worn by the marching band at Satellite High School in Florida until replaced by Satellite Beach Lions.

3,000



Cloth diapers for newborns collected by Kodiak Lions in Alaska for distribution in Nicaragua by the Rainbow Network.

7

Layouts of model trains including local landmarks such as lumberyards, a harbor and a pumpkin patch at an exhibit sponsored by a model railroad club and Crescent City Lions in California.

120

Feet of concrete poured for a new sidewalk at Partridge Creek Farm, an educational farm located downtown, thanks to a donation from Ishpeming Lions in Michigan.

3

Duration in hours of the Cape Cod Canal sunset cruise held by the Sandwich-Bourne Lions Club in Massachusetts.

400+

Quarts of apple butter produced for the annual fundraiser of Troutville Lions in Virginia.



2

Performances of the "Las Vegas-Style Illusion and Magic Show" sponsored by Ridgway Lions in Pennsylvania.



Eric Elliott holds his namesake, Aiah Eric, who passed away earlier this year from an infection (not related to Ebola).

Honeymoon Period

Two months after my wife and I married, she was offered work with an NGO to counter Ebola and strengthen health systems in Sierra Leone. Within two weeks, we had sold our cars and packed our bags!

The Danger Zone

Is Ebola dangerous? Yes, absolutely. But Ebola outbreaks do not need to result in a widespread epidemic. Observing basic infection protection and control protocols—washing hands with chlorinated water and minimizing physical contact with individuals displaying symptoms—greatly reduces the chances of getting Ebola.

Good Days ...

You can't help but feel electrified after listening to how a patient who was near death has been able to resume working in order to support themselves and their families.

... And Bad Days

One of the biggest emotional challenges is when we hear stories of patients forgoing medical care to pursue care through traditional healers. While traditional healers are culturally respected, their intervention often delays critical medical care—assuming the patient ever makes it to a health care facility. Daily, we work to dispel [these] medical misconceptions.

Eric Elliott

West Austin Lions Club, Texas

Epidemiologist Eric Elliott, 30, has been in Sierra Leone since 2015 fighting the Ebola outbreak. Working for Partners in Health, he also is helping reduce maternal mortality as well as managing HIV and tuberculosis treatment.

Degrees from Texas A&M University and the University of Michigan School of Public Health

Chief statistician for the Half-Helen Foundation, a nonprofit run by his sister and fellow Lion Chelsea to expand vision and hearing screenings

Founder and president of high school Leo club

Staying Motivated

Many of my Sierra Leonean colleagues are Ebola survivors, as well as individuals living with HIV or tuberculosis. When I need a reminder of why we deal with the daily struggles, I talk with them about their hopes and dreams. The powerful part is how little time they spend talking about themselves and how quickly the conversation turns to the ideas they have for helping people in their community.

Lion's Strength

My father [a member of the West Austin club, like sister Chelsea] claims I've been a Lion since the ripe old age of 2 months. From a young age, I've been ingrained with the principles of selfless service to community. Lionism shaped me to be aware of the needs that extend beyond my own nose. This principle drives me day in and day out through all the challenges of working in Sierra Leone.

The End Game

Unlike nearly all of my expatriate colleagues, Sierra Leone is my first stint living abroad. There isn't much in the United States that preps you for living in rural Sierra Leone! But my wife and I plan to stay for a while.

—Stacia Hernstrom

Read about Chelsea Elliott and her Half-Helen Foundation, featured in the February 2016 LION.

Club Sends a Safety Message

Karlstad Lions in northern Minnesota wanted to drive home a message last year. That message was “Don’t Text and Drive.” A heavily-damaged car and a large sign deliver the warning.

The exhibit sits along Highway 59, a well-traveled road through a rural area that ends at the Canadian border. Besides cars, trucks and farm equipment on the highway, many deer and other wildlife cross the road. “This problem is usually blamed on teenagers, but adults are guilty of texting and driving as well,” says Lion Elaine Ruud. “We just want to remind people to pay attention when they’re driving.”

The car was donated by a dealership, and Lion Danny Johnson created the sign, which cost the 39-member club only \$200 in materials. “The local newspaper did a big feature story on our project, and so many people have come up to thank us,” Ruud says. “People have even been posting pictures of the sign on their Facebook pages. It’s just been a great campaign for us and the community.”



Karlstad Lions are sending a clear message to drivers in Minnesota.

New Club Tested By a Tornado

The Big Sandy Area Lions Club in Texas was chartered only five months when disaster struck the area. Cutting a swath more than 1.8 miles wide, a tornado touched down four times in populated areas in April. One of the worst hit locations was Holly Lake Ranch, a wooded community that is home to many retirees as well as young families. The community is gated and secure, but the tornado brought danger in ways residents didn’t expect: downed trees on homes and roadways and live electrical wires. No one was hurt or killed, but the devastation was immense.



Rickey Caughron, vice president of the Big Sandy Area Lions Club, cuts a fallen tree limb while Lion Texanna Green picks up debris.

The only service experience Big Sandy Lions had to date as Lions was helping the volunteer fire department raise funds to buy equipment and working at a spring festival. They’d been planning a highway cleanup when the tornado struck. President Gerri Thompson and Texanna Green loaded up their vehicles with goods and immediately hit the road.

Green used her chainsaw to clear property. The Lions passed out cold bottles of water and snacks to victims and service workers, charged cell phones, removed debris and gave rides to those who lost their vehicles.

The club was so new that there weren’t any funds in the treasury yet. “We just bought the stuff on our own. People were literally running out of their homes with the live wires crackling and popping,” she recalls. Thompson, an insurance agent, was swamped. “People were in shock. There I was, helping them file claims with my competitors and telling them what they could expect. We listened and hugged them and told them it would all be OK.”

Members of the Tyler Lions Club purchased \$50 Walmart gift cards to distribute to residents for medications and food. “Anything we did was by acting purely on instinct. These people needed help right away,” Thompson emphasizes. “And I think we made a lot of friends by doing what we did. Isn’t that what Lions are supposed to do? We may all be new Lions, but we tried to serve others the best we could. And we’ve already had some people tell us they want to join the club because we helped them so much.”

Garden Helps Partnerships Bloom

Wendy Van Orman knows Liberty Lake in Washington well. She should. She's served as the city's mayor, as a councilwoman and as a Lion since her club was chartered in 2010. A few years ago, she helped establish Nature's Place at Meadowood Arboretum. A homeowners association agreed to her request to donate drainage property, and the arboretum was built on nearly three acres with raised beds for community gardens, trees and walking trails with outdoor art and exercise equipment.

Liberty Lake Lions not only helped fund the arboretum's creation but last year also provided the latest addition—a sensory garden. “Plantings were picked especially for the sense of smell along with sight and touch, using different species such as lamb's ear, balloon flower, sword fern, lavender, thyme and rosemary,” explains Lion Arlene Lindstrand. Van Orman and Lion Kathleen Burzynski worked with city staff on the garden.

The sense of hearing is engaged by a brightly-colored xylophone put together by Van Orman's husband, Darren, and Glen Dart, husband of Lion Rose Mary. “The pipes on the xylophone were from a recycling place and were powder-coated before being put together,” says Van Orman. “Our club purchased everything for the plantings, pipes for talking flowers, the xylophone, a rock with our club name



Children enjoy playing in the sensory garden.

on it and even trees.” Additional plantings, an archway and a bench will be installed this year.

Another sense—taste—will be indulged as grapes ripen on the vines that Lions intend to plant. They envision elementary school students someday learning about plants and gardening there on field trips.

Lions initially donated \$25,000 to the city to help fund the arboretum's landscaping. Those funds were raised from the club's annual bed races. The sensory garden cost another \$6,500. With only 11 members, Lions partnered with the nearby Spokane Valley Lions Club and its 26 members to raise money from their third bed race. The clubs' partnership worked so well that Liberty Lake Lions plan to help Spokane Valley Lions build a sensory garden in their own community.

Camp Is a Home for Some Kids Without One

Lions who chaperone a group of 9- to 11-year-olds at the camp in the foothills of Mt. Potosi, 47 miles northwest of Las Vegas, have plenty of fun themselves at Camp Lotza Fun. “These kids just amaze me,” says Bob Knipes, the Las Vegas Summerlin Lion who helped establish the camp. Some of the 29 children, chosen by their schools based on financial need, are homeless.

Summerlin Lions spearheaded the project four years ago with the Las Vegas Breakfasters and Las Americas Lions clubs. Another Lions camp in Elko had maxed out on the number of annual applicants; a new camp was needed to accommodate more disadvantaged youth. All clubs in District 46 now support it.

Camp Lotza Fun means that Lions and campers don't have to make the 9-hour drive to Elko. “We feel like we reach more children by having two



Archery is one of the most popular activities at camp. Photo by Lisa Schaffer

camp. We don't want anybody to be turned away,” Knipes explains. It costs \$2,500 to lease a camp from the Boy Scouts and another \$5,000 to pay expenses for the week.

“We've had some real moving moments here,” he says. “We had a dog named Roo visit the kids. The dog was missing a leg and kind of hopped along. She went over and sat in one little girl's lap. The girl was

missing an arm, and that dog just snuggled up to her.” Lions later had the child fit with a prosthetic arm and paid for it.

The camp is staffed by 35 Lions and other volunteers. Campers gaze at the moon during astronomy classes given by volunteers from the University of Las Vegas. Children learn archery and swim in an Olympic-sized pool. They learn how to properly fold an American flag when it's taken in for the night. They eat hamburgers and enjoy Taco Tuesday.

“It's hard to say goodbye,” Knipes says. “So many of these kids don't even have homes to go back to. One little girl came here wearing a pair of her father's big old pants. Two Lions took her into town and bought her a bunch of clothes before she left. My wife wanted to adopt her. So did everybody else. We just try to do what we can for them.”

JAPAN

Historic Mountain Pass Not Passed Over by Lions

The Yonezawa Kaido is an ancient hiking path that winds through 13 mountain passes and also is woven into Japanese history. Today cars and trucks rumble over it and carefully navigate its twists and turns. The natural beauty of the first mountain pass was spoiled by accumulated litter—until Lions took to the roadside.

For the past 30 Aprils Kawanishi Lions have collected litter at the Suwa Pass, the first of the 13 passes. The town of Kawanishi is perched on one side of the mountain. People frequently dumped large appliances, and the club once had to contract a 4-ton truck to pack out all the garbage.

The town of Iide rests on the other side of the mountain, and five years ago the presidents of the Iide and Kawanishi clubs happened to meet at a community forum. The result was that Iide Lions joined the cleanup project. Members of the two clubs meet at the pass before getting to work. At last year's collection Lions not only picked up the typical beverage containers but also a mattress and video game controller.

The 37-mile Yonezawa Kaido dates from the Edo Period, an era of

stability in Japan that began in 1603. During the Boshin War of 1867, a civil war, skirmishes were fought along the trail. Today avid hikers ignore the nearby drone of traffic to take in the beauty of the mountains while traversing the ancient path.

Lions have observed less litter each year: apparently people are less likely to toss trash out the window

where there is relatively little litter. Still, the cleanups continue, and “it can be a genuinely terrifying endeavor to collect bottles and cans that have been tossed onto the steep slopes,” according to a story in the Japanese LION. “Risking life and limb is something these Lions are happy to do for the benefit of preserving a beautiful historic site.”



Lions have collected litter at the Suwa Pass for three decades.



Satirist Andrew Poniedzielski entertains the crowd.

POLAND

Satirist Draws a Crowd

Sopot Polish Lions elicited laughter, auctioned several paintings and raised funds for its charitable causes when they hosted Andrew Poniedzielski, a popular satirist, poet and songwriter.

Lionism began in Poland in 1989. The country now has 1,057 Lions in 56 clubs. Sopot is a seaside resort town on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea in northern Poland with a population of nearly 40,000. Chartered in 1996, the Sopot Lions Club has 20 members.

SWITZERLAND

Gentle Horse Helps Riders with Challenges

A horse from Iceland named after a Czech soccer star is helping children and adults in Switzerland with emotional and physical challenges.

The Chur Kora Lions Club in Switzerland raised funds for a therapy horse for the Auhof Chur Farm, dedicated to using horses to help people with autism, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries and behavioral disorders. The rhythm and repetition of a horse's pelvis while moving, similar to how a person's pelvis moves while walking, has a soothing effect on people with challenges.

The 10-year-old horse bought by the club is named Baros-Ljon. "Ljon" is a common Icelandic name, and Milan Baroš is a Czech soccer icon. The horse was born at the exact moment Baroš scored an important goal.

Baros-Ljon cost 11,000 francs (US\$11,020). The club raised 6,000 francs through the sale of sausages, cakes and mulled wine at a Christmas market in Chur and kicked in the rest from its coffers.

Twice a week, Baros-Ljon slowly and deliberately is ridden over the green pastures of the farm. "We were excited about Baros-Ljon from the get-go," says Brigitte Hürzeler of the farm.



Bruno Ruegg, president of the Chur Kora Lions Club, stands aside Baros-Ljon with Lion Jeannette Xayaboun (right) and Brigitte Hürzeler of the Auhof Chur Farm.

HUNGARY

City Comes Alive for the Blind

A gem of a city that dates from the Roman era, Sopron has more monuments and historical buildings than any other place in Hungary, aside from Budapest. Now the blind can better appreciate its grandeur thanks to an elaborate scale model created by Lions.



The three-dimensional scale model of the city has become a popular destination in Sopron.

The sturdy bronze model, 6 ½ feet long and 4 feet wide, features the city's most significant buildings including the Fire Tower, the 17th-century symbol of the ancient city. Braille inscriptions explain the major sites. Located in a well-traveled area, the model quickly has become a popular attraction for the blind and tourists alike.

Chartered in 1991, the Sopron Lions Club was one of Hungary's first Lions clubs and was among the earlier civic groups established in the country after the fall of communism in 1989.



Lions Clubs International

Directors Elected at the Convention

Delegates to the 99th International Convention in Fukuoka, Japan, elected 17 new international directors to serve a two-year term. Visit the Lions Clubs International website for biographies of newly elected directors and to also view the biographies and photos of the five international officers and 17 second-year directors who lead the association.



Bruce Beck
Palisade, Minnesota
United States



Markus Flaaming
Espoo, Finland



Tony Benbow
Vermont South, Australia



Elisabeth Haderer
Overveen, The Netherlands



K. Dhanabalan
Erode, India



Magnet Lin
Taipei, Taiwan



**Luiz Geraldo
Matheus Figueira**
Brasília, Brazil



Sam H. Lindsey, Jr.
Hilltop Lakes, Texas
United States



Aruna Abhey Oswal
Gujrat, India



N. Alan Lundgren
Scottsdale, Arizona
United States



Vijay Kumar Raju Vegesna
Visakhapatnam, India



Joyce Middleton
Bridgewater, Massachusetts
United States



**Elien van Dille
Ronse, Belgium**



Nicolin Carol Moore
Arima, Trinidad & Tobago



Jennifer Ware
Rapid River, Michigan
United States



Yasuhisa Nakamura
Saitama, Japan



Jaepung Yoo
Cheongju, Korea

Fukuoka Knocks It Out of the Park

BY JAY COPP

Roaring cheers and chants, frenzied baseball fans typically fill the Yahuoku! Dome in Fukuoka. But in late June thousands of Lions roared in the stadium. They celebrated the accomplishments of Lions worldwide and heard heartfelt appeals from Lion leaders and humanitarian figures to increase their service as the Lions' centennial approaches in 2017.





(Opposite) Thousands of Japanese Lions march in Fukuoka during the grand Parade of Nations.

(Above) Dr. Jitsuhiro Yamada of Japan, 2015-16 international president, honors the keynote speaker, Kailash Satyarthi of India, the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize recipient. (Below) Chancellor Bob Corlew of Tennessee, the 2016-17 international president, speaks at the third plenary session.



Lions were not rooting for a home team but reveling in the power of an international service association. The 99th International Convention in Japan brought together 37,386 Lions and guests from 124 nations to elect new leaders, learn about the progress of service initiatives and centennial plans and enjoy robust camaraderie and fellowship.

Leading off, so to speak, was 2015-16 International President Dr. Jitsuhiro Yamada of Japan, who related how well Lions can respond to a contemporary crisis. Lions in Turkey and Lebanon, aided by Lions of Scandinavia, are providing food and water, shelter and even prosthetic limbs for refugees from the war-torn Middle East. He urged even greater assistance. "If each one of the 1.4 million Lions members can help just one refugee, then the impact is not small. This is the power of grassroots service. This is what Lions are all about," he said.

Yamada, who traveled the world as president, also talked about the sometimes hidden allure of service and the need for Lion leaders to recognize a service job well done. "I witnessed scenes where leaders gave Lions awards, and the Lions were in tears," he said. "These Lions have

continued to serve without expecting anything in return, so the tears are a result of pure surprise and joy at being recognized."

Batting cleanup was newly elected International President Chancellor Bob Corlew of Tennessee. Corlew, whose theme is New Mountains to Climb, spoke at length on the importance of adding members. A typical Lion serves 50 people annually, he noted. Social problems are mounting. "For every new Lion there are young people who are born in poverty, without guidance, without a mentor or role model and without any realistic hope for their own future," he said. "For every new Lion there are more children who starve to death. For every new Lion here are more adults who become blind due to cataracts and trachoma."

The key to Lions' progress against social ills is a greater commitment from each Lion, Corlew said. "Each club is stronger only if the individual members continue to strengthen themselves," he said. "A Lion who is knowledgeable about our great association is far more effective than a Lion who chooses not to learn about the great opportunities offered by Lions Clubs International."



History was made at the convention with the election of Past International Director Gudrun Bjort Yngvadottir of Iceland as second vice president, which will make her the first female president in 2018-19. “By electing a woman as their leader, Lions show themselves to be modern, despite having served for a century,” she told the LION. “This I hope will help to boost the membership of Lions worldwide, so we can expand our service reach and impact.”

Past International Director Jung-Yul Choi of Korea was elected third vice president. Choi will serve as president in 2019-20.

Other convention highlights included the keynote speech of Kailash Satyarthi of India, the recipient of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize who spoke of his efforts against child labor and child trafficking, and the awarding of the Lions Clubs International Humanitarian Award to Doctors Without Borders. Dr. Tomoaki Atsumi, a vice president of the organization, spoke of his group’s selfless, courageous mission, a purpose that resonated with Lions. “In essence, humanitarian action is about saving and assisting strangers, people you have never met and may never see again. It is about going to places other people are leaving and treating any and all people who need medical care. It is about challenging systems and policies that create these needs in the first place or that prevent people from getting the care or the medicines they need.”

Beyond the three plenary sessions at the baseball stadium, Lions marched down city streets in the traditional Parade of Nations, enjoyed the International Show and its wide array of mesmerizing entertainment, consulted with Lions Clubs International staff at the convention hall, attended seminars to boost their service capabilities and membership rolls, caught up with old friends and met new ones, and became acquainted with Fukuoka and its foods and sights. Convention can be serious and consequential but more often the five days are a pleasant swirl of Lions-style fun and fellowship, a friendly, relaxed gathering of like-minded folks.

The recurring message in Fukuoka was that the gatherings in service—whether at the club, district or international level—bring about enormous positive changes to communities. Past International President Joe Preston, the chairperson of LCIF, detailed the astonishing impact of the foundation: from nearly eliminating blinding trachoma in China and curbing measles in Africa to protecting the vision of tens of millions of children in Asia through Sight for Kids and aiding victims of major disasters worldwide. “Just think of the millions of lives we’ve impacted,” said Preston, who dramatically entered the stage in a Star Wars costume to the delight of Lions. “The Force is what gives a Jedi his power. In many ways, LCIF is just like the Force. It is the energy generated by the good works Lions do around the world under the LCIF banner.”

The convention ended at the third plenary session with the swearing-in of the 2016-17 district governors. But just before that Lions were encouraged to come to Chicago June 30-July 4 next year for the centennial convention. Past International President J. Frank Moore III detailed the progress of the centennial celebration: nearly 100 million people served, 4,000 Legacy service projects and grand commemorative projects such as a \$1 U.S. silver coin, postage stamps and a globetrotting enormous banner, divided into 48 parts to be signed by Lions until attached back together in Chicago.

Lions involved in the centennial celebration, Moore said, are “rounding third and heading home.” Chicago promises to be a home run, a walk-off grand slam.

Didn’t make it to Fukuoka? Do the next best thing and watch colorful videos of convention highlights and other videos shown at the convention.

[Fun in Fukuoka](#)

[Fun in Fukuoka, Part II](#)

[The Menace of Measles](#)

[Doctors Without Borders](#)

[Meet the 17 new international directors elected at the convention.](#)



Lions and Leos enjoy fellowship in Fukuoka.



Spectacle, Song and Dance

Convention is anything but a solemn, fuddy-duddy gathering. The days are filled with the energy, passion and artistry of singers, dancers, musicians and even Star Wars characters and sumo devotees.





(Opposite) Drum Tao, a taiko drum show, performs at the International Show.

(Above) The second plenary begins with a whole lotta shakin' goin' on: the music, dance and look of the 1950s.



The Jedi Master of LCIF, Joe Preston channels his inner Obi-Wan Kenobi as he describes the achievements of the foundation in 2015-16. As immediate past president of Lions Clubs, Preston chaired LCIF last year.



(Above) Yu-ki Nishimoto demonstrates traditional calligraphy at the third plenary session. (Below) Lions enjoy music at the third plenary session.





Sumo wrestlers on a college team display their surprising dexterity at a Leo gathering at the convention hall.



Convention participants wear sumo suits.

Pride on Parade

Nearly 15,500 Lions from at least 105 nations marched in the glorious Parade of Nations. For nearly four hours people of Fukuoka, as well as Lions, were treated to a vibrant display of the universality of Lions Clubs.



A marching band from Japan boisterously leads a Lions nation.

(Below) Indonesian dancers fan out. (Right) Lions from India include their children in their delegation.



Nepalese Lions shake and bake their way down the street.



CHANCE ENCOUNTER

A mother's chance meeting with a Lion may mean her son will regain his vision.

BY ANNE FORD

Grapevine Gifts carries just about anything anyone in Lake Jackson, Texas, might need, from scented candles to cigar cutters. But when Calista Stewart walked into the shop one day in March, she was after something that wasn't on the shelves.

She tracked down the owner, an acquaintance of hers named Ron Martin. "Hey," she said. "Remember how a long time ago, you said you were active in the Lions club, and that if we ever needed help, that's what you were there for?"

Martin nodded.

"How serious were you?" she asked.

"Dead serious," he said. "What do you need?"

What she needed had its origin some 30 years before, when Calista and her husband had a baby boy, Doug.

Doug was a happy, healthy kid with just one quirk: He seemed to always be bumping into things, even things in plain sight. "We just thought he was kind of a klutzy little boy," his mom remembers.

In sixth grade, during a routine eye exam, Doug was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa, a rare genetic disorder in which the cells of the retina—the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye—break down.

The disease might leave Doug with diminished eyesight all his life. Or it might steal his vision completely by the time he turned 50. There was no way to know.

It was a long ride home after the appointment. "We were all pretty much devastated," Calista remembers. "Doug's biggest concern was, 'Mom, Dad, will I be able to drive?' Because he was only 12 years old. We said, 'We don't know, sweetie. We'll just have to play it by ear.'"

Doug did retain enough vision to get his driver's license a few years later. And a few years after that, he ob-

tained his college degree and secured a job teaching high school physics.

"That was my first job and my first love in life, teaching," Doug says. "It's pretty amazing, the impact you can have on someone's life." But a few years into his career, his eyesight grew exponentially worse.

"All of a sudden, the ball started rolling down the hill a lot faster," he says. "Before, I could drive at night somewhat comfortably within local areas, as long as there were streetlamps." (Retinitis pigmentosa attacks night vision and peripheral vision first.)

After he learned that his visual field had diminished to only about 20 percent of normal, he stopped driving at night altogether. And, knowing that his eyesight would likely continue to decline, he quit teaching.

"I couldn't imagine being a teacher and being blind," he says. "It just seemed impossible to me." Instead, he took a job as a software developer, but even that required major adaptations.

"Any time it gets dark out, I essentially can't leave my house, so I have a modified work schedule, because I need to allow time for getting groceries and things of that nature," he explains. "Fortunately, my company's been very accommodating." Still, being housebound so much of the time was no joke.

As his mother puts it: "It makes for a very lonely existence when you have to plan your entire life around daylight."

One day in February, everything changed.

Doug learned of something taking place in Florida called the Stem Cell Ophthalmology Treatment Study. A federally approved clinical trial that began in 2013,

Doug Stewart (opposite), a physics teacher until his vision deteriorated, has hope his vision will improve thanks to Lions and an innovative stem cell treatment.

the study aims to evaluate the use of stem cells for the treatment of certain eye diseases—including retinitis pigmentosa.

In the trial, doctors take bone marrow out of a patient's hip, then inject the stem cells from that marrow into the patient's eyes. If all goes well, the stem cells turn into specialized cells that regenerate or repair the damaged tissue.

Some patients who have participated in the trial have seen extraordinary results. One has gone from having 20/4,000 vision to 20/40 vision. Another was legally blind when he had the surgery; now he's able to drive.

But the results aren't predictable—and may be temporary. In the case of a patient with retinitis pigmentosa, the procedure doesn't fix the underlying genetic issue; it simply restores some of the cells that the disease has attacked.

Still, even if the surgery didn't restore Doug's vision, perhaps it would at least arrest the progression of his disease for a while.

The only catch: Because the trial is only federally approved—not federally funded—patients had to bear the \$19,600 cost. That was much, much more money than Doug or his parents could afford.

And that was why, one ordinary March day, Calista Stewart walked into Grapevine Gifts and asked if the Lions could do anything to help.

'This is What We Do'

"Everyone in town knows we're Lions. I mean *everybody*," says Martin, a past governor of District 2-S4 who, along with his business partner Jeff Rae, belongs to the Brazosport Breakfast Lions Club in Lake Jackson. "Everybody who works for us is a Lion. My sisters are Lions. Most of my nephews and nieces are Lions. Everybody."

And if they aren't, they soon will be. At least, that's the feeling you get from the affable Martin, who spends



Lion Ron Martin of Grapevine Gifts rallied Lions behind Stewart after a chance encounter in his store with Stewart's mother.

much of his time traveling on behalf of the Lions as a new club development consultant.

Raising close to \$20,000? That was nothing, he thought. He remembers telling Calista, “‘Okay, we’ll take care of this. This is what we do.’”

Calista’s recollection is a little more dramatic. “I almost passed out right there,” she says. “It was a good thing I was holding onto the counter. I said, ‘You’ve got to be kidding me. I wasn’t coming in asking for someone to pay for everything. I was just asking if you knew what organization or what government agency to go to.’ And he said, ‘No, no, that’s what we’re there for.’”

One of the first people Martin called to get the ball rolling was Billy Gray, a member of the Lake Jackson Lions Club. Like Martin, Gray was immediately convinced of the need to help Doug.

“We can’t afford to pick up every single person’s problem out there, but Doug had a special need,” Gray says. “It was the chance of a lifetime.”

As Martin puts it: “If you could give someone their eyesight back, why wouldn’t you?”

Gray wasted no time in convincing the owner of five local Sonic fast-food joints to let nine Lions clubs sell \$10 coupons to the restaurants, with half the proceeds going to Sonic and half to Doug’s cause.

At first the money trickled in. Then, after an article about Doug’s situation appeared in the local newspaper, it started gushing. Not only did the Sonic tickets get snapped up, but people made direct monetary contributions as well. Doug’s employer and colleagues ponied up, too.

Within 30 days, the fund for Doug stood at \$22,107—enough to cover the cost of the trial plus travel expenses. And in May, he and his mom flew to Florida for the surgery.

Immediately afterward, it was hard for Doug not to feel disappointed by the results. First of all, “he looked like he’d been through a bar fight,” Calista says. “His eyes were all swollen and black and blue.”

Second, even after the swelling went down, his eyesight didn’t seem any better. His doctor counseled patience, as well as the knowledge that it could take up to nine months for him to notice any benefit.

“It took me back a little bit,” Doug says. “But my mom was there to remind me that nine months in the grand scheme of things—maybe 10, 20, 30 years of regained eyesight—is nothing. She goes, ‘You know you can handle that,’ and I said, ‘Yeah, yeah, I can.’”

As Doug and his family wait to learn the full effects of the surgery, they continue to be grateful to everyone who helped make it possible.

“If it weren’t for the Lions club and my company, there would be no way that I could have done the procedure without being in a whole bunch of debt,” he says. “With the student loans I’ve already got, I would have been in debt for the rest of my life, essentially.”

And if the surgery turns out to have no effect on his eyesight?

“Even if it doesn’t work for him, what the doctors learn from the surgery will help other people in the long run, so we’re on the right path,” Doug says cheerfully. In

other words, it wouldn’t make the Lions regret their help one bit.

Nor would it decrease the appreciation that Doug and his family feel.

“Our whole family is so grateful to the Lions for giving him a chance at improving his eyesight,” Calista says. “If we can just arrest the progression of the disease, even if just for a little while, it would be such a blessing. And if it happens that he’s in the percentage that doesn’t see any change, well, he knows he tried, and he and our whole family are so thankful.”

Meanwhile, she’s got something to keep her mind occupied while they wait: “I want to join a Lions club.”



Martin and Billy Gray enlisted the help of Sonic restaurants to raise money for Stewart.

Lions have saved vision and helped the blind since the first years of Lionism.

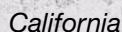
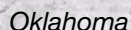
- Read how Helen Keller in 1927 praised Lions in asserting that their “attitude toward the blind is something new in the world” (December 1927 LION).
- The Rev. Wilmore Kendall, a blind minister from Tulsa, Oklahoma, says Lions are the “star that has arisen upon the world of the blind” in a speech at the 10th International Convention in San Francisco (August 1926 LION).
- International President Benjamin Jones of New Jersey explains the Lions’ “campaign against blindness” (April 1926 LION).

POSTER POWER

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GOOD SEEDS

Lions partner with Leavenworth inmates
on a bountiful garden.

BY DAVID HUDNALL | PHOTOS BARRETT EMKE



The United States Penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas, was the largest maximum-security prison in the country for more than 100 years—from 1903, when it was built, until 2005. James Earl Ray, assassin of Martin Luther King Jr., did time there. So did Boston Irish mob boss Whitey Bulger. Machine Gun Kelly died of a heart attack inside its walls.

These days, though, supermax prisons, designed with 21st-century security concerns in mind, are where they send the really bad guys. Leavenworth looks a bit creaky and

crumbly by comparison and has been downgraded to a medium-security prison. It's also home to a separate, dormitory-style prison for minimum-security inmates—"the camp," as it's known around Leavenworth. NFL quarterback and dogfighting financier Michael Vick, for example, served 19 months at the camp in 2008-2009.

The camp is also where USP Leavenworth's Prison Garden Project gets its volunteers, Brian Habjan, community coordinator for the program, explains one morning.

"It's all non-violent, low-threat guys who aren't going to be away from society very long—less than five years, typically," Habjan says of the roughly 10 inmates who participated in the program in 2015.

Habjan (pronounced hay-bee-in) drives along the southern boundary of the prison property in a Chevrolet Suburban with an "Eat Beef" sticker on its bumper. To the north are hundreds of acres of undeveloped land owned by the prison. Roughly 20 of those acres are now used every year as part of the Prison Garden Project. Since 2010, this land has yielded nearly 700,000 pounds of fresh produce—all of which finds its way to needy families in Leavenworth County.

Lion Brian Habjan (opposite) tends to the garden just outside the prison fence of Leavenworth. (This page) Inmate Corbin Bosiljevac works the fields and then carries harvested greens to a truck for distribution for those in need.





The produce includes lettuce, cabbage, onions and spinach.



Habjan pulls off onto a private road that leads to USP Leavenworth's food-distribution warehouse. Though the facility is owned by, and adjacent to, the prison, it's technically outside the fence: free country. Despite this, two men in tan-colored jumpsuits are loading tubs of freshly-picked vegetables into a trailer bed outside the facility. "Yep, those are inmates," Habjan says. He explains that, because these prisoners have relatively short sentences, the risk of getting caught trying to escape just isn't worth it.

"There's guards circulating the grounds, of course, but sure, they could walk off," Habjan says. "But it never happens. Minimum-security guys, they just want to serve their time and be done. And if you get caught trying to escape, you're just doubling up on your sentence. It just doesn't make any sense to try it."

By volunteering for the Prison Garden Project, prisoners forfeit the opportunity to work a paying job at the prison. You can't do both. But the experience can be worth it in other ways. For one, it offers a huge amount of freedom. A prisoner involved in the program can spend virtually his entire day working unsupervised in the fields if he so chooses. It also affords the opportunity to learn the nu-

The haul included a variety of peppers (bell, habanero, cayenne), turnips, green beans, lettuce, a few random parsnips. Earlier in the year, there would have been "tomatoes, squash, melons, potatoes, sweet corn—just about everything you can think of," Thomas says, "except cauliflower."

Nowell adds: "Zucchini grows like crazy up here."

Twice a week during growing season, every Tuesday and Thursday from April through November, Habjan makes the trip to this distribution point and loads as much of the produce as he can into his Suburban and then drops it off at various food banks in Leavenworth County.

"We grow it," Thomas says, "and he gets rid of it."

Federal law, though, prohibits the prison from using federal funds to pay for community programs such as the Prison Garden Project. So where does the money come from? Thomas smiles and nods at Habjan.

"That's where Lion Brian comes in," he says.

Habjan is a member of the Linwood Lions Club. Linwood is about 30 miles south of Leavenworth. But since he works in Leavenworth, he's also friendly with the Lions in Leavenworth, which has the largest club in the state—184 members strong. "They're the biggest, and we're [Linwood]

Since 2010, this land has yielded nearly 700,000 pounds of fresh produce—all of which finds its way to needy families.

ances of agriculture in an immediate environment that would be hard to come across in the real world. Habjan uses the example of one inmate, whom he refers to as Corbin (inmates are not allowed to speak to the media) to illustrate the value of the program for the incarcerated.

"He's really taken to the program and been deeply involved this year from the planting stage through to the harvest," Habjan says. "Next year, he'll be able to use that knowledge to assist us in the garden plan, move the crops around, say what worked and what didn't work. And when he gets out, that's a really valuable skill to have." One former inmate in the program now works for a chemical company, and another manages a landscaping company.

"The challenge for us is that, obviously, these guys want to leave prison first chance they get, and their sentences are pretty short," Habjan continues. "So every other year or so we get a turnover of inmates who don't know anything about farming, and we have a lot of teaching to do. We have to start back over at square one."

Habjan parks his SUV and walks over to meet with the two prison employees who coordinate the program from the inside: Matt Nowell, who runs the food-distribution warehouse, and Keith Thomas, who oversees education programs at the camp.

"What do we got today?" Habjan asks.

"End of the road," Nowell says, gesturing at the produce. A frost was expected that evening, making this the final haul of the year. In anticipation, the inmates had picked just about all the remaining crops. The next day, they'd begin the process of turning over the fields in preparation for winter.

probably the smallest," Habjan says. Through Habjan, they've discovered a way to unite their strengths.

Exiting the prison grounds with a car packed to the brim with vegetables, Habjan gestures at the unoccupied land surrounding USP Leavenworth.

"At one time, all this you see here was used for crop production," Habjan says. "Beef, pork, and dairy, too. There was a full farming operation. Inmates farmed the land, and that's how they fed them. Then, in 1985, the prison decided that it made more sense to buy food from outside vendors than to grow it and raise it there. So they decommissioned the program."

In 2007, though, a food service manager at USP Leavenworth planted a small garden that provided occasional fresh produce for prisoners' meals. The warden at the time, Claude Chester, liked the garden. He was also interested in finding ways the prison could become more involved with the greater Leavenworth community. Chester thought expanding the prison's farming operations might be a way to accomplish that. So the next year he asked the prison's community relations board if it knew of anybody with some expertise in growing food.

"Well, I was on that board, because at the time I was the president of the Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce," Habjan says. "And even though I'm a banker by day [he's vice president of commercial loans at the Leavenworth branch of Commerce Bank], I have an agricultural background. I grew up in southwest Missouri, and our family had a little acreage and garden down there. I worked for farmers growing up. And here in Leavenworth, I've got a little vegetable corporation where we have crops on about

20 acres. So as soon as I raised my hand, it was pretty much, ‘OK, Brian’s in charge now.’”

Over the next year, Habjan worked closely with the prison to build out the program. They recruited prisoners to participate and lined up folks such as Thomas to assist with the educational component. But it soon became clear that to meaningfully expand the Prison Garden Project would require a significant infusion of money—about \$1,000 a year—to pay for the seeds. Since the prison’s purse strings were tied up by the law, they needed to find reliable outside financing.

Leavenworth Lion Sam Maxwell, a cabinetmaker and furniture-repair specialist by trade, recalls Habjan bringing the Prison Garden Project idea to the Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce.

“The chamber basically said, ‘We don’t know what the hell to make of this,’” Maxwell says. “But I knew Brian from the Lions, and I came up to him and said, ‘We’re Lions club members, we can do this damn thing through the Lions. We just gotta find the money.’ So we asked Deborah [Weaverling], who was the [Leavenworth Lions] president at the time, for \$500 from the discretionary fund. Then we went to two banks in town and got two \$250 loans for the Lions. We wrote Brian a check for \$1,000 that day and said, ‘Go for it.’”

That year, the program produced 200,000 pounds of free produce for area families.

“From \$1,000 worth of seeds!” Maxwell says. “I just about fell over. You talk about return on your money. So I took that information back to the Lions club and said, ‘This is an amazing program, and we need to be all over this thing. And to do that we need to give this program \$1,000 every year for seeds.’ And that’s how it’s been working every year since—seven years now. We’ve done the math, and if you bought it at a grocery store, it’s \$859,000 worth of food. In seven years the Lions have given all of that away.”

While it’s the Leavenworth Lions who pay for the program’s seeds, it’s the Linwood Lions who do much of the distribution. In addition to its members dropping the prison-grown produce off at several food banks in Leavenworth County, the Linwood Lions have also built a shelter house that serves as a distribution point for the program.

“Basically, the Linwood Lions Club is the drop point for the program in Linwood,” Habjan says. “People in Linwood know they can come by every Tuesday and Thursday at 6 p.m. during the season.”

“It’s similar to a farmers market,” Habjan continues, “except it’s free.”

Serving a Need

It is an unfortunate truth that a majority of Leavenworth County residents are in particular need of what the Prison Garden Project provides. Poverty has skyrocketed in recent years. Due to concern about malnourishment, a program called Backpack Buddies sends approximately 750 children home with backpacks of donated food every weekend.

Two-thirds of the children in Leavenworth public schools qualify for free or reduced lunches, a number that climbs every year.

Janet Stuke, the head volunteer at the Good Shepherd Food Bank in Tonganoxie, says anywhere between 80 and 100 people take advantage of the Prison Garden Project every week when it’s in season.

“It’s been a great success in that way,” Stuke says. “People start asking in February, ‘When do you think the prison will get the farm going again?’”

It’s the same story at the Catholic Charities Emergency Assistance Program in Leavenworth. Later that afternoon, as Habjan uses a shopping cart to wheel several trays of green beans and lettuce into the building, manager Jackie Masoner describes the ever-rising poverty levels in north-east Kansas.

‘And we especially love that it’s not just food—it’s fresh fruits and vegetables. That it’s healthy food is really important.’

“We just keep servicing more and more people,” Masoner says. “A year ago in October, we serviced 575 individuals. Last month, it was 795 individuals. That’s why things like this are so important. And we especially love that it’s not just food—it’s fresh fruits and vegetables. That it’s healthy food is really important.”

Outside Masoner’s office, a woman named Nilsa gathers green and orange peppers from a freshly arrived tray. “My kids like spicy stuff,” she says. Minutes later, an elderly couple leaves with some lettuce and green beans. “It’ll all be gone by tomorrow,” Masoner says.

Habjan explains that the program was designed to eliminate as many barriers as possible to people receiving the food.

“Social services agencies have to ask about income. We don’t do that,” he says. “We don’t ask for tax returns, we don’t ask for income, we don’t discriminate. If you show up, you can have the produce. All we want is your name and how many people will benefit from produce, so we can keep track of how many people we’re serving.”

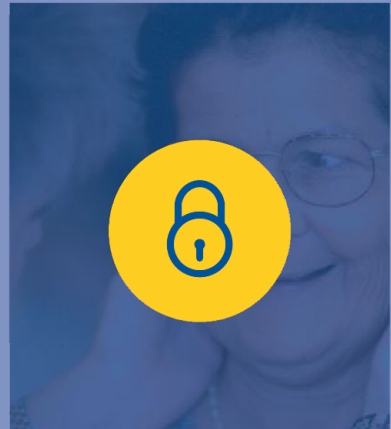
It’s time for Habjan to get back to his day job. There are still dozens of pounds of fresh food in the cargo area of his vehicle—a few ladybugs had already made their way to the front seat—but those he’d deliver after work, on the drive back to Linwood. Once those were unloaded, that’d be it for the Prison Garden Project for this year.

“Until next year,” Habjan says with a smile.

Recently based in Kansas City, David Hudnall is now a staff writer for INDY Week in Durham, North Carolina.



UNLOCK HISTORY



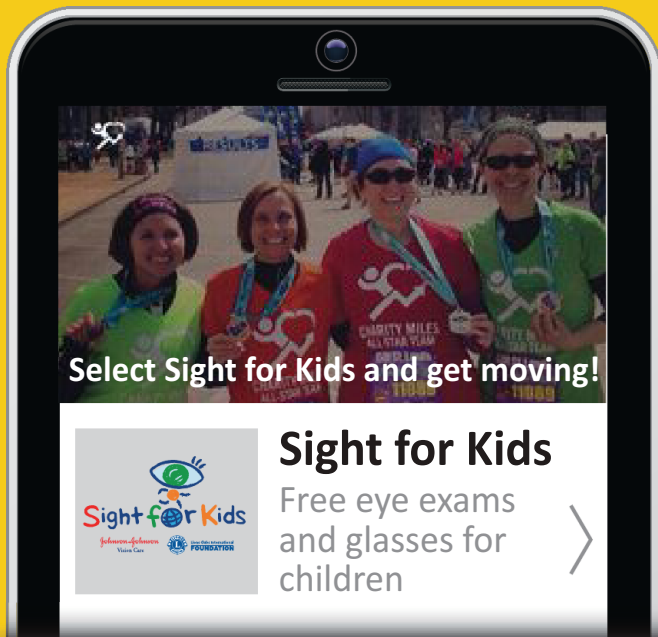
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Italian Hospitality Blooms in Africa

BY CASSANDRA ROTOLO

Nearly 800 million people in the world do not have enough food to eat. The situation is most dire in developing countries, where one out of six children is underweight. The Venezia Host and Venezia Angelo Partecipazio Lions clubs in Italy teamed up with the Koudougou Baobab Lions Club in Burkina Faso and Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) to address food insecurity in several villages in the West African nation.

The Italian Lions received an LCIF International Assistance grant (IAG) for US\$54,267 to support the project. The Lions had two main objectives. The first was to form a field school to train rural women to use a drip irrigation system. Secondly, they would use that drip irrigation system to create a village vegetable garden. Women from nearby areas would be taught how to cultivate crops using the new system, as well how to use those crops to feed healthy meals to their families. Water storage towers, compost pits, a storage shed and fences played important roles in helping the project reach its goals.

Drip irrigation is a low-water, low-pressure system that keeps plant roots moist. By applying water directly to plant roots rather than the surrounding soil, drip irrigation systems use less water than some other traditional systems. Drip irrigation is particularly beneficial where water sources are scarce.

Lions got to work. They secured and cleared nearly 2.5 acres of land. They dug a well with a solar pump and a storage tank and planted onions, other vegetables and fast-growing moringa trees. Once the crops were planted, Lions from both countries trained local women on using the drip irrigation system and tending to their gardens.

The field school pilot program trained seven women from the Kyon District. It is expected that up to 60 women will be trained annually. The Lions hope that these women will grow enough excess food that they may start their own village market and sell their produce for a profit, leading to economic stability and independence.

“We Lions are fighting poverty and securing food for women and children in rural Burkina Faso because malnutrition is widespread,” says Lion Giovanni Spaliviero of the Italian Lions Association, MK Onlus. “We hope these vegetable gardens will help to significantly improve the health and the living conditions of children and their families.”

LCIF’s IAG program awards grants between US\$5,000 and US\$30,000 on a matching basis. IAGs enable Lions

clubs in developed countries to partner with Lions clubs in less developed regions on projects that significantly impact entire communities. IAGs fund international assistance programs focused on basic health care, education and literacy, clean water and sanitation, rural development and self-sufficiency programs, services for people who are blind and otherwise disabled, and environmental protection. For information on how your district can apply for an IAG, visit lcif.org.



Women tend their new village vegetable garden in Kyon, Burkina Faso.

A Chicago Insurance Man Founded Lions Clubs

Melvin Jones was a dreamer, a doer and a pragmatist. He was an energetic, extroverted salesman who in private hours would read Shakespeare. What better man to found the world's largest association of service clubs?

The Lions International Board of Directors officially designated Jones as the founder of Lions Clubs in 1958—more than four decades after Lions Clubs held its first meeting. But, no matter what his official title, Jones' impact on the Lions has been far-reaching. He provided the leadership, the organizational ability, the tenacity and the muscle necessary to establish the foundation for Lions Clubs International to become what it is today.

Jones was born on Jan. 13, 1879, at Fort Thomas, Arizona, a remote U.S. Army cavalry post where his father was a scout for the Army. At age 7, Jones' family moved east and settled in Illinois. Gifted with a fine tenor voice, he considered making his career in music. Instead, he became an insurance salesman.

By 1913, Jones had formed his own insurance agency in Chicago. When he joined a networking luncheon club for businessmen in Chicago called the Business Circle, he quickly took the lead in recruiting new members and persuading backsliders to rejoin. But something about the club's business-only focus didn't square with Jones' different, larger vision.

"What if these men who are successful because of their drive, intelligence and ambition were to put their talents to work improving their communities?" Jones asked. He saw a new kind of club with the desire to help others.

As Business Club secretary, Jones, with help from his wife—the championship golfer Rose Amanda Freeman—wrote scores of letters to clubs nationwide inviting them to take up his idea for a service-centered organization. Businessmen interested in membership convened in Chicago, Illinois, and on June 7, 1917, Lions Clubs International was born.

Later that year, at Lions' inaugural convention in Dallas, Texas, Jones was elected secretary-treasurer, a title he would hold for many years. Eventually, the board bestowed upon Jones the title of secretary general for life.

Jones was a prolific writer who could be clear and forceful on some occasions, flowery and sentimental the next. His hand can be seen in founding documents like the Lions Clubs Objects and Code of Ethics. His columns in LION Magazine, which are still quoted today, helped articulate the organization's principles and values.



Melvin Jones (center) tames a lions cub in 1947.

He also loved aphorisms. Never one to sugarcoat the truth, Jones had one favorite saying neatly framed in his office: "Truth and roses have thorns about them."

Jones gave up the insurance business in 1926 to become Lions' de facto CEO and global goodwill ambassador. He played both roles brilliantly—building and managing an expanding headquarters operation and traveling constantly for club visits and speaking engagements. The pace never stopped.

Read the rest of the 100 Touchstone stories written for Lions' centennial at Lions100.org.

Club News

The **Penticton Lions Club** in **British Columbia, Canada**, has been filling backpacks with provisions to help the homeless for the past seven years. They're filled with essentials such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, facecloths and, depending on the season, wool caps, mittens and scarves knit by two Lions.

The **Rockaway Township Lions** in **New Jersey** held their white cane appeal in front of two supermarkets and raised \$1,700 in a single day. Funds will sponsor one or two campers this summer at Camp Marcella, a camp for visually or physically impaired children.

The **Hagerstown Lions Club** in **Maryland** gave \$1,000 scholarships each to seven graduating seniors.

The **Penn-Yan Lions Club** in **New York** sponsored a golf tournament and donated nearly \$15,000 to a cardiac rehabilitation program to help low-income patients pay for services.

In **Pennsylvania**, 18 of the 80 members of the **Pottsville Lions Club** are veterans, many of whom have served in combat from World War II to Iraq and Afghanistan. Numerous projects help veterans including the Hometown Heroes program. Photos and/or names of veterans are displayed on banners placed throughout Pottsville from Memorial Day until Veterans Day. The club also sponsors a free Thanksgiving meal for veterans at a restaurant, supports a program to help homeless vets and last year gave a vehicle to a veteran who needed transportation. Other veterans received gift cards donated by local businesses.

The **Utica Lions Club** in **Michigan** gave scholarships to four graduating seniors.



Spring Township Lions in **Pennsylvania** renovated a popular park picnic facility. Lions and their families volunteered more than 1,000 hours of labor to remove old siding and install new siding with two coats of paint to preserve it. They also completely rehabbed the facility's interior and installed a new stainless steel grill area with added benches and storage cabinets. Lions spent \$5,150 on materials.

Appalachian Lions in **Pennsylvania** have sponsored a "Back to School" program for 26 years. Lions pay for new clothing and supplies for low-income children who need assistance before school starts.

Camp Leo, a weeklong summer camp open to legally blind children in **South Carolina**, is sponsored by the **Hilton Head Island Lions Club**, the **Hilton Head Island Noon Lions Club** and the **Sun City Lions Club**. In 2015, the camp hosted 44 children who enjoyed kayaking, swimming, fishing, zip lining, miniature golf, crabbing and sailing. All services were donated. The camp has been held on Hilton Head Island since 1975.

The **Ventura Downtown Lions Club** in **California** donated \$50,000 toward the purchase of a \$100,000 retinal camera shuttle for the Ventura County Medical Center. The camera will enable doctors to diagnose retinopathy of prematurity, a leading cause of blindness in infants.

Laurel Springs Lions in **New Jersey** helped a family when their two-month daughter was diagnosed

with a rare eye disease that progresses to blindness. Their doctor contacted the **Lions Eye Bank of Delaware** and requested two corneas from the organization's Gratis Tissue Fund. The baby's corneal transplants were successful, and she no longer faces blindness.

Members of the **Neah-Kah-Nie High School Leo Club** in **Rockaway Beach, Oregon**, collect and recycle bottles and cans to raise money. The more than 40 members of the club also collect glasses for recycling, helped decorate a visitor center in Rockaway Beach, volunteer on highway cleanups, collect food and socks for those in need and help cook and serve at pancake breakfasts.



The annual car show of **Clifton Lions** in **Virginia** is a big draw. In 15 years, Lions have raised more than \$300,000 for service activities from this single event held over Labor Day weekend.

The **Naperville Noon Lions Club** in **Illinois** gave a \$25,000 donation to the Foundation Fighting Blindness for research into finding a cure for inherited retinal diseases that cause blindness.

The **Mount Washington Lions Club** in **Kentucky** regularly donates funds to the Bullitt County Court Appointed Special Advocates program, which provides guidance and assistance to children in the court system.

LION

STAFF

Editor-in-Chief: Sanjeev Ahuja

Managing Editor: Christopher Bunch

Senior Editor: Jay Copp

Graphics Manager: Connie Schuler

Graphic Designer: Christina Jacobs

Graphic Designer: Lisa Smith

11 issues published yearly by Lions Clubs International

300 W 22nd St. Oak Brook, IL 60523-8842

(630) 571-5466 / Fax: (630) 571-8890

lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org

http://www.lionsclubs.org

(ISSN 0024-4163) (R-124397233)

(PRINTED IN U.S.A.)

Official publication of Lions Clubs International. Published by authority of the Board of Directors in 20 languages—English, Spanish, Japanese, French, Swedish, Italian, German, Finnish, Korean, Portuguese, Dutch, Danish, Chinese, Norwegian, Icelandic, Turkish, Greek, Hindi, Indonesian and Thai.

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Anniversaries

OCTOBER 2016

100 Years*: Tulsa Downtown, Okla.; Muskogee, Okla.

95 Years: Eureka, Kan.; Metro Jackson, Miss.; Kingman, Kan.; Aberdeen, S.D.; Faribault, Minn.; Las Animas, Col.; Vernon, Texas; Buffalo Host, N.Y.; Billings, Mont.; Wichita Falls Founder, Texas; Northfield, Minn.; Grand Junction, Colo.

90 Years: Bucklin, Kan.; Klamath Falls, Ore.

85 Years: Lonaconing, Md.; Bay Shore, N.Y.; Orting, Wash.; Lemay Jefferson Barracks, Mo.; Grand Saline, Texas

80 Years: McConnellsburg, Pa.; Belle Fourche, S.D.; Babylon, N.Y.; Fairfield, Conn.; Highstown-East Windsor LC, N.J.; Goshen, Ind.

75 Years: Ysleta, Texas; Lakewood, Calif.; Manchester, Iowa; Concord, Mass.; Boones Mill, Va.; New Virginia, Iowa; Moses Lake, Wash.; Calhoun, Ky.; Andrews Downtown, Texas; Alturas, Calif.; Dansville, N.Y.; Spencerville, Ohio; Warrington Township, Pa.; Newfane, N.Y.; Huntsville, Ont., Can.; Wilson, N.Y.; Vienna, W. Va.; Odessa, Wash.; Berlin, Conn.; Denver Westwood, Colo.; Christiana, Pa.

50 Years: Flowers Cove, NL, Can.; McHenry, Ill.; Fayetteville, Texas; Pleasanton, Neb.; Salem, S.C.; Elm Creek, Neb.; Junction City, Wis.; Barkhamsted, Conn.; Magnetawan, Ont., Can.; Amqui, Que., Can.

25 Years: Buffalo, Texas; De Leon, Texas; Toronto Mabuhay, Ont., Can.; Deer Park, Texas

*Lions clubs operated before Lions Clubs held its first convention in Dallas on Oct. 8, 1917. Hence, the centennial of some clubs predates the centennial of Lions Clubs International.

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

Correction

Rachel Swartz was the treasurer of the Michigan State University Lions Club in 2015-16 (September LION). The LION Magazine regrets the error.



Dr. Franklyn Mgbemere of the **St. George's Lions Club in Grenada** checks one of the 43 people screened for vision problems. Lions gave eyeglasses to 42 people.

Del Rio Host Lions in Texas gave \$12,000 in scholarships to six Del Rio High School graduating seniors.

Athens Lions in Tennessee pay for prescription medications for low-income cataract patients.

The **Long Island Portuguese Lions Club in New York** collected nearly 1,000 nonperishable items for area food pantries.

Darlington Lions in South Carolina were among four groups who marked city storm drains with signs warning against pouring pollutants such as oil, grease and chemicals into them. Untreated storm water drains directly into waterways where people swim, fish and boat.

Members of the **White Oak Lions Club in Pennsylvania** honored four members who are veterans as part of challenge by 2015-16 District 14 B Governor Joe Donkin to recognize every Lion who served in WWII, Korea or Vietnam. Each veteran recognized by a club receives a certificate of appreciation; 85 men and women have so far been recognized for their service to their country.

The **St. Thomas East End Lions, St. Thomas East Lions** and the **Charlotte Amalie Lions** clubs in **St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands**, collected and shipped supplies to

Lions on Dominica, heavily damaged by Hurricane Erika. Clubs collected building supplies, food, water, school supplies and other provisions, which were shipped free of charge by a local company to help families including Lions recover.

In the past 15 years, the 40-member **Little Falls Lions Club in Minnesota** has donated more than \$500,000 back into the community and to charitable organizations. The club's popular Ribfest, during which more than 500 dinners are served annually, has helped boost its donations. Among recipients last year were the Minnesota Military Family Assistance Center, the Boys and Girls Club, Leader Dogs for the Blind, Special Olympics and the Pine Grove Park Zoo.

Members of the **Arlington Host Lions Club in Virginia** deliver a monthly collection of toiletries to Doorways, an organization for homeless women and families. The club also gave more than \$2,000 to Leader Dogs for the Blind and \$6,850 to 34 community organizations.

In **Washington, Fort Vancouver Lions** and members of the **Leo Legends Club** helped a school for the blind on Neighborhood Clean-Up Day. They cut grass, trimmed, weeded and hauled away debris.

Members of the **Rushford Lions Club in Minnesota** helped harvest between 8,000 to 10,000 pounds of vegetables and fruits with other community members at a farm. The produce was then delivered to several nonprofits and organizations including local schools and food pantries.

The **Nevada City Lions in California** sponsored a sight screening event at a park using the Northern California Lions Sight Association Sight Van. Lions screened 42 patients including 15 children.

Rehoboth Beach Lions in Delaware helped sponsor an eye mission to Peru for member Dr. Rodolfo Rios. Rios, a native of Peru, was assisted by local Lions and doctors from the National Institute of Ophthalmology who helped him complete 52 cataract surgeries in four days.

Lowell Lions in Indiana donated several large-print books to the public library.

The **Miami County Traveling Lions Club in Florida** provided free health screenings during its annual health fair, including cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes and vision testing.

The **Jane Lew Lions Club in West Virginia** sponsored a safety fair for children in a park. Members of law enforcement, EMS crews and firefighters explained to children what they do to keep the community safe.

In **New Jersey**, the **West Milford Lions** refurbished a bus shelter used by students.

The **Warwick Lions Club in New York** gave a donation to an assisted living home that pays for a weekly visit by a certified music therapist, who engages residents in an evening of singing, fun and even playing musical instruments.

The **Pacific Lions Club in Missouri** donated 27 backpacks and several boxes of school supplies to a school to help students in need and delivered necessities so that teachers would not have to pay for the goods themselves.

Spokane Central Lions in Washington rented a pool to host more than 500 children as part of an annual tradition. Each child received an ice cream treat from Lions.



Familiar, not Frightful

President Brandy R. Boyer of the Dakota County Technical College Lions Club, a Campus club in Minnesota, shows his pride in Lions by taking part in a Halloween pumpkin carving contest at Dakota County Technical College. He finished 4th out of 18.



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• Deadline for advance registration and hotel reservation. (*Registrations after this date will be processed in Chicago*). • 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 _____

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Daytime Phone _____ E-mail _____

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

COMPANION: First Name/ Family (Last) Name _____ Badge/Call Name _____

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

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

PACKAGE A:

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

☐ Before January 13, 2017 ☐ Reservation in delegation hotel
☐ After January 13, 2017 ☐ I prefer my delegation hotel ☐ Prefer another hotel

Hotel Name _____

Arrival Day/Date _____ Departure Day/Date _____

Number of Guests in Room _____ Number of Beds Needed ☐ 1 ☐ 2

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

The Hotel deposit is US\$200 per room. 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)

EVENT: MELVIN JONES FELLOW LUNCHEON

DATE/TIME	FEE	QUANTITY	AMOUNT DUE
July 3/ 13:30-15:00	US \$75	_____	\$ _____

EVENT: DISTRICT GOVERNOR/PAST DISTRICT GOVERNOR BANQUET

DATE/TIME	FEE	QUANTITY	AMOUNT DUE
July 3/ 20:00-22:00	US \$125	_____	\$ _____

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REGULAR (January 14 through March 31, 2017)	US\$180	US\$10	US\$60
LATE (April 1, 2017 – onsite)	US\$200	US\$10	US\$60

PACKAGE A:

Registrations: US\$ _____
Ticketed Events: US\$ _____
Hotel Deposit: US\$ 200.00
Total Due: US\$ _____

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

☐ Check # _____ ☐ Wire transfer (*payment slip must be attached to this form*) ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard Discover ☐ Discover

Name as it appears on card _____ *Credit card must be in the name of the registrant.*

Card Number _____ Expires Month/Year _____ Security code (3 digits) _____

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