

# LION

NOVEMBER 2018 LIONMAGAZINE.ORG

## THE DNA OF LIONS

Is Serving in the Genes?



Lions Clubs International

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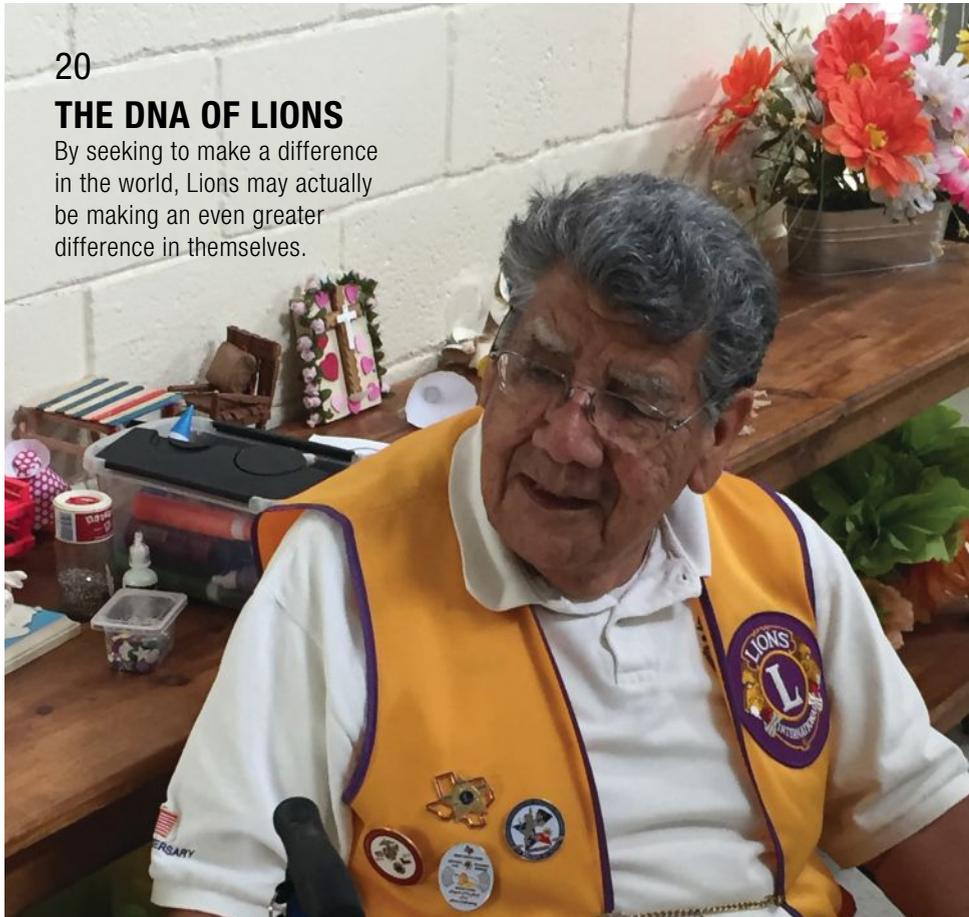
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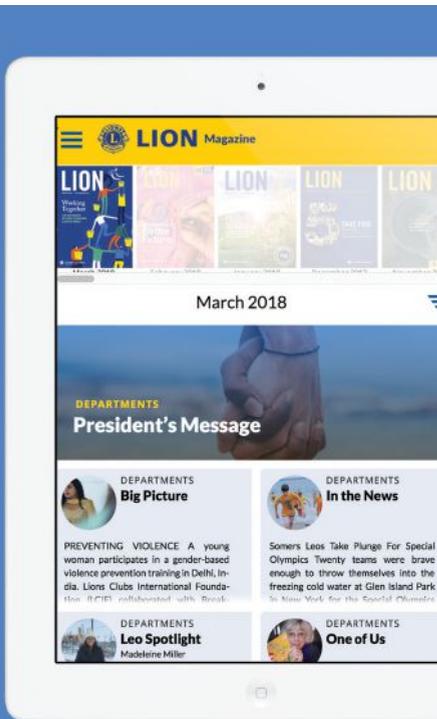
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Does your club have a unique tradition? Write to us at [lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org](mailto:lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org) and tell us about it. Use "Tradition" in your subject line.



## VIDEOS

### WHY I'M A LION

Lions talk about what drives them.

Want to start your own specialty club? See all the ways your unique interests can help your community.

### LIONS GLOBAL ACTION TEAM IS INSPIRING RESULTS AROUND THE WORLD

GAT specialists help you and your club grow.



## THE VAULT



### NOVEMBER 1952 BUILDING A BATH HOUSE FOR YOUTH

Charles City club erected a bath house complete with boiler and tool shed for "Camp Christie," a camp dedicated to local youth.



### MAY 1952 LIONS RESTORE GIRL'S VOICE

Leveraging their global presence, Lions arrange life-changing surgery for Aruban girl.

## HIGHER KEY AWARDS

Lions honored for sponsoring members.

## WE SERVE

### MISSION STATEMENT OF LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL:

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

### CONTACTING THE LION

For change of address, non-receipt of the magazine and other subscription issues, contact 630-468-6982 or [MemberServiceCenter@lionsclubs.org](mailto: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](mailto:lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org) or at 630-468-6798.

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# The Heart of Lions

Hello, Lions!

**Y**ou are all aware of how important my family is to me. You might have seen them on stage with me at convention, or heard me talking about my granddaughter at an event.

I believe that the world of Lions is a great place for family. What better way to teach your kids—through action—how to care for those in need around them? I have come across many families who have made service a family tradition, with three or four generations serving in the same club.

But we are not all born into families who are service-minded. Yet each of us are Lions because we found something in our hearts that called us to serve. And this thing in our hearts, it's not from the DNA our parents gave us. But it is a part of us just the same.

And it's this "gene" that unites us. We are bonded by the common values we hold—our beliefs that the world could be better if everyday people like us take action. We don't wait for others to do the work. We do it ourselves. We organize, we serve, and we work together toward a brighter future for all. This is what makes a Lion family.

I encourage you all to remember the fellowship that is essential to being a Lion, and to welcome new members not into a club, but into a family. After all, it's this family—that we've created for ourselves with people who share the love of service in their hearts—that can be the ties that sustain us throughout our lives. 

Yours,



**Gudrun Yngvadottir**  
International President, Lions Clubs International



We Serve.

## Looking Good

Bob Harshbarger of the Normal Lions Club holds a mirror for a Special Olympian at the Special Olympics Lions Club International Opening Eyes program held at Illinois State University's Redbird Arena in Normal, Illinois on Saturday, June 16, 2018.

📷 PHOTO BY STEVE SMEDLEY





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# The Wall That Heals

A Minnesota veteran stops to reflect before the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall where the names of 58,286 killed or missing Vietnam veterans are listed. The Waconia Lions in Minnesota took 142 Korean and Vietnam War veterans on a one-day trip to Washington D.C. See story on page 38.



📷 PHOTO BY MAREN DELANEY



**BIG PICTURE**





## When Lions Swarm

Neil Pergande, an 86-year-old Wisconsin farmer who suffered a stroke, watches out the door as the Larsen-Winchester Lions build a wheelchair ramp for him. His was the club's 1,000th ramp Lions have built for those in need. See story in the October issue at [lionmagazine.org](http://lionmagazine.org).

## Group Ceremony Boosts District Camaraderie

In an exemplary display of community and fellowship, Lions of District 3233 E1 in India came together to participate in a historic joint installation of officers. Eighty of the district's 148 clubs participated, installing officers for 15 new clubs and 65 existing clubs on July 29, 2018, in Jaipur, India.

Conceived by District Governor Shakuntala Goyal as a way to reduce the costs of individual ceremonies and promote trust and fellowship among Lions of a large district, the event is believed to be the first of its kind in India.

More than 900 Lions attended.



Lions from 80 clubs in India are installed in one joint ceremony on July 29, 2018.

## Looking Ahead

International Leo Day  
12/5

What does your club have planned? For service ideas, check out archived issues of Lion Magazine at [lionmagazine.org](http://lionmagazine.org).



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
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# December 2018



IP Yngvadottir tries out the inclusive playground at Smiles Park, built by the Civitan Club in 2017 from funds raised in the community, including a donation from the Greater Ouachita Lions Club in Monroe, LA.

## IP Yngvadottir Makes Time for Monroe, LA

International President Gudrun Yngvadottir made a last-minute adjustment to her tight schedule to visit Monroe, Louisiana, where two clubs organized an all-women's chapter, made up primarily of young professionals.

The Monroe Downtown and Greater Ouachita Lions clubs invited Yngvadottir to attend as they chartered the first all-women's club in Louisiana.

"They were doing something new and different and I thought they should be recognized," Yngvadottir told the News Star.

Yngvadottir was presented a key to the city of Monroe by Mayor Jamie Mayo, and told the News Star that the new northeastern Louisiana club is symbolic of an effort to engage more women and younger members.

"It celebrates new voices and the contribution of women in Lions," said Yngvadottir.

## OVERHEARD

“My heart to serve soared when I realized how powerful is the network of people that I am in.”

—**Stella Foo**, Lions Club of Kuala Lumpur City in Malaysia.

“We’re not young, but we have young spirits. Rather than just meet and eat, we want to meet, eat, and do.”

—**Carol Marshall**, Albuquerque Breakfast Lions in New Mexico.

“Of course, Lions are trying to recruit young members, but to the older members, I’d say, ‘Don’t be scared by young people. You have strengths we do not have. We have strengths you may not have. We can help each other.’”

—**Brandon Johnson**, District Governor, 12N, in Tennessee.

“I have my own idiosyncrasies...I hate driving, especially at night or in areas that are a bit risky. I have found that my Lions club has always accommodated me. People make sure that you get home safely and that you are fine.”

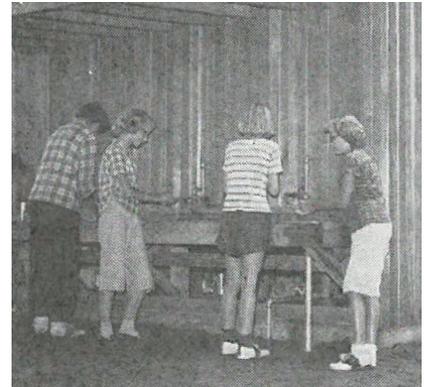
—**Nina Taylor**, East London Port Rex Lions in South Africa.

## 66 YEARS AGO IN THE LION

November 1952

### Building a Bath House for Youth

Charles City club erected a bath house complete with boiler and tool shed for “Camp Christie,” a camp dedicated to local youth.



## BY THE NUMBERS

552

Lugs (boxes) of peaches the Aurora Lions Club sold this year during its annual peach fundraiser.

4

U.S. dollars it will set you back to purchase a sheet of 10 Icelandic Christmas stamps sold by the Reykjavik Thor Lions Club in Iceland.

100

Volunteer hours per year at which participants in a 2002 study were found to benefit from better health and lower mortality.

13

Number of heated cabins spread across 264 acres of Indiana woodland set aside by District 25F Lions for those with special needs.

22

Feet in length of custom trailer built to haul the Castaic Lions’ lighted Christmas float.



Kindness Matters in Promoting

# PEACE

## IMAGINE

600,000 children sharing their visions of peace

## INSPIRE

Youth to showcase their talent

## CREATE

Stronger ties in your community

Don't miss your opportunity to sponsor the **31st annual Lions International Peace Poster Contest!**

Give kids in your community a creative way to express their visions of why *Kindness Matters*, the theme for the 2018-19 Peace Poster Contest. Order your Peace Poster Kit to play a key role in engaging young people and promoting peace around the world. Get complete contest details at [lionsclubs.org](http://lionsclubs.org).

*Kindness Matters.* It starts with you and your club.

Order your Peace Poster Kit today!

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[#peaceposter](https://twitter.com/peaceposter)

ICELAND

# Stamps Decorate Christmas Mail in Long-Standing Nordic Tradition

If you're lucky enough to get a Christmas card in the mail, you're lucky enough. It means someone is thinking of you.

But if the envelope is adorned with Christmas stamps from Iceland, others are benefitting as well. It means someone probably bought the stamps from the Reykjavik Thor Lions, supporting one of their favorite charities—Dadahus, a summer home for children and adults with special needs.

Thor Lions started selling Christmas stamps in 1967 when many of the club members were artists, and they have sold stamps every year since, says Gunnar Mar Hauksson, a Lion for 50 years.

The stamps are purely decorative, an old-time tradition brought to Iceland from Denmark, and popular in Sweden and Norway as well. Stamp collectors buy them, but so do individuals and companies that want to support a good cause and add a little extra touch to their holiday greetings.

“These were designed just to tell people that there was a Christmas card in the mail,” says Lion Oli Jon Hertervig, flipping gently through a thick album that stores his club’s collection. “The only problem is that now people aren’t sending as many Christmas cards as they once did. They are using computers more and stamps less and less.”

Typically a sheet of 10 stamps costs ISK400, or US\$4, Hertervig says. On good years, the Reykjavik Thor Lions make ISK200,000 to 300,000 (US\$1,840 to \$2,700) selling the small pieces of artwork.

The stamps often feature a church scene. “Probably because, as you know, in every country there are a lot of churches, and Iceland is not lagging behind,” Hertervig says. But this year the stamp will be designed by a child with disabilities.

Thor Lion Daniel Omar Viggooson, who has a 9-year-old son in a wheelchair, says his club’s support of Dadahus means a lot to families like his who benefit from the house not only being more affordable, but accessible. The home, named for Viggooson’s stepbrother, Dadi, who died at age 6, is owned by Throskahjalp, a national organization in Iceland that fights for the rights and promotes the interests of people with intellectual

disabilities and challenges. Lions assist with home maintenance and have purchased equipment for the house, including furniture, appliances, and a lift to assist those with severe disabilities.

“Making these changes and buying equipment to increase accessibility is really expensive,” says Viggooson. “Throskahjalp would not be able to do that without our [Lions’] help.”



Dadahus, the accessible summer house supported by Thor Lions in Iceland, is named for a young boy, Dadi. His grandmother and uncle made a plaque with his picture to identify the home.



## SOUTH AFRICA

# Pop-Up Soup Kitchens Celebrate South African Icon

“It is in your hands to create a better world for all who live in it.”—Nelson Mandela

The Lions of Potchefstroom celebrated the centenary of the birth of a social justice icon by relieving hunger in their community.

Nelson Mandela was born in 1918, and 100 years later his legacy is celebrated through the work of others looking to meet the needs of those in their local communities. The Potchefstroom Lions heeded this call with pop-up soup kitchens designed to help relieve hunger by providing a warm meal to underprivileged children and the elderly each week of July, Mandela’s birth month.

The club leveraged partnerships from a local bakery, which supplied the bread, and a grocery distributor to gather the bulk of the food, then sponsored the remainder with donations from club members.

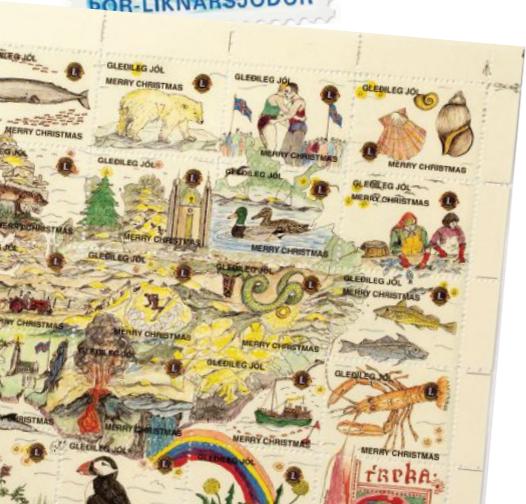
The project began with an estimated 20 liters of soup to serve 60 to 100 people per pop-up event. This was exceeded the first day and continued to grow every week. The club served 140 people the first week, 188 the second, 181 the third, and 291 people on the final day.

A total of 800 hungry souls were served. The visibility of the project in the community also attracted a number of interested volunteers who helped at the events, opening the door to new members inspired by the service.

The Potchefstroom Lions are looking to use the momentum they’ve created to potentially make pop-up soup kitchens a signature event, furthering the legacy of Nelson Mandela to build a more values-based society.



Reykjavik Thor Lions Gunnar Mar Hauksson and Oli Jon Hertervig look over the collection of Christmas stamps the club has sold in Iceland for 50 years.



Potchefstroom Lions attend to the many hungry visitors to their pop-up soup kitchens in celebration of Nelson Mandela.

USA

# Christmas Float Collects Big Donations As it Brings Santa—and a Little Magic—to Neighbors

Christmas may be the season of magic, but in Castaic, California, it's the Lions club that brings Santa to town.

The Castaic Lions are preparing once again to bring Santa and his rooftop reindeer out of storage, treating residents to their lively Lions Santa Float—a 32-year tradition designed to bring joy to the children and food to needy families.

Each night, for 10 nights before Christmas, the Lions help another community group take the float Lions constructed to a different neighborhood in town, delivering Christmas cheer and collecting donations.



Lion Jeff Preach brought the idea with him when he moved to Castaic 32 years ago, starting humbly with a small motorcycle trailer and seven reindeer because he could not afford eight. He built the prototype, but Lions and Lion friends with movie set experience soon pitched in to help, creating a lavish, lighted float that now requires a 22-foot custom trailer and a large diesel truck to pull it.

Preach stores the float all year, except for the 10 days when it is in operation. Lion James Perry provides the technical maintenance to keep the float in shape. Other Lion volunteers handle everything from the music vehicle that precedes the

float to announce Santa's arrival, to the advertising, organizing, collecting, and sorting of food. They help Santa prepare each night for his four-hour appearance when the float pauses for the children, and Lions buy candy canes to be handed out by Santa's elves—jolly elves who also happen to be Lions.

Last year the Castaic Lions collected more than 10,000 pounds of food and 200 used eye glasses when the Santa float made its way through the neighborhoods.

“We’re very fortunate to have club members who have the facilities and the know-how to keep it stored and updated. Actually, we have it down to an art now,” says Lion Keith Schmidt, a float co-chairman. “It’s a tradition here, and people love it. In fact, we’re now seeing second and third generations of families bringing their children to see Santa with the Lions.”

USA

## Peace in the Woods, for All Abilities

Back in the 1980s, the Lions of Indiana District 25F bought 264 acres of pristine woods near Connersville, on the east side of their state, carved a path through the forest, and built a shelter house with stone fireplaces at each end.

It was the start of Camp Woodsmoke, a place where those with special needs would always be at the top of the list.

Now Facebook fans call the campground “a little slice of heaven.”

“We have people with every disability you can think of come out to Woodsmoke. And to see the fun the people have, well, the Lions can be very proud,” says caretaker Paul Bowling, a disabled Army veteran who lives on the property with his wife, Betty.

Over the years, Lions have invested money, time, and sweat, expanding the original structure into a camp that includes 13 heated cabins, an amphitheater, a pavilion, a full-size kitchen, a chapel, and a playground. Everything is disabled accessible, including the woods, thanks to concrete and paved walkways.

“It’s the best-kept secret in Indiana,” says Pike Township Lion David Straughn, who lives 90 miles from camp but helps on Lions’ spring and fall cleanup days.



“There’s always something to be done down there. It just takes time and money and volunteers.”

There is no charge for staying at the camp, although it costs Lions US\$2,000 to \$3,000 a month to maintain it. Visitors are just asked to donate what they can.

Bowling says 4,000 to 5,000 kids visit the camp each year in warm and cold weather. Not all have special needs, but most do. The site is also open to private organizations, churches, and families. However, says camp fan Michelle Yocum, “This is the one place I’ve seen where the disabled can bump someone else off the list. They always come first.”

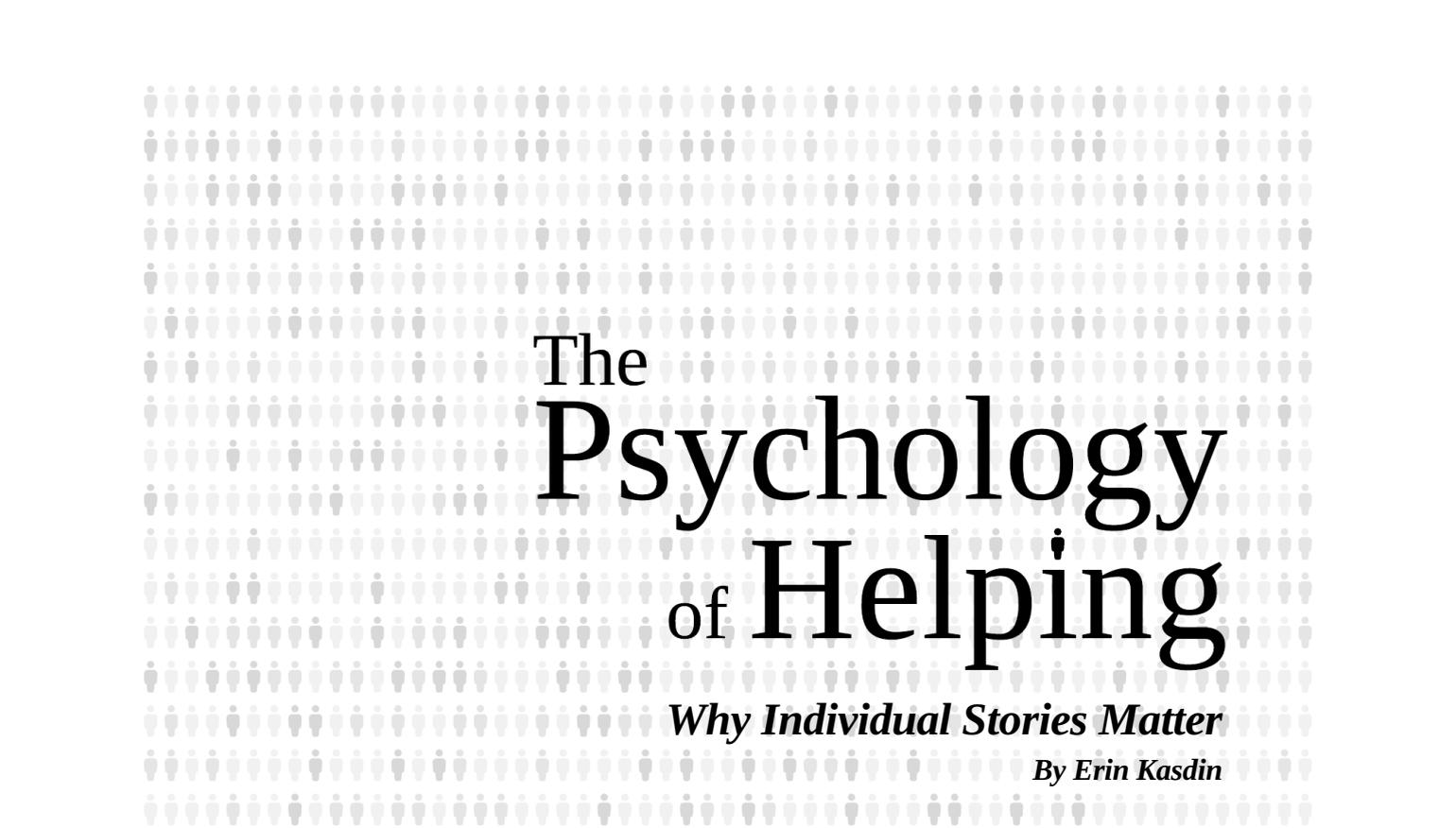
Yocum, who has supported special needs persons and their caregivers for 31 years, recently went to camp with about 200 clients from LEL Home Services in Indiana. She will go again this year with Special Olympics participants.

“It’s a beautiful place. You just feel at peace there, but what’s so special is that you get to see people—

most of whom have never been camping—get to do what they really enjoy because everything is accessible, even the trail through the woods,” she says. “It’s a place where these people can for once step out of the box.”

One group in particular has become a great help to Lions at camp. Members of the Connersville, Indiana chapter of the international Iron Order Motorcycle Club, show up almost weekly to help with everything from mowing and painting to cooking for Lion get-togethers and camp attendees. The Bowling’s son, Paul, a disabled veteran, says he and his club “brothers” help at the camp for one reason: “Because we completely support what Lions are doing out there. It’s a special place for special people.”

The senior Bowling, described by others as “a Godsend,” says many Lions have invited him to join their club. “My heart and soul is Camp Woodsmoke,” he responds. “I’m thinking about it.”



# The Psychology of Helping

*Why Individual Stories Matter*

*By Erin Kasdin*

**W**hen a photo appeared in September 2015 of a three-year-old Syrian boy who drowned while trying to reach Europe with his family, the world seemed to momentarily open its eyes to a refugee crisis that had been quietly building for years.

The boy's name was Alan Kurdi, and in the wake of his death donations to charities helping refugees surged. Migrant Offshore Aid Station, an international humanitarian aid organization dedicated to providing aid and emergency medical relief to refugees and migrants around the world, received a "tidal wave of support." Donations to the Red Cross, which had set up a fund specifically to aid Syrian refugees in the weeks before Alan's death, were 100 times greater during the week after publication of the photo than the week before.

According to The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in 2015 there was an estimated 60 million refugees worldwide (a number that has since grown to 69 million in 2018). More than 3,770 people died trying to cross the Mediterranean to reach Europe that year. But it took the image of a boy, face-down on a Turkish beach, for the world to wake up to the crisis.

It is true that a picture is worth a thousand words. But there's more to it than that.

Paul Slovic, President of Decision Research and Professor of Psychology at the University of Oregon who studies risk and decision-making, has a simple explanation for this sudden surge in interest and action: the human brain is bad at math.

In what Slovic calls the "arithmetic of compassion," the human brain fails to multiply one person's suffering by millions. In fact, he says, research shows that "the more who die, the less we care."

## Psychic Numbing

The refugee crisis wasn't new, but the photo tapped into what the human brain does best: empathize with the individual. In that one photo, many people saw their own child at that age. Or their nephew or grandson or little brother. They could connect emotionally, and that enabled them to respond with action.

Slovic's research has shown that statistics of mass tragedies don't elicit the emotional response required to provoke action. This is because the brain has two different ways of processing information: fast and slow. Fast thinking relies on instinct and is what we typically call our "gut reaction." Slow thinking relies on careful deliberation and logic. People tend to rely on fast thinking in most daily decision-making. But intuitive feelings don't do math very well.

The brain is unable to empathize with groups, so when presented with a large number of people affected by a tragedy, we can't add up the suffering of one and translate it to the many. This emotional insensitivity is called psychic numbing, and it doesn't just apply to large groups of people. The effect is seen when the number goes from just one to two. "People will risk their own life to save one person nearby," says Slovic. "But as numbers increase, the lives don't feel as valuable."

## False Sense of Inefficacy

In addition to psychic numbing, good intentions are often derailed by a false sense that what we can do won't help.

In one study Slovic and his team gave two groups of participants an opportunity to help a starving child. In one group, the participants were shown just the photo of the child. In the second group, they were shown the photo accompanied by statistics about the number of children starving in that region of the world. The researchers thought the statistics might encourage more people to donate. They did not. The participants who saw the statistics donated 40% less. It turns out, people didn't feel as good donating to one child when there were many more they could not help.

***"We help others not only because they need our help, but because we get a good feeling—a warm glow—when we help them," says Slovic. "The trouble is that it doesn't feel as good to help someone when our attention is drawn to the fact that there are others whom we are not able to help."***

The emotional system in the brain lets in irrelevant factors that dampen the positive influence of helping. It is wired to search for clues that an action is "good," and will resist actions that may be associated with "less good" or "bad" outcomes.

A number of studies have shown that the percentage of people helped is more important in decision-making than the number of people helped. A percentage gives the brain boundaries from which to evaluate the action. For instance, Slovic found that college students were more likely to support an airport safety measure that helped save 98% of 150

lives at stake versus a measure designed to save 150 lives.

This is illogical. But the problem lies in the perception of what is "good." One hundred and fifty is just a number, with nothing to give it context. Ninety-eight percent of 150 is "most" of the at-risk lives, and therefore "good."

## Even Partial Solutions Save Whole Lives

Slovic notes that it's important to understand these psychological effects, because that is the only way to overcome them. We can't assume statistics will capture the attention of the community or motivate them to take action, no matter how large the numbers.

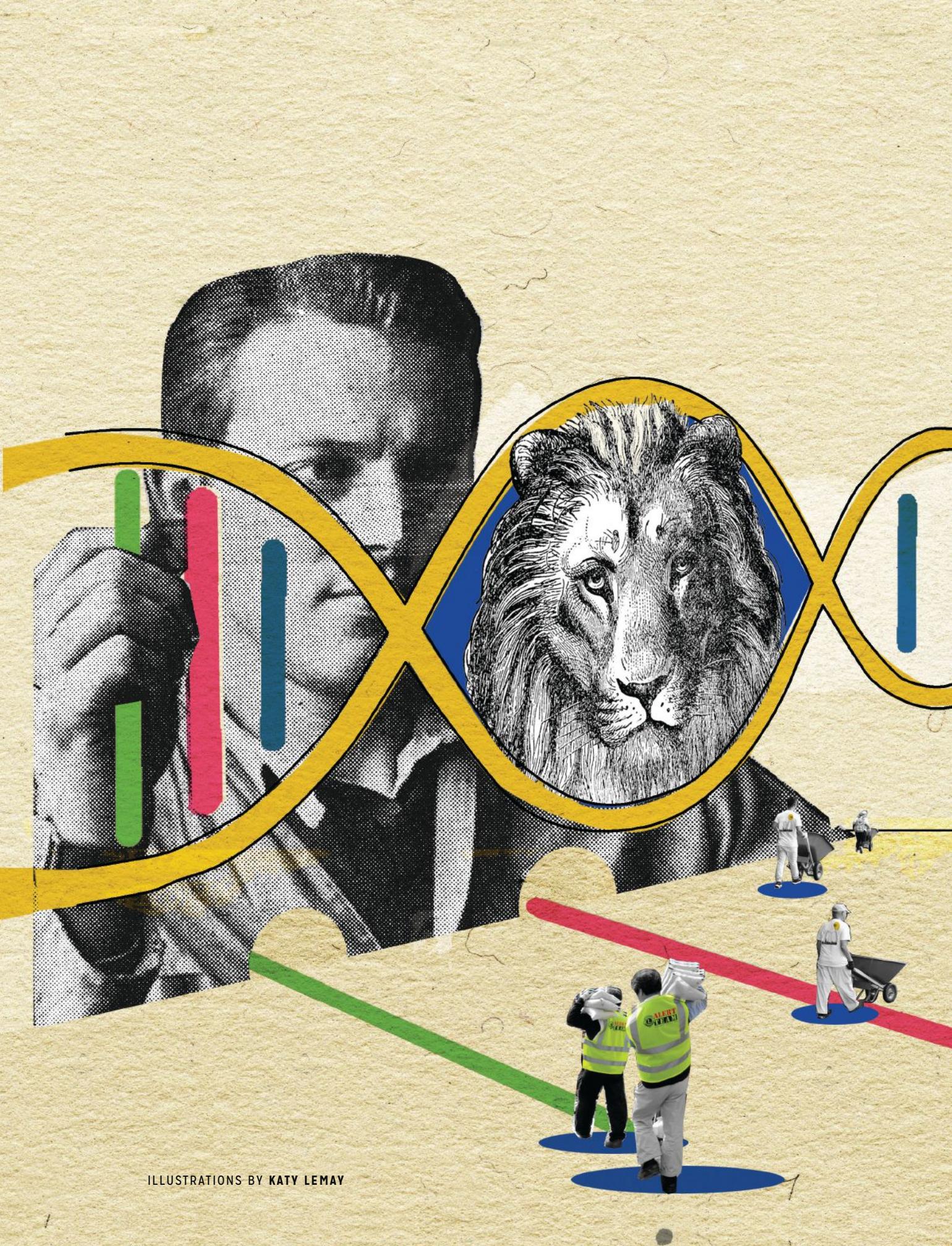
"I want to emphasize that the indifference to suffering...is not the result of the behavior of 'bad people,'" says Slovic, in a talk he gave in Kenya in June 2018. "It results from psychological tendencies that affect all of us if we don't understand how they work and take steps to prevent them from misleading us."

"Be aware and protect against the false sense of inefficacy," he says. "None of us can fix these problems by ourselves, but we can all do something meaningful. Even small actions can make a difference to one or more individuals." 🗣️

## What This Means for Lions

Steps you can take to overcome psychological barriers to action and engage your community in causes that matter:

- 🗣️ **Make it personal** – Tell the individual stories of those in need on social media or through local media.
- 🗣️ **Bring beneficiaries to life** – Communicate the hopes and dreams of those impacted by your cause.
- 🗣️ **Give concrete ways to help** – This helps people envision the process and outcomes.
- 🗣️ **Think small** – Show your community how a small effort can make a big impact, even if it doesn't "fix" the whole problem.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY KATY LEMAY

# THE DNA OF LIONS

BY SEEKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN  
THE WORLD, LIONS MAY ACTUALLY BE  
MAKING AN EVEN GREATER  
DIFFERENCE IN THEMSELVES

BY JOAN CARY AND ERIN KASDIN



## WHAT DRIVES LIONS TO SERVE

Some people ask 89-year-old Robert ‘Rocco’ Viera, “Don’t you just want to go fishing?”

But the 49-year El Paso Del Norte Lion in Texas laughs at the silly question. “This is my fishing. This is my hobby,” he says. “This is my retirement.”

“This” is Viera’s passion for being a Lion and helping the hearing impaired.

According to Barry Greenwald, clinical psychologist and Associate Professor of Psychology Emeritus at the University of Illinois at Chicago, there are a lot of different reasons why people choose to donate their time,

and a lot of it depends on where you are in your cycle of life. The person who chooses to volunteer at retirement is different from someone who may be looking for a way to gain insight and direction for a future career (like a medical student donating time at a local health clinic). Others, he says, are just those kinds of people. “It’s in their personality.”

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## THE HEART TO SERVE

**ROBERT 'ROCCO' VIERA,  
89, EL PASO DEL NORTE  
LIONS CLUB, TEXAS**

Viera grew up in El Paso's Second Ward, El Segundo Barrio, a historic Hispanic neighborhood that is often called "the other Ellis Island" because so many people immigrate through the area. They had no water and no electricity. He had to go outside to brush his teeth, and walk wherever he needed to be. In 1952, he married his high school sweetheart, Grace, and he joined the U.S. Air Force.

Years later, Viera found himself unable to communicate with the deaf people who worked for him. He noted how segregated, isolated, and underserved they were, so he went to school to learn sign language. Admired for his dedication, he was invited to join Lions.

Over the years Viera grew more and more involved in assisting others. Now, he says, what stands in the way most often is the lack of financial resources.

"It's hard. Money is very limited, especially for the hearing impaired," he says. "But we are very united in our cause. And we help each other. We always all support each other. You have to have the heart, the passion to do what Lions do."

*VIERA IS JUST ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE.*

Although he prefers to think of himself as “just a boy from the barrio that did well,” Lion Viera served diligently as chairman of the District 2-T3 Lions Hearing and Speech Committee for 41 years. He formed a partnership with the non-profit community development center Clinica de Salud Familiar La Fe, and at Le Fe, founded the Lions’ Hearing Aid Bank.

He has spearheaded Lion volunteers assisting nurses and teachers in identifying students with potential hearing loss, and personally identified, counseled, and referred countless others in need of help and hearing aids. And all this has not only benefitted his community, but inspired the Lions around him, enough so that he was nominated for El Pasoan of the Year in 2017.

“I was fortunate to have good parents,” he says. “They were humble, hardworking people, and they taught me the importance of helping others.

I guess that’s why I’m a Lion. To be a good Christian.”

Nina Taylor, of the East London Port Rex Lions Club in South Africa, became a Lion because she wanted to give back after so many years spent immersed in her own studies. “I decided I wanted to make a difference,” she says. “I always had a passion for people and helping others.” She joined a different service-oriented club at school but eventually dropped out. “I hated every second because it was all about raising funds,” she says. “You never saw where it went.”

Greenwald says it’s common for people to begin volunteering when facing a transition in life. It gives them a chance to redefine themselves, find an identity, and gives them a sense of purpose. Especially for older adults, who tend to experience an identity crisis when they retire, volunteering gives them something new to build their life around. “It’s an excellent antidote to being depressed,” he says. Research backs this up. It turns out, by seeking to make a difference in the world, Lions

may actually be making an even greater difference in themselves.

The Corporation for National & Community Service reviewed research on the health benefits of volunteering. According to their report, a growing body of evidence indicates that there are significant health benefits for those who serve. The impressive number of Lions turning 100 years old endorses what these studies have quantified: Volunteering helps you live longer, and in better health.

*ONE STUDY FOUND THAT THE BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING WERE ACTUALLY GREATER FOR THOSE DOING THE SERVICE WORK THAN FOR THOSE WHO WERE GETTING THE HELP.*

And it’s not just the service work alone that makes the difference. One study found that membership in voluntary associations—not just doing volunteer activities—had a significant positive effect on longevity and duration of good health. It also improved a

person's sense of well-being and ability to get out and do things into old age (like go to a movie, attend church, visit friends, walk up and down stairs, or do heavy work around the house).

Besides being generally enjoyable, volunteering gives people an opportunity to fulfill something that may be missing in their day-to-day lives, says Greenwald. As opposed to paid work, "With volunteering you can be flexible, write some of your own rules," he says. For those at risk of depression, "Doing something throws you back into the world."

It's also a self-fulfilling prophecy. One study from the 1980s showed that those who volunteered reported higher levels of happiness, life satisfaction, self-esteem, a sense of control over life, and physical health—including lower levels of depression—three years later. And those who had originally reported higher levels of happiness and overall health and lower levels of depression at the beginning of the study were more likely to volunteer three years later. What this indicates is that people who are healthier and happier tend to volunteer more. And, volunteering makes you happier and healthier.

## WHY DOESN'T EVERYONE DO IT?

"Some fear getting involved," says Carol Marshall, of the Albuquerque Breakfast Lions Club in New Mexico. "They fear they are incapable because they haven't done it before."

When Doug Day, also an Albuquerque Breakfast Lion, first visited New Mexico's largest homeless shelter, Joy Junction, and saw the condition of the "library"—a walk-in closet stacked floor to ceiling with books, like a giant Jenga game ready to tumble—he thought "no." He couldn't fix that.

But then he started to think "yes."

It took hours, weeks, months. Over the days at the shelter, his perception of the homeless changed. He is honored now that he doesn't just know the clients' names, but they know his. They greet him by name at the door. That might have never happened if his original hesitancy to serve had lingered.

Sometimes, Marshall is quick to admit, she gets frustrated that other Lions don't want to serve the way she does: Often and with gusto. Although the club serves lunch to the homeless once a month, she and Day go every Friday. They also clean up

and restock the newly rebuilt library, and take on a multitude of other serving opportunities with other organizations.

But every Lion has to give in their own way, she learned.

*"IF I SEE PEOPLE IN NEED OF HELP AND IT'S IN MY CAPACITY, I WANT TO GET IT DONE. THAT'S HOW I FEEL EACH AND EVERY TIME," SAYS MARSHALL.*

"So many people need help, and I really feel like if you're well and you can afford to do things, you have an obligation to help others," says Day. "But you also have to recognize that not everyone is meant to be active in serving. Everyone serves differently, and that's OK. We all do what we can."

Brandon Johnson, DG for district 12N in Eastern Tennessee, thinks there are some practical—and preventable—reasons people don't get more involved as well. "Lions don't like to publicize what they do," he says. "I want to share what Lions do with as many people in as many ways as possible, including all forms of social media. That's how we get other people involved in serving. We need to promote what we do so others want to be a part of it."

# WHEN I BECAME A LION

BRANDON JOHNSON, 24,  
DG IN DISTRICT 12N

Every time DG Brandon Johnson in eastern Tennessee inducts a new member into Lions, he says, “Welcome to our family.”

The youngest district governor in the organization, 24-year-old Johnson officially became a Lion on his 18th birthday.

But it wasn’t until November of 2016, when high winds spread a wildfire from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to Gatlinburg, 80 miles from Johnson’s hometown of La Follette, that he had his “come to Jesus” moment, he says.

People were dying. Homes were being destroyed, and Johnson, then a second vice district governor, was lying in bed at 3 a.m., watching live tweets of the devastation.

“I’m a Lion. Why am I lying here?” he asked himself.

The next day there was a US\$10,000 emergency grant from LCI, Lions were serving on the ground, and Johnson had begun fundraising efforts that would net them another US\$40,000 for fire relief. Among the Lions on the ground was Johnson, who met a young single mother with four or five children who lost their home. Their basic needs were being met with food, clothes, and shelter, but she needed a blender to puree food for her smallest, a special needs child.



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“That’s not something you would think about in a fire,” says Johnson. “A blender? But I was able to get this for her, and that was the moment.”

“That was the moment,” he says. “For the first time I really knew, ‘Wow. This is what it means to be a Lion.’ Those kinds of stories happen all the time, all over the world.”



**NELSON CRUZ**, PRESIDENT OF DADE CITY HISPANIC AMERICAN LIONS, SEES BEING A LION AS A FAMILY AFFAIR.



THE CUB PROGRAM HELPED REVIVE AN AGING METAIRIE AIRLINE LIONS CLUB, BRINGING IN YOUNG FAMILIES WHO SEE LIONS AS A WAY TO TEACH THEIR KIDS THE VALUE OF GIVING BACK.

## THE CLUB REFLECTS THE HEART OF ITS MEMBERS.

Perhaps part of the appeal of the club is the opportunity to belong. It's possible to find a club in your community that reflects who you are, while still being part of a worldwide organization.

“What’s so great about this platform is how flexible it is,” says Mindy Marks, Division Manager for District and Clubs at Lions headquarters in Oakbrook, Illinois. “Each club has the power to decide what they want to do. A group of people can see a need in their community, come together, and solve that problem.”

*“IT REALLY IS YOUR CLUB, YOUR WAY,” SHE SAYS.*

This is especially true of the growing number of specialty clubs popping up. Specialty clubs offer the opportunity for groups of people who already have something in common to give something back to the community, together.



**CAROL MARSHALL AND DOUG DAY, OF THE ALBUQUERQUE BREAKFAST LIONS, VOLUNTEER EVERY WEEK AT NEW MEXICO'S LARGEST HOMELESS SHELTER, MARSHALL LOVES THE "GOOD TIRED" SHE FEELS AFTER A BUSY DAY OF VOLUNTEERING.**

Whether it's retirees, professionals, sport enthusiasts, cultural groups, or those united for a common cause, these people are already united under a common interest. By joining Lions, they have the opportunity to come together and use their special talents to help those in need around them.

Often, these are people who might never have imagined they'd be part of a service organization, but find that it enhances the joy they get from what they were already doing. "This is something that I would not have seen myself doing in [my] younger years," says Jason Nunn, from the Anchorage

Racing Lions Club. "It's a lot of fun and it's very rewarding."

Indeed, Lions have a unique way of looking at membership. "Even though the form is so traditional, it can be whatever people make it," says Marks. "In a way, every club is a specialty club."



## BUT WHY LIONS?

There are other ways to give back. Why do Lions choose to become Lions?

*“LIONS ARE FAMILY,” SAYS DAY. “THAT’S ONE OF THE BENEFITS. LIONS DON’T JUST HELP OTHERS, EVERYBODY PITCHES IN TO HELP WHEN A LION NEEDS HELP, TOO.”*

Viera echoes this feeling. “My club is very much like a family club. We’re very united. We help each other. Although we might not agree, we always support each other.”

For Club President Nelson Cruz, Lions are, literally, his family. Cruz is president of the Dade City Hispanic American Lions Club in Dade City, Florida. He has always been active in his community. As a letter carrier, he sees it as his responsibility to look after the neighborhood and its citizens. He always carries cards with information for domestic abuse survivors and makes sure he knows where all available housing is in the area.

“Sometimes a small gesture is all it takes,” he says. “I might see a kid who’s out in his yard and ask ‘Why aren’t you in school

today?’ Simple conversation can make a difference.”

Cruz joined Lions after he saw a presentation on what the club was about and he realized he could help, given his intimate knowledge of the community and its needs. “I had to bring it back to my family though,” he says. Cruz knew he wouldn’t always be available for the meetings or service projects, and he wanted to make sure that when he couldn’t be there, a member of his family could be. “If I believe in it,” he says, “I have to educate my family to get them to also believe in it. We’re trying to make it a way of life.”

And that’s just what PDG Chris Carlone, 55, is hoping to do for the kids in his club’s Cub Program. A couple years ago his club, the Metairie Airline Lions Club in Metairie, Louisiana, consisted of a dedicated group of four to six folks in their very golden years. “The youngest one other than my wife and I was 81,” says Carlone.

He learned his first year as club president that he’d have to take it easy with them. After a can-shaking project for white cane day, they all gathered and told him what a great job he did—and to never do it again. “We’re

too old for that,” they said. And they really were, concedes Carlone. These were guys who loved Lions and who wanted to give back, but their energy was limited.

Then he happened to run into a woman he had known as a little girl. She had grown up next to Carlone and expressed her gratitude at having him as a role model. “I want my kids to give back, too” she said. Her kids and some friends had decided they wanted to go read to children in the hospital, she told Carlone. However, it turned out it wasn’t that easy.

“You need background checks, liability insurance, etc.” says Carlone. “They don’t let just anyone in off the streets.” Carlone suggested they join Lions and do the project as part of the Cubs Program. So his former neighbor joined—and so did 13 other moms (and one dad) with their kids.

Cubs now come to the Metairie Airline club meetings regularly with their parents. Each child is challenged to come up with a project of their own and lead the other kids as they do it.

“This is not a babysitting job,” says Carlone. “It’s designed for kids to learn what it’s like to



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give back. Each one of these kids had the philanthropy blood in them. They just needed an avenue to do it.”

The older members are proud of their club’s new life. “They do all kinds of stuff,” says Carlone. “It has been the life-saving boost of our club.”

### IS IT IN THE GENES?

“I don’t know, I’m not a scientist,” says Carlone. “Everyone has a different story as to why they join. But kids are smart, they listen. And if you come home and talk about how you got one over on someone else and how you’re winning, well, they’ll learn that. But if you come home and you talk about how you went to a homeless shelter that day and fed 300 people, then that’s what they’ll see.”

Greenwald says there are some people who just have that desire inside them to help. “They are the ones in your church or synagogue who are the first to bring a meal if you’re sick,” he says. They recognize that there are a lot of needy people in the world and they can lend a hand. “They’re alert to it,” he says. “They do it. They don’t wait for others to do it.”

 **WANT TO START YOUR OWN SPECIALTY CLUB? SEE ALL THE WAYS YOUR UNIQUE INTERESTS CAN HELP YOUR COMMUNITY.**

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A LION

LIONS SOUND OFF.



“It makes me feel good to say I helped those people. Those people are better off now than when we started.” **ROBERT ‘ROCCO’ VIERA**, El Paso Del Norte Lions Club, Texas.

*“HOME IS NOT WHERE YOU LIVE, IT’S WHERE YOU’RE UNDERSTOOD. AND WHEN I GOT INVOLVED WITH THE LIONS, I FELT HOME THERE.”* **KEVIN WHITLEY**, Anchorage Lions Club, Alaska.

“I figured that I could maybe make a small difference on my own, but by joining with other like-minded people, we could make a much bigger difference.” **ZARINA LUCK**, Newcastle Lions Club, South Africa.

“I enjoy wearing my vest, and I love people asking, ‘What is a Lion?’ I enjoy being able to tell them. ... Lions is the most important thing that’s happened to me in my life.” **DOUG DAY**, Albuquerque Breakfast Lions, New Mexico.

*“IF YOU’RE BROUGHT UP IN A FAMILY THAT BELIEVES IN GIVING BACK, YOU’LL LEARN THAT.”* **PDG CHRIS CARLONE**, Metairie Airline Lions Club, Louisiana.

“There are people in Africa who need food. We give them that. There are people in India who need mobility devices. We give them that. There are people here in America who are reaching out and we are reaching back to them. School buses full of gifts. Who else does that? Where there’s a need, there’s a Lion.” **CLIFF HEYWOOD**, Waihi Lions Club, New Zealand.

*“THIS IS THE CORRECT PLACE FOR ME TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY, AS I FEEL ONLY BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER. THIS IS A PLACE OF LOVE AND HUMANITY.”* **STELLA FOO**, Lions Club of Kuala Lumpur City, Malaysia.

“While I did not aspire for the position of club president, becoming one opened up my consciousness that there are so many poor people in all aspects of life in my community...Suddenly, I realized that they are just lingering beside me and they are so miserable that they need help, not tomorrow but now.” **MANNY CUASAY**, Quezon City Cubao Lions Club, Philippines.

*“BEFORE, WHEN I WASN’T A LION, I WAS JUST HELPING. BUT WHEN YOU START TO FEEL THE PASSION, THEN YOU UNDERSTAND AND THAT’S WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO. WE SERVE.”* **JAMA WAHL**, Streator Hardscrabble Lions Club, Illinois.

“I had never realized how for such small amounts these individuals would have remained visually impaired for the rest of their lives. I thought...there’s more to life than just biological family considerations. There’s more to life, it’s reaching out to the world at large.” **PID A.P. SINGH**.

*“OH MY GOD. REWARDS WITHIN MY HEART WHEN I AM HELPING PEOPLE WHO NEED HELP.”* **CAROL MARSHALL**, Albuquerque Breakfast Lions, New Mexico.

“I’ve not only found an outlet to serve others, but I’ve found a network of friends and family.” **DG BRANDON JOHNSON**, 12N, in Tennessee.



**LIONS TALK ABOUT WHAT DRIVES THEM.**



## New Voices

### Why is it Called New Voices?

“As I traveled around the world, I saw a lot of diversity in membership and leadership between men and women,” says Yngvadottir. “Even in many places where women were not members or leaders, they were playing an important role behind the scenes—in organizing meetings, in running projects, in managing activities. They were silently working, but did not have a voice.”

“We don’t have to look for women—they are there—all that we need to do is bring their ideas, their talent, their commitment to the table. They needed a new voice. And I thought this would be the right time to give them a platform so that together we can take this organization forward.”

## Raising Up New Voices

The New Voices initiative celebrates women’s contributions to Lions Clubs International by focusing on increasing the number of women in Lions clubs and closing the gap between men and women in leadership positions.

“New Voices means new ideas,” says IP Gudrun Yngvadottir.

Speaking to more than 1,000 delegates gathered at the 2018 International Convention in Las Vegas, Yngvadottir said it

wasn’t originally on her agenda to start a women’s initiative.

“In fact,” she said, “when I made my first official visits, I was careful not to touch on women’s membership or leadership. But, to my surprise, wherever I went, I was asked what would be my strategy to promote women in Lions Clubs International. The women would come up to me and say how they were waiting to see what I would do. I thought to myself, ‘If not me, who?’ I felt this is what Lions want. So here we are!”

Leading the initiative will be the Global Chairperson and eight Constitutional Area Teams (including Africa) who work with district governors and the Global Action Team to create awareness, conduct webinars and identify Lions who have made a difference but whose voices have not been heard.

### New Voices

- Celebrates women’s contributions to Lions
- Promotes gender parity by focusing on the increasing number of women in Lions Clubs
- Works to close the gap between men and women in leadership positions

## Get involved!

**Visit the website:** Go to [weserve.org/newvoices](http://weserve.org/newvoices) to learn more about the program.

**Read the profiles:** Gain inspiration and enjoy the stories told by New Voices team leaders from all constitutional areas as they share their thoughts and experiences as a Lion.

**Share your own experience:** Post your story on social media about how your work as a Lion has supported women in membership, leadership, service, and marketing, and you may be invited to an exclusive seminar with IP Yngvadottir in Milan.

[facebook.com/groups/lionsnewvoices/](https://facebook.com/groups/lionsnewvoices/)

**Email us:** Reach out to us at [newvoices@lionsclubs.org](mailto:newvoices@lionsclubs.org) and tell us how you've joined the move to unleash the potential of women in our clubs. 



# Be Yourself

## Meet New Voice Global Chairperson Sangeeta Jatia



When Past International Director Sangeeta Jatia first took on a Lions leadership position in 2004, she thought she had to mimic the male leaders around her—talk like them and dress like them.

A Calcutta Midtown Lion since 1988, she was preparing for her role as district governor in 322 B1, and she thought she should wear a suit jacket like the male leaders she knew in India, where the climate is not conducive to jackets and women traditionally wear sarees.

She ordered some jackets. She began to throw her voice at meetings, to be more aggressive, adopting the back-slapping camaraderie of the men, she writes in her New Voices online biography. She thought it would send the message to others that she was truly a leader to be listened to.

But she soon learned that the Lions were not impressed with mimicry. They appreciated her for her different ideas that she expressed in her quieter, feminine voice. She realized the voice she really needed to listen to was her own.

She stopped trying to fit in. “Being authentic was liberating,” she says. Now Jatia, as the global chairperson for New Voices, encourages women to not be like her, but to be themselves.

She also erroneously believed the divide in how men and women behave as Lions was only present in small, conservative towns, she says. “But to my surprise it is in every culture, in every place. Many women did not know they could be Lions. They came to projects, worked at meetings, but did not have a say in club affairs. Even now, you have to tell them ‘you can lead.’”

“They need mentoring. They need a nudge. And once they get involved, there is no looking back.”

Jatia suggests Lions work to make clubs and districts women friendly, with late evening meetings and Sunday meetings that include family. Lions need to be the ones to educate society that Lions are indeed both men and women. And while these Lions—men and women—work daily to meet the needs of all those they serve, she says, “We need to understand the needs of each other.”

# FLY IT FORWARD

AIR NATIONAL GUARD PILOT IS ALSO A DEDICATED LION



*By Stephen Prudhomme • Photos by Dream Weaver Photos*





Sarah Watson's flying career started on her 13th birthday. Her parents' gift to her was a flight onboard a small, private Cessna plane during which she took the controls. Sixteen years later, having moved up in plane size and flight status, Watson flew the gift forward by transporting people and supplies in an area of southwest Texas devastated by a hurricane. For the thousands of people forced to evacuate their homes due to record flooding, her presence—and flight—was a most welcome gift.

The Pooler resident is piloting C-130s for the Georgia Air National Guard and flying around the world transporting military personnel and supplies and, last year, going to Texas to help victims of Hurricane Harvey.

Watson, 30, is a captain in the 165th Airlift Wing and one of three female pilots; by contrast, there are 55 male pilots in the 165th. According to Col. Peter Boone, vice commander of the 165th Airlift Wing, she is an extremely competent, fully qualified pilot who truly epitomizes the Air Force core values of integrity, service, and excellence, and who embraces her role as a female pilot and officer in a male-dominated work force.

"Capt. Watson has deployed numerous times in combat environments supporting global C-130 taskings bestowed upon the Savannah Air National Guard," Boone says. "Sarah is a true representative of the 165th Airlift Wing and I am extremely proud to be her wingman."

She also happens to be a dedicated Lion.

"She's an excellent role model," says Rosemary Cutuli, VP of their Pooler Lions Club. Watson helps with the vision screenings the club does, helping to screen 16,000 children just last year. Watson's involvement comes at a time when Lions are actively looking for more women leaders. Programs such as the New Voices Initiative aim to show women that there is no ceiling to their dreams. They do not have to be like men to be leaders. This is something Watson has understood since she was young.

The Ohio native was interested in flying as a child. Taking the controls during that pivotal 13th birthday flight was a test she passed with flying colors.

"I first took the controls and the pilot said, 'You're flying,'" Watson says. "It was a feeling of 'wow, I'm actually doing this,' and at the same time the most amazing experience of my life. In that moment I knew that was what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. I had the good butterflies in my stomach – the ones you get when you fall in love, and I did. That was the day I fell in love with flying. I got home and asked my parents for an airplane for my birthday. They just laughed."

Watson joined the Air Force as an enlistee, where she served for five and a half years, then attended Bowling Green University and earned a bachelor's degree in aviation. Following graduation, Watson applied for pilot school and was accepted. Since only officers are eligible to be pilots, Watson attended officer training school for six weeks before entering the pilot training program.

For two and a half years – working 12-hour days that she described as pretty stressful – Watson trained in smaller planes, starting with the T-6 and moving up to the T-1, and did lots of simulator flights. She also did survival training, 24-7, for three straight weeks. "You never off-time," Watson says.

Watson eventually earned her wings and graduated to the C-130, a plane that can carry up to 90 people, tanks, and ammo during a flight. As large as the plane is, Watson says it's very maneuverable and can land on a 3,000-foot dirt strip.





It was the C-130 that Watson piloted during the hurricane relief mission. In September 2017, Hurricane Harvey brought Category 4 winds and record flooding to Houston and a number of other cities and towns in southeast Texas. Thousands of people abandoned their homes in a mad scramble for higher ground. Enter Watson and her large plane.

For 10 days, she was part of a rescue and relief effort made up of 18 C-130s from nine states. Watson flew 18,000 pounds of potable water from Naval Air Station Fort Worth, along with large pallets she picked up from Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, to Beaumont and Galveston; the water was contaminated in both cities.

She also carried displaced residents from those two cities to a shelter in Fort Worth and was struck by their difficult situation. “They had nothing,” says the 10-year military veteran. “They were carrying a small garbage bag with their possessions and with three or four kids starting over in Dallas. It was hard to see.”

It also was hard to see where to land her plane. Watson says the airport landing strips were flooded and the navigational equipment on the ground was largely inoperable. When she was finally able to land, Watson saw thousands of people at the terminal,

with a number of them disabled and in wheelchairs. Loading and unloading people, pets, and supplies made for some long days for Watson, who flew two missions a day and was glad to do her part.

“It was a great feeling making a difference in people’s lives and getting them to a safe shelter,” Watson says. “It was great to see the states coming together to provide the C-130s, personnel, and flight crews. Family and friends told me they wish they could do something to help the hurricane victims. I get a lot of satisfaction that we have the equipment and planes, and knowing I can help.”

And helping others is exactly what helped her through a difficult time. It was just a few years ago that Watson was dealing with the death of a beloved cousin and decided she needed something to direct her attention. “It was difficult to be happy, and I used to be a really happy person,” says Watson. That’s when she began looking for ways to give back. She looked in the Pooler community for volunteer opportunities and found them hard to find. Once she found Lions, though, she jumped right in.

“She’s wonderful with children,” says Cutuli, who also notes Watson is very helpful with the computers and gives input on how to help attract younger members.



“It’s a little odd,” says Watson, of being the youngest member of the club. “I get along with everyone, but I think we’d be able to help more people if there were more young members.”

She’s helping to organize the club’s first open house for prospective members, hoping it will attract a younger crowd. However, the club is more than happy with her as their youth ambassador for the time being.

“She’s everyone’s adopted daughter,” says Cutuli. “She has such a good heart.”

Lt. Col. Brian Zwicker, an instructor pilot who works for Delta, says Watson has embraced the citizen-soldier concept and has been the first to volunteer for many missions – including the hurricane relief effort. She has earned the respect of her peers, he adds, through her volunteerism for the most demanding missions and long overseas deployments.

“As with all our young airmen, she has tackled the challenges of tactical airlift and long deployments with a positive attitude and willingness to work hard,” Zwicker says. “Capt. Watson continues to focus on building her aviation and leadership skills, which is evident from the improvement I see on every flight that I fly with her.”

In addition to her relief mission in Texas (and a similar one after hurricane Irma), Watson has flown a C-130 on Guard lifts and humanitarian efforts to Europe, the Middle East, and the Republic of Georgia, where she helped train that country’s Air Force, and earned an air medal. She spends half her time away from home and is preparing for an upcoming mission to Kuwait.

“I love the variety of stuff we do,” Watson says. “I get paid to fly. You can’t beat that.” 🇺🇸

*Originally printed in Chatham County Living magazine, this version has been edited by Lion Magazine to include Watson’s work as a Lion.*



# Trip Brings Tears and Cheers for US War Veterans

BY JOAN CARY

For Vietnam veteran Dan Vos, his recent Lions-sponsored trip to the memorial sites in Washington, D.C., was not his first. He had been there many years ago.

But this trip gave him hope.

Vos is one of 142 Korean and Vietnam War veterans who were flown by the Minnesota Waconia Lions to Washington D.C. for a day of history, memories, and honor. They visited the Arlington National Cemetery, laid wreaths at the Vietnam and Korean War memorials, ate lunch with dignitaries, and came home late at night to a welcoming crowd.

At the somber memorial sight, Vos says he was taken aback by the other visitors, particularly the young people who came up to shake the hands of veterans and thank them for their service.

“It gave me great hope for our country. We think a lot of that has been lost, but there are Moms and Dads doing the right thing for their kids, teaching them,” says Vos. “These young kids don’t know anything about the Korean or Vietnam wars, but to know that they get it, that they honor those who keep us free, and they are very sincere, that made me feel good.

“The Lions hit it out of the park on this day. A day like this says who they are.”

Eleven years ago to the day [on April 25, 2007] the Waconia Lions honored 119 World War II veterans by offering them the same free trip, says Lion Joe Gifford, a U.S. Army veteran from the Desert Storm era. It was such a success they decided to do it again for other vets.

Planning for this trip began in August 2017, and with community support and contributions from local organizations, the Lions raised US\$107,000 for what turned out to be a US\$95,000 day.

Lions collected money in donation buckets made from ammo cans. “There were weeks in the fall where we were meeting with groups asking for support every night of the week, and sometimes two in one night,” says Gifford. “We wanted this to be community-based. We wanted to engage all of the county to support their veterans.”

This veteran’s day started at 3:30 a.m. with donuts and coffee at a local church before boarding chartered busses for the airport. It ended close to midnight when the busses were escorted back into town by fire departments, leading them into a hometown parade that included military honor guards, Lions, and Leos.

It was an emotional day for the veterans, from the joy of rekindling friendships and making new veteran friends, to the sadness of finding comrades’ names on the memorial wall, says Vos, who served in the Seabees, building schools and houses during the Vietnam War.

The feedback was immediate, says Gifford. “We have been receiving thank you notes ever since. For some who had never been, it was a dream, and it was great to see.”

“It took a real community effort,” says Vos. “The Lions had a lot of help from others, but it was a typical Lion thing. They do what’s good.”



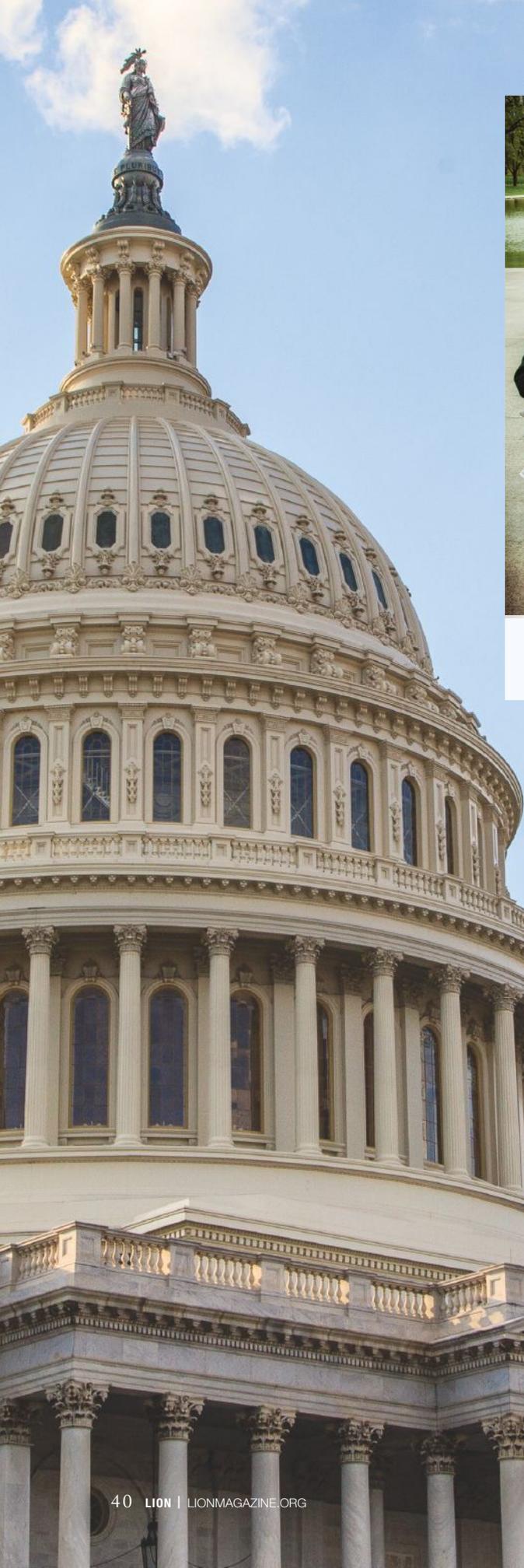
Veterans read the names on the "Wall That Heals."



Lion Shannon Sweeney assists a veteran at the Washington memorials.



Lions assisted veterans at Arlington National Cemetery.

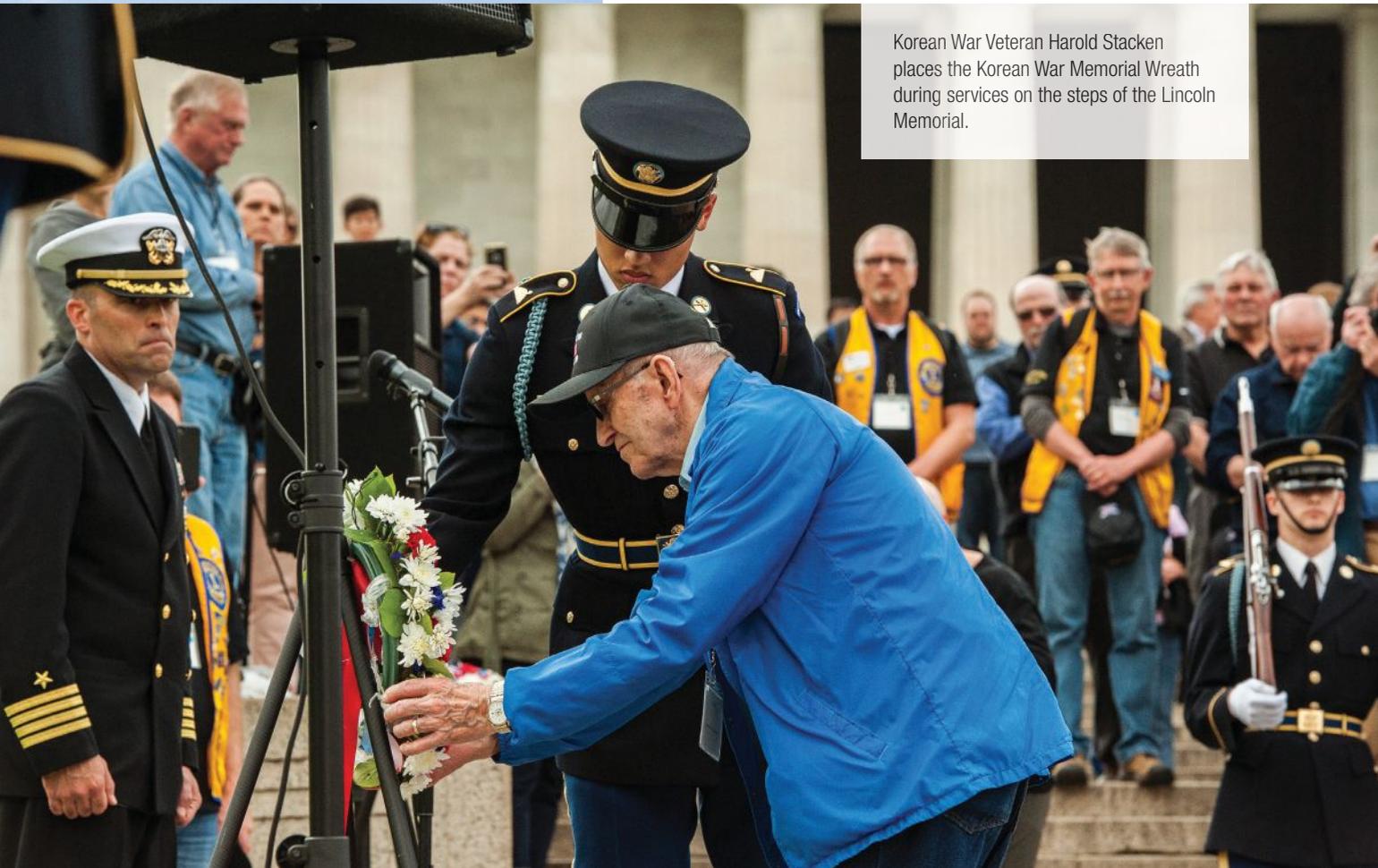


Lions Richard Beckett, Shannon Sweeney, and Tom Kaliher (rear), accompany veterans at the service on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.





A Minnesota veteran finds a familiar name on the Vietnam War Memorial.



Korean War Veteran Harold Stacken places the Korean War Memorial Wreath during services on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

# Lions Extend a Hand to Kids Going Hungry

BY JAMIE KONIGSFELD

Starvation is a terrible reality for people of all ages, all around the world, with more than 800 million people going to bed hungry on a regular basis. La Guajira, one of 32 departments in Colombia, is home to the Wayuu—Colombia’s largest indigenous group. Within the last decade, nearly 5,000 Wayuu children have died of malnutrition. Lions clubs in La Guajira want to help relieve this devastating situation through nutrition centers, which will provide children with regular, nutritious meals. Lions of La Guajira collected donations for the project and also secured a grant from Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) to help with the centers.

The Wayuu people used to depend on access to the Ranchería River to grow their crops, but due to a 2011-built dam that now diverts the river to neighboring municipalities, the Wayuu are forced to walk more than three hours to access wells. The Wayuu’s livelihood hinged on the river, which has been routed to other locations for domestic use, irrigation, and for Cerrejón—Colombia’s largest coal mine. Even when they make the long walk to the well, the water there is contaminated with bacteria. To add to the problem, a drought that has persisted since 2011 is killing off their crops.

Lions have responded to this urgent crisis through the construction of six nutrition centers, two of which

have been fully constructed and open since December of 2017. The centers are located near local schools, each built with a dining hall, a kitchen, space for food storage, and restroom facilities. Operation expenses, food, and staff will be provided by local municipal governments.

Since the opening of these nutrition centers, hundreds of local Wayuu children have regular meals with the nutrition they need to grow into strong, healthy individuals. The centers also encourage school attendance, so more of the children are staying in school and, with full bellies, they’re able to pay close attention to their classes instead of where their next meal will come from.

Visit [LCIF.org/BE100](http://LCIF.org/BE100) to learn how Campaign 100 will work toward a world in which no one goes hungry, expanding resources and infrastructure needed to address food shortages in our communities and around the world.



# The Future Looks Clear & Bright for Ugandan Communities

BY JAMIE KONIGSFELD

In areas of the world where water is scarce and there are no adequate latrines or sanitation facilities, disease can quickly become out of control. Poor hygiene within crowded households adds to the ease at which disease can be spread. The world's leading infectious cause of blindness, trachoma, is a bacterial infection that causes itching and irritation of the eyes and eyelids. In Uganda, trachoma plagues people of all ages. Upon repeated infection, the disease will result in searing pain, vision loss, and ultimately, irreversible blindness. Lions in Uganda see this happening in nearby communities and want to end their neighbors' suffering. They are working hard to eliminate the disease and Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), our global Foundation, is empowering them to do so.

Trachoma causes a person's eyelids to turn inward, which means their eyelashes start to scratch the cornea of the eye. This will eventually lead to visual impairment and, ultimately, it can leave someone completely and irreversibly blind. This, in turn, will leave them with debilitating health, social, and economic repercussions. Trachoma trichiasis surgery corrects the eyelids, thus stopping the painful and detrimental damage done to the eye. Our Foundation has partnered with The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust

(The Trust) since 2014, committing our SightFirst program to granting US\$4.5 million dollars to The Trust and supporting more than 22,500 surgeries in Uganda and Kenya.

Lions of Uganda have also been partners with The Trust since 2014, being strong advocates for the LCIF-Trust projects. Their incredible social mobilization efforts have begun to dispel the myths behind trachoma trichiasis surgery, putting patients at ease and arming them with knowledge. Lions share information and promote upcoming events through platforms like churches, markets, various community gatherings, and the radio. Through a radio show in Karamoja, callers raised questions such as, "Does shaking hands while greeting spread trachoma?" and expressed concerns that the surgery would render the patient totally blind. The radio team comprised of Lions and district officials educated listeners and further spread the word that this surgery prevents unnecessary blindness. Lions were awarded a US\$71,696 SightFirst grant to support their advocacy, mobilization, and sensitization camps in communities such as the Kotito and Agago districts. Lions also worked hard to spread the word about Lions' humanitarian work to district leaders and community influencers, in hope of expanding the LCIF-Trust trachoma elimination projects.



Thanks to the outstanding efforts by Lions of Uganda and the support of our Foundation, just two recent camps in Kotito and Agago have provided eye surgeries for more than 150 patients. Communities are also beginning to dismiss myths and surgery refusals are declining significantly. The future of the Ugandan community is starting to look clear and bright.

Visit [LCIF.org/BE100](http://LCIF.org/BE100) to learn how Campaign 100 will lead the charge to rid the world of infectious blindness, reduce avoidable blindness and visual impairment, and improve overall quality of life by providing services to those with blindness or visual impairment.



Yosemite Sam and his horse won first place this summer in the California State Fair. The comical pair were created by one of the Folsom State Prison inmates in the Folsom Lake Lions' Hooks and Needles group. The inmates entered the contest for the first time this year and won three awards.

In **Georgia**, the **Snellville Lions Club** made and sold funnel cakes at Public Safety Night and Relay for Life night. Lions donated proceeds of US\$450 to the Snellville Police Explorers and US\$1,125 to the American Cancer Society.

IPDG Garry Charbonneau, an **Amity Lion** in **Oregon**, said "yes" to having his long locks cut for charity. At the MD 36 convention in Oregon, attendees donated US\$1,100 to LCIF to watch Garry get a haircut.

In **California**, the **Folsom Lake Lions** deliver more than 950 items a year, including hats, scarves, blankets, booties, and stuffed animals, to those in need. The items are crocheted by Folsom State Prison inmates in the Hooks and Needles program, with yarn provided by the Lions. Through food sales, the inmates also raised more than US\$7,000 that they donated to Folsom Lake Lions.

For 26 years the **Seguin** and **Geronimo Lions Clubs** in **Texas** have sponsored the "Pack the Bus" school supply drive to help 2,000 low-income children. Lions recruited students to help with the city-wide collection, pick up the supply order, and organize supplies for bagging day. A health fair was held at the same time to aid low-income families. More than 30 other clubs, organizations, and businesses donated funds toward the drive.

The **Norfolk Lions** in **Nebraska** donated a Lion head drinking fountain to the Norfolk Embrace Park. The fountain is located between a park for physically challenged children, a bicycle obstacle course, and a water splash playground. Funds for it were raised through the **Norfolk/Pierce Lions'** club charity golf tournament.

In **Maryland**, the **Perryville Lions** collected more than 200 empty pill bottles for distribution to needy persons in Malawi, Africa. Lions also made and gifted 100 gold pins that were given out at the 95th annual MD 22 convention in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

### In Memoriam:

Past International Director Melvin M. Nakamura has died in Honolulu, Hawaii. He was 81. A member of the Honolulu Waioli Lions since 1978, he held many offices within the association and received numerous awards. He was a multi-level Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow and received the Ambassador of Good Will Award, the highest honor the association bestows upon its members. A native of Kapaa, Kauai, he received his chemical engineering degree from the University of Illinois and enjoyed a career with the Honolulu Gas Company where he retired as Vice President. He was active in numerous organizations and served as a director for Friends of Hawaii's Public Housing as well as a director of Junior Achievement of Hawaii.

The **Kernersville Lions** in **North Carolina** completed their 22nd annual vision screen of area schools and preschools. Lions screened 3,085 students at nine schools and seven church preschools, and five percent were referred for further evaluation. Lions started the vision program in 1995 with five schools and have now screened more than 40,000 students.

**Lake Conroe Centennial Lions** in **Texas** held a “Swing for a Cause” golf tournament to benefit the Crisis Assistance Center of Montgomery County.

For more than 35 years the **Highland Park-Highwood Lions Club** in **Illinois** has been selling hot dogs and corn at the Highland Park Fourth of July Festival in Sunset Woods Park. Proceeds of US\$3,000 to \$4,000 are contributed to a variety of causes including the Hadley School for the Blind, Canine Companions, Leader Dogs, school honors programs, the police department, and Scouts.



The **Hellertown Lions** in **Pennsylvania** gathered under the Alfred J. Fritchman Reservoir Park pavilion for their annual picnic, recognizing new officers, board members, and the Lion of the Year, Jesse Repash. The pavilion was built by the Lions many years ago and the roof was in disrepair, so Lions raised half of the US\$11,000 needed for a new roof, and **Pennsylvania Lions** matched their funds.

The Annan Family in **Colorado** celebrates four generations of lions in the house with the induction of fourth generation Lion Ryan Annan. John Annan, Jack Annan, and Bill Annan celebrated with the **Brush Lions Club**.

More than 100 clubs in **Manitoba** and northwest **Ontario, Canada** took part in a contest that asked middle school students to design a Lions hearing aid collection box. Clara Peake from Binscarth Public School was the winner, and her design will be featured on the displayed collection boxes. Her school also received a US\$1,000 donation from Lions. The winnings were put toward the purchase of musical instruments for the school.

The **Windsor Lions** in **Connecticut** had a yoga fundraiser, and the Lions received rave reviews on the new offering, especially from newcomers who vowed that their first time to practice yoga would not be their last.

Jeanie Pearlman of the Highland Park-Highwood Lions Club helps dish up dogs on the Fourth of July.

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(Signed)  
Christopher Bunch, Managing Editor, September 20, 2018

# LION



Lions Clubs International

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# L ANNIVERSARIES

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**90 Years:** Dickinson, N.D.; Eldon, Mo.; Aransas Pass, Texas; Richfield, Utah; Saint Paris, Ohio; Sandersville, Ga.; Saugus, Mass.

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**75 Years:** Portales, N.M.; Athens, Ala.; Spearfish, S.D.; Clinch County, Ga.; Moulton, Ala.; Westmont, N.J.; Linthicum, Md.; Malvern, Ark.; Cadillac, Mich.; Mer Rouge, La.; Uniontown, Pa.; Meyersdale, Pa.

**50 Years:** Pisgah Forest, N.C.; Healy Valley, Alaska; Columbus, N.C.; Sheboygan Noon, Wis.; Fairchild, Wis.; Goose Creek, S.C.; La Sarre, Quebec, CAN; Dale City, Va.; New Rochelle Huguenot, N.Y.; Effingham, Kan.; North Sea, N.Y.; New York Mills, Minn.; Nisland, S.D.; Finch District, Ontario, CAN

**25 Years:** Prescott Skidway Lake, Mich.

## Corrections

In the article, "Being Kind," Lion Justin Gripon, 24, was incorrectly identified as Cory Thomas.

In the LCI forward story, College Station Noon Lions Club was incorrectly identified as being located in Orange, Texas. The club is in College Station, Texas.

The October calendar in Looking Ahead was off by a day.

We apologize for these errors.

*Calling All*

# World Changers

November 14, 2018, is World Diabetes Day, and Lions are taking steps for global impact.



Join the movement at  
[fightdiabetes.lionsclubs.org](http://fightdiabetes.lionsclubs.org)



**Lions Clubs  
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Waconia Lions in Minnesota escorted 142 Korean and Vietnam War veterans on a trip to Washington D.C.

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Join us in New York this March to commemorate the 41st Annual Lions Day with the United Nations and be part of the global conversation about this year's theme, **“Protecting our Future: The Health of our Children.”**

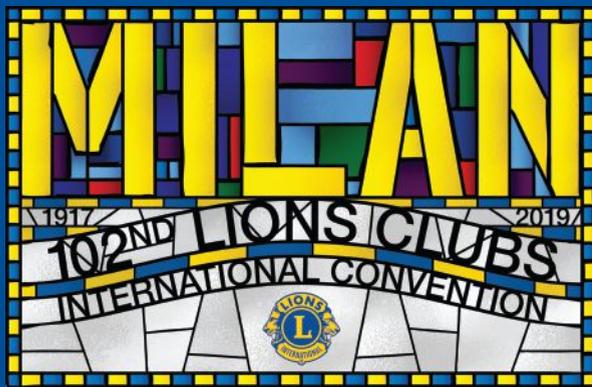
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