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May 2019 LIONMAGAZINE.ORG

Women Are Changing Lions

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📷 PHOTO BY ZACK WITTMAN



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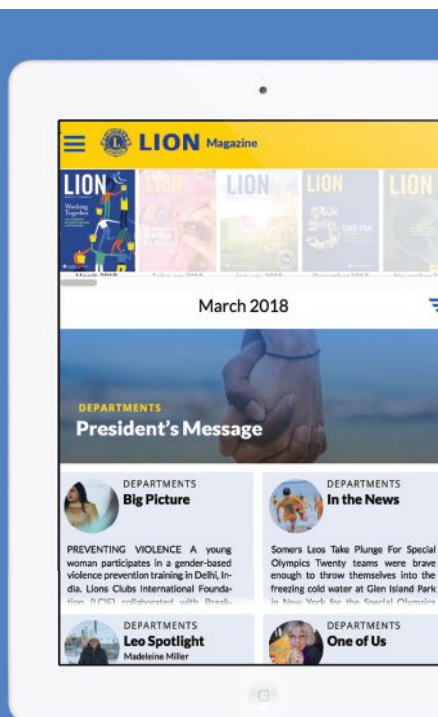
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A LEO SAVED MY LIFE**
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VIDEOS

WOMEN IN LIONS

Take a look as PIP Judge Brian Stevenson discusses the year Lions voted to include women.

NEW VOICES

Hear from New Voices leaders around the world about why we need these (and other) great women in Lions.

THE VAULT



September 1987 Taipei '87

Lions recap a historic convention.



May 1959 The Lion from Hawaii

John Burns was the man credited with getting statehood for Hawaii. He was also a long-serving Lion.

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

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Together, We Lead the Way

Hello, Lions!

In the months leading up to my term as International President, I was often asked how I would do things differently as the first woman president of our organization. The question bothered me because I didn't want to lead as a woman; I wanted to lead. Period.

In Iceland women have been leading for a long time. I grew up feeling my opportunities were not limited by my gender and as I prepared to lead Lions into the 21st century, I didn't want being a woman to define my presidency.

Although my life has not been hindered by gender inequality, I also realize the same cannot be said for all women. Around the world, many women still face obstacles to becoming the people they are destined to be.

What I love about service is that it knows no gender, no color, no religion. And we are truly stronger as an organization, and as clubs, when we have a diverse mix of experiences contributing to the energy and ideas that make Lions so great.

I now see my term as president as an opportunity to support other women—and hopefully inspire them. I'm proud to showcase the work women are doing in this great organization so they can inspire others too. I believe that the more we see women joining in and doing interesting, important things, the more we will see other women doing the same. And this is how we build an even stronger future for Lions.

Because being a Lion is not about being a man or a woman. It's about being a human being. And the more caring men and women we have working together for good, the better chance we have of truly changing the world.

Yours,

Gudrun Yngvadottir

Gudrun Yngvadottir

International President, Lions Clubs International



We Serve.

Food for Thought

A Dade City, Florida resident leaves the Norma Godinez Education and Arts building with bags full of cereal, canned goods, and pasta. Dade City is home to a large population of farmworkers who work the fruit and vegetable fields that blanket the state's interior. Farmworkers often work long hours picking food that feeds the country while they go hungry. The Dade City Lions work to ensure they can provide meals for their families with a regular food pantry for residents in need. See story page 32.







A 1956 portrait of Helen Keller holding a Braille volume. Lessons about Helen Keller have been put back into the Texas state curriculum.

📷 PHOTO BY HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

Helen Keller is back in the Texas school curriculum

Past International President Jimmy Ross (2006-2007) and dozens of Lions in Texas put pen to paper protesting a proposed change to the Texas school curriculum that would eliminate Helen Keller from lesson plans.

The preliminary decision by the Texas State Board of Education in September caused a stir among the public, and Lions spoke up in an effort to keep the iconic activist in the books. In his letter Ross wrote, "There is no more powerful example of someone lighting a candle rather than cursing the darkness than Helen Keller."

In November, after hearing hours of live testimony from residents, the board reversed its original vote and decided to include Keller in the state curriculum.

Looking Ahead

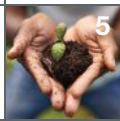


June

World Environment Day
6/5

Lions Clubs International Birthday
6/7

Helen Keller Day
6/27

What does your club have planned? For service ideas, check out archived issues of LION Magazine at lionmagazine.org.

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June 2019

Trailblazer Gives Big Gift to Posterity

Lion Ruth Molenaar, vice district governor 16-N, recently received the Cultural Preservation Award from the Newark Public Library for her donation of archival material, articles, and photos from La Tribuna, the largest and oldest Spanish language newspaper published in New Jersey.

La Tribuna was founded in 1962 in Newark, N.J. by Carlos Bidot, a Cuban émigré who saw a need to provide a newspaper in the Spanish language for others of Hispanic origin and those Cubans fleeing the Castro regime. The newspaper was published on a bi-monthly basis and over the years diversified to provide in-depth coverage of matters important to the Hispanic community.

On March 11, 1988, Molenaar purchased La Tribuna and became the owner and publisher. Molenaar worked alongside Bidot for a year after purchasing La Tribuna, learning many of the aspects necessary to successfully operate and publish a newspaper.

Born in Caracas Venezuela, from a Dominican mother and Dutch father, Molenaar lived in Aruba until the age of 14, when she and her family moved to the United States.

At its 30th Anniversary Gala in 1992, Governor of New Jersey, Jim Florio, said “La Tribuna Newspaper has been a lighthouse for the Latino community of New Jersey, showing them the path to a better future. Under the leadership of Ruth Molenaar, La Tribuna increased its influence on the aspects of life that not only affect the Latino community, but all New Jersey’s communities at large.”

“It is an honor and privilege to own a paper that has been a community paper, a decent paper, and has supported the Hispanic Community,” says Molenaar.

Molenaar has been a member of the Newark Borinquen Lions Club for 24 years.

Original reporting by John Romano.



Lion Ruth Molenaar ran the Spanish language newspaper La Tribuna for decades, helping generations of spanish-speakers and immigrants find a sense of community and belonging.

L IN THE NEWS

OVERHEARD

“I love it here. I could live here another 20 years. I love it.”

—**Lion Anny Cochrane**, Bethel Lions Club, on living in Bethel, Alaska. See story page 14.

“New members and diversity bring new, fresh ideas as well as provide those extra hands needed to accomplish more service projects.”

—**Lions Clubs International Third Vice President Brian Sheehan**, Bird Island Lions, Minnesota. See story page 14.

“Broken people cannot fix broken communities. You have to fix broken people.”

—**Lion Margarita Romo**, Dade City Hispanic Lions Club, on turning around her community. See story page 32.

“I think I am shaking them up a bit!”

—**Lion Shyana Jayalath**, New Voices Winner in Marketing, on how she is changing Lions. See story page 26.

BY THE NUMBERS

504,548

Eyeglasses collected over 15 years by Rocklin Lions in California.

16

Inches thick the ice on Bass Lake, in Underwood, Minnesota, must be before it's deemed safe for the Underwood Lions Club's annual ice car race.

7,000

Books available for sale by the St. Wendel Lions Club at the local Easter market in St. Wendel, Germany.

433,157

Women Lions around the world.



**2019 kicked off with Lions
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Rose Parade. Keep rockin
throughout the year with
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Lions Clubs International

A138

NORWAY

All Aboard the Løvebussen

About 30 years ago, Lions Club Sørfold in northern Norway built a “play-bus” for the local kindergarten. As the weather in the region can be harsh, the bus began to look worn. The Sørfold Lions decided it was time to build a new bus for the children.

Ten members of the 19-member club spent more than 60 hours building the bus by hand from Norwegian spruce. Says Lion Bjørn Helge Hansen, “The bus is very popular, and the kids are as much on the roof as inside.”

The bus’s Norwegian name “Løvebussen” means “Lionbus” in English, but it sure does spread some love.



GERMANY

Bookstall Makes Bank

For the 17th year, the St. Wendel Lions Club set up shop at the St. Wendel Easter market. Similar to previous years, they had approximately 7,000 books to sell. These ranged from nonfiction, to cookbooks, to literature for children, to travel books, and included specialist publications on themes like medicine, esoterism, philosophy, and global and local history.

The St. Wendel club uses the proceeds from the book sales to construct schools and medical centers in India, mainly in the south Indian town of Jogipedi in the state of Telangana.

The club, together with the Caritas association of the Schaumberg-Blies region, has also been assisting children in need and their families in the county of St. Wendel for a few years now.

The 30 members of the Lions club have been able to raise more than 60,000 euros (US\$67,993) in their years of selling books at the Easter market, which is popular well beyond the region, and the funds have all been used to give back to their community or abroad.



USA

LION Day Helps Beet Diabetes

In Dover, New York, the elementary school children have taste-tested everything from healthy mangoes to golden beets during their lunch time. At home their parents are being educated about combatting diabetes.

It all started when The Town of Dover Lions Katie Pallmer-House and Patti Zangle were inspired by the Lion mantra “Think Global, Act Local” at the 40th annual Lions Day with the United Nations in March 2018. Pallmer-House and Zangle wanted to learn about the global cause of diabetes, and even more about how to act local and fight it at home.

They started by meeting medical professionals at their local hospital to learn about the health needs in their community. Then, enlightened to the growing problem of prediabetes in children, they spoke with the principal and food service manager at Wingdale Elementary, and they met with parents on a curriculum night.



With the help of an education enrichment grant, the Lions club launched a monthly new fruit and vegetable tasting program in the school. It's called “Let's Improve Our Nutrition (LION): A Lunch 'n Learn Series about Healthy Eating.”

The grant funds from the school district help them purchase fruits and vegetables, and each month on LION day the students view a short video about healthy eating. Lions, school employees, and dietetic staff from the hospital then distribute a new food for the students to taste at lunch.

Their first foods—mangoes, clementines, fruit smoothies, and cucumbers—were well received but are also most familiar to the students. The later foods, including golden beets, were new and unfamiliar. But because students already had a good rapport with the Lions, many were willing to give them a try.

Each week the students receive a “new food” information worksheet to take home for their parents, along with literature about diabetes awareness and education.

Pallmer-House says The Town of Dover Lions will continue the program next fall and expand it to include children in the local Head Start program. Lions also plan to purchase a vertical garden to grow next year's lettuces, cherry tomatoes, and cucumbers at the school so the children can see how their food grows.



USA

Paying Off Lunch Debt Pays Off Big for Kids

For some students their school lunch is the only meal they will get all day.

In Minnesota's Minnetonka School District the Excelsior Lions are looking out for those children, seeing to it that everyone gets the food they need, and no child has to feel singled out for being different.

The Lions donated money to Excelsior Elementary School to pay off student hot lunch debts and are also providing funding for a program that allows students to take an extra sandwich or piece of fruit in case they need it later in the day.

According to USDA policy, children in the hot lunch program can buy three lunches after the money has run out of their lunch account, but after that they no longer get to have the same meal as their classmates. They get an alternative lunch such as a sandwich, fruit, and milk, says Jane Bender, the school supervisor of nutrition services.

Excelsior Lions donated US\$2,000 from their summer golf tournament to the school of about 750 to pay off all student lunch accounts that were negative. One of the benefits is that no child is singled out. No one knows which children are receiving extra benefits because they're getting a different lunch. Everybody is equal.

Lion Josh Bright spearheaded the idea, noting the need for donations like this is great in many communities. "I think every student should have the ability to come to school, feel safe, and have something good to eat. To learn the way they're supposed to," says Bright.

Well-fed children come to school not thinking about their hunger. They are better able to concentrate and visit the nurse's office less often, says Bender.

The donation also eases stress, says school Principal Stacy DeCorsey. Students as well as their parents know when there is no money left in their lunch account. "This is wonderful for them," she says. "This is one thing they don't have to worry about."



W **omen** **are** **Changing** **Lions**

A growing number of women are taking the lead and Lions' service has never been stronger

By Joan Cary

In 1987, Lions Clubs International voted to allow women to join the Lions family. And join they did.

Today, women are the fastest growing segment of Lions, with more than 425,000 women serving around the world.

In Latin America, 41% of club presidents are women, and so are 43% of district governors in Australia, New Zealand and Indonesia. Of course, this was also the year Gudrun Yngvadottir became the first woman elected international president.

“Our clubs and organization have certainly been strengthened since women have joined,” says Lions Clubs International 3rd Vice President Brian Sheehan. Speaking for his Bird Island, Minnesota club, he says, “They have brought new and vibrant ideas to our club in what we should accomplish for our community and how we can contribute outside of our community. It has made us an extremely strong and diverse club, with a great mix of seasoned and new, younger Lions members.”

The idea that a diverse room of voices create a more robust organization is borne out in recent research, which shows that companies with more gender parity

perform better.

“They’ve expanded our scope of service, our perspective of service, greatly,” said Past International President Judge Brian Stevenson in a 2018 interview.

And as the number of women leaders in Lions grows, the ways in which they can use their unique perspectives to find innovative ways to serve will continue to grow as well.

Here are some of the inspiring ways women are taking action and changing what it means to be a Lion.



Take a look as PIP Judge Brian Stevenson discusses the year Lions voted to include women at lionmagazine.org.



George Cochrane has his mother Anny Cochrane's back as she assembles Christmas dinner boxes in the back of Sammy's Market owned by Lion Sammy Deema in Bethel, Alaska.

They're Saving Lives Near the Arctic Circle

Six years ago, Anny Cochrane awoke to find that over the night a man had died of exposure at the end of her street.

Today Cochrane is a woman Lion in no-man's land.

She and her neighbors in Bethel, "the middle of nowhere Alaska," knew that every winter the cold claims five or six people in their area. But this time it happened too close to home to not keep their attention.

This time Cochrane and her friends decided "there has to be something better." They wanted a sanctuary to save those who are left overnight in the cold. And the more the group talked, the more they were reminded that what they really wanted—to serve and to help—is what Lions do.

The environment is rugged and the list long to support the many needs of the families in their town of 6,000 on the western edge of Alaska. The Bethel Lions Club was already spread thin.

Cochrane and others, including her husband, Jon Cochrane, chartered the Bethel Winter House Lions. They found a building and made arrangements for hot meals, welcoming the area's most vulnerable as well as travelers who temporarily find themselves without a home for the night.

Three years later, in 2016, the Bethel Lions and the Bethel Winter House Lions merged to strengthen their power, and now the Winter Shelter House is a project of the Bethel Lions. It is open from December through March when the days are short and the night temperature can drop to dangerous levels. On some of the coldest nights they have more than 40 houseguests.

Cochrane, an energetic and optimistic mother of six, and a second vice district governor for Alaska, sees both the advantages and the unique challenges of living in the bush, 400 miles and an hour plane ride away from the next town, the city of Anchorage.

HOW WOMEN ARE CHANGING LIONS

Among those challenges: Daylight that tops out at five or six hours in the winter; transportation that is limited to plane, barge or two feet; a river that turns into an ice road connecting them with 58 surrounding native villages; water that is trucked in and sewage that is trucked out; and above all, poverty. More than 26 percent of Bethel's people live below the poverty line compared with the national average of 14 percent.

Despite all that, says Cochrane, "I love it here. I could live here another 20 years. I love it."

"Any time you have the ability to make a significant change in your community, it's amazing."

Anny and Jon Cochrane, the current club president, moved to Bethel six years ago for his job at a bank. He had lived in Anchorage as a teenager but never been involved with Lions. She had met Lions only as a child in Idaho, when the Challis Lions fed pancakes to the whole town in a parking lot for the Fourth of July. She remembers it like the syrup poured yesterday.

Now her Lion involvement gives her joy in a very different way. It keeps her engaged, and like her club mates, satisfied to be improving lives one bit at a time. Besides the shelter, the club operates the town's food bank, recently designated as a regional food bank, much to her delight. And the Lions' and Leos' summer food program in the park five days a week is by far Cochrane's favorite activity.

Lunch packs from the Food Bank of Alaska are shipped from Anchorage to Bethel for children under 18, and women Lions use this opportunity to not only feed the children but teach them about good health and hygiene.

"It's a lunch in the park but it's really life skills," says Cochrane. Children learn the importance of brushing teeth and washing hands and eating healthy. The women develop low-sugar healthy recipes that kids age five and older can make for themselves from

ingredients that most will get with food stamps. In a partnership with the ROTC the Lions also host a lunchtime book swap to encourage summer reading.

Although the men in the club are happy to drop the lunch supplies at the park, the women are key to making the lunch happen, embracing the community with projects like this that focus on youth, family, and food insecurity, says Cochrane.

The women started the Bethel Leos club and also run a popular pediatric cancer fundraiser. They introduce their own children to Lions early on by bringing them along to all their Lion activities.

"Sometimes we can all get stuck in our old ways, but the women here have been able to open up more service opportunities in our club," says Cochrane. "The women bring a fresh voice and a fresh perspective."

"The men just think differently. They aren't aware of those issues. I'm not going to bash our men. We love our men," she says. "They're excellent at spearheading things like the community Thanksgiving dinner, and it's good to have a balance in a club."

The Lions get most of their funding from weekly bingo nights and other organizations that are eager to work with them. Cochrane, proud of her networking skills, says it's clearly a matter of finding ways to politely ask for money. "We couldn't do it without partnerships."

The Lions also operate the soup kitchen. They bought a vision screener to take to the native villages. They support a regional cultural dance festival each spring, and they purchased a snow machine for the search and rescue team, and an ambulance equipped for ice rescue.

"It's all important," says Cochrane.

"Everybody goes to the Lions for their needs here. There are so many things that wouldn't be getting done in the community if it weren't for Lions. I'm just really thankful that I'm given the opportunity to be a part of it."

"We get to help people," she says with a hint of swagger. "I think that's awesome."



New York Lions Paula Flisnik and Celestina Ekezie met at Lions Day With the UN and developed a friendship that over one year led to a completed mission trip to Nigeria.

They're Proving the Power of Partnership

At the March 2018 Lions Day with the United Nations in New York, Lion Paula Flisnik admired Lion Celestina Ekezie's colorful dress and gele, a traditional Nigerian head wrap.

Flisnik walked over to complement Ekezie's attire, and the two Lions from different clubs, different backgrounds, and different careers, began to chat. Flisnik learned that Ekezie has a vision impairment. Ekezie discovered that Flisnik serves in the blindness field.

HOW WOMEN ARE CHANGING LIONS

In the 10 months to follow, the new Lion-born friends remained connected and combined their skills and resources to organize a two-week medical and educational mission trip to Nigeria, assisted by U.S. and Nigerian Lions.

PDG Flisnik, a Marcy Telephone Lion who was recently awarded the foundation's Helen Keller Distinguished Service Award, is director of community relations at the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired [CABVI] in Utica, New York.

Ekezie, a New York City Barahona Lion from the Bronx, is founder and CEO of Beacon of Hope Outreach, a U.S. and Nigerian nonprofit that works to create healthier educated communities in a country where the life expectancy is still below age 50 and diabetes, stroke, and poor eyesight are normal occurrences.

With Flisnik's help, Ekezie organized a group including eight doctors to travel to southern Nigeria in January. Shipments of donations that included 700 glasses, vision materials and more from the Lions and the CABVI, and shoes from the Marcy Telephone Lions, preceded their trip. The Lions of District 20-R2 in the Bronx, and numerous individuals contributed funds.

With their van, a hospital on wheels, the group visited rural communities where the people have to walk to the mouth of the stream to get water, and walk five miles or more to reach a hospital. More than 5,000 Nigerians received assistance with medical exams, vision checks, eye and dental care, diabetes screenings, medications, wound care, and food. And through the Girls Initiative run in part by Ekezie's daughter and niece, more than 1,000 girls were taught about hygiene, sanitary health, sexual awareness, and abuse prevention. Women were also taught how to make disinfectant soap.

At the end of their visit, Ekezie's group was asked to please come back. The young women requested that someone teach their parents about the Girls Initiative so they might better teach and empower the younger girls as they grow up.

"Look at what we've accomplished in less than a year,"

said Flisnik in a phone conversation with her friend shortly after the trip was completed. "We became friends, and ever since we have been driven to work together. And see what can happen.

"We hope to help Lions look beyond their needs, look beyond the United States, and help wherever they can," she said. "Being a Lion isn't just about giving money. It's about the hands-on work of serving."

It is also about going back to help where you're from, said Ekezie, who has dual citizenship in the U.S. and Nigeria, and hopes her organization can secure a location in Nigeria for construction of a rehabilitation and wellness center.

"The fact that I came to the UN and I met Paula gave me a new lease on life. There's nothing like when you see someone who encourages you and mentors you and believes in what you do. Women Lions can do that for each other," Ekezie said. "When she's giving me all this support I am not going to disappoint her."

"As a woman I want to impact as many women as I can. The support of Lions has given me the ability to walk farther and in any way I can, empower people. It's making me do more than I was doing before."

Flisnik said she gets re-energized when she helps people like this. "When they're happy, I'm happy, and that's a rewarding opportunity I get from being a Lion."

"We know we can't always change their environment, but we're helping them live within their environment, to be successful with what they have."



Cady Mariano, charter member of the San Diego California United Leos, met the Lions at age 9 and has been serving ever since.

They're Staying Young

In one of their many service projects the San Diego California United Leos make sandwiches and hand them out to the homeless.

Charter club president Cady Mariano had often heard about the living conditions of the people on the street. "But when I saw them and I handed them a sandwich I could see the problem in a whole different way," she says. "If you're not involved, you don't understand how hard some things are."

"I see bad things happening all the time, and to just say, 'I'm against animal abuse,' or 'the hurricane was so bad' and to not do anything about it is pointless. I choose to do something about it."

Being in Leos not only exposes young people like her to Lions, but to these community needs, says the 16-year-old. "It helps us realize how great it is to help, and how much we can make an impact at a young age."

Her awareness of need started when she was in kindergarten and her school held a fundraiser for victims of an earthquake in China. Mariano, who is half Chinese, emptied her piggy bank to give, shocking but also inspiring her mother, San Diego United Lion Lee Mariano.

At age 9, Cady was introduced to Lions when charter San Diego United Lion Dr. Allen Chan saw her

perform with a children's Chinese Dance Troupe and invited her to dance at a Lion fundraiser for Rady Children's Hospital.

That performance led to more and more outings with Lions, and at age 10 she chartered the San Diego United Cubs Club. In 2015, she chartered the Leos.

Now a high school junior, her list of accomplishments and awards is long, and although she appreciates the accolades, she says, "I don't think my work is that impressive. It has just become part of my life. Through Lions I've realized that I am so blessed to have everything I have, and that I shouldn't take it for granted."

In 2013, after a dance performance for the Salvation Army, Mariano approached the leaders and asked what more she could do to help, in the same way she asked Lion Chan how she could help when she was 9. Every year since, she and her Leo friends have boxed up hundreds of Thanksgiving meals for needy families. They have held bake sales for fire victims, conducted toy drives, and rung the Salvation Army bells at Christmas.

In February of 2017, at age 14, Mariano became the youngest recipient of the Salvation Army's Volunteer of the Year Award.

"Lions has shown me all these ways to help, and now I see people hurting and it hurts me to not help," she says. "I've benefitted because serving is such a part of my life now that it would be weird to not have it."

HOW WOMEN ARE CHANGING LIONS



Tennessee Houston County Lion Evelyn Alsobrooks, 101, waits for her younger brother, Lion Ben Hagler, 88, to bring her the minutes from the club meetings so she stays informed.

They're Staying Active

No one doubted Evelyn Alsobrooks would be a good addition when in 1993 she became the first woman in Tennessee's Houston County Lions Club. They supported her to become their first woman president three years later.

Now 101 and living in a nursing home, Alsobrooks remains an active and interested Houston County Lion. Although unable to attend meetings because of her hearing loss, she is eager to get Lion updates from her younger brother, Lion Ben Hagler, who is 88 and brings her the club minutes so she can voice her opinion.

Alsobrooks joined Lions at the invitation of her husband, George Alsobrooks, hoping to spend some social time with him, but also help her community,

she says. One of the biggest challenges was during her presidential year when work was beginning on the Lions Pediatric Eye Center at the Vanderbilt Eye Institute in Tennessee.

But Alsobrooks was up for it. She is known for her stamina. She worked as a machine operator in a Detroit factory during WWII, and when she later lost her right arm in a traffic accident, she reacted by starting to paint with her left arm to strengthen it. Her friends say she got pretty good.

Would these life experiences have given her the confidence to join the all-male Lions club?

"As if I needed it," she says.

Women Lions, says Alsobrooks, are more service oriented than men and likely to urge the men in the club to get out there and help. "If Lions show respect for each other's ideas," she says, "LCI will be an even stronger organization."



Wentzville Outreach Lions Club members in Missouri say their president Lisa Alexander is “a Godsend.”

📷 PHOTO BY WHITNEY CURTIS

They're Multiplying

One week after the Wentzville Outreach Lions had their charter night in 2016, they served 100 Thanksgiving dinners to the homeless, veterans, seniors, and first responders.

On Christmas Day, the new club did it again. But this time more people came to eat and more townspeople came to help. The Lion spirit to give was already catching on in their Missouri community.

Charter Lion Jimmy Butler credits their current president Lisa Alexander with the club's jump start that has yet to slow down.

"She is a Godsend," says Butler. "Without our guiding Lion Lisa we would not be a Lions club today."

Alexander, who joined Lions in St. Louis, Missouri in 1998, and served as district governor in 26-M3 from 2013 to 2014, tosses the credit back to club members who wanted first and foremost to put their words into actions. Their enthusiasm was infectious, and seeing a number of women in the club encouraged her even more, she says.

"Men are good, but women can get down in there and get things done that sometimes men can't get done," says Alexander. "We are committed to seeing it through."

Every month the club has a different project in addition to their continuous service like collecting food for the local pantry. In February they gather coats, shoes, and socks for the needy. In April they conduct hearing screenings paired with the eye screenings offered at Walmart. The Lions help seniors clean up their yards in the spring, collect school supplies for children in the summer, pick up trash along the highway four times a year, and the list goes on.

The calendar pages turn quickly.

Before the club's official charter night, Alexander wondered how she could give this spirited group a boost. She applied for a community grant from the Walmart Foundation and got the club a US\$2,000

nest egg. In January 2018, the Lions of District 26-M3 received a US\$100,000 LCIF grant to build an inclusive playground in Wentzville to accommodate children with disabilities.

At community events, Alexander and other Lions make a point of telling their guests about the organization. They invite students and their parents to help with projects, and they find that the extra promotional effort has further warmed their reception in the community and increased membership.

"We work together as a team, but teams need leaders," says Butler. "You can make it happen with the right leadership."

He questions if their particular leader ever gets any sleep.

"No," replies Alexander with a laugh. "I don't sleep much. I have a full time job and I volunteer. But they say if you need something done you ask a busy person and they find a way to get it done."

"My family says I'm married to the Lions."

"Lions changed me because I knew nothing about giving back. I knew nothing about helping people. And now I'm always busy doing something for the club," says Alexander. **L**

"We live in a 'me' world. It's all about them and not about others. But we can do something about that. We can make a difference in people's lives and it feels wonderful when we do."

LCIF Eases a Heavy Burden in Tanzania

BY CASSANDRA ROTOLO

Imagine trekking across the savannah with your child in the blistering sun to collect water for drinking, cooking, bathing, and farming. For you, the three-mile journey is grueling, but standard practice. For your 5-year-old daughter, it's an exhausting trip that brings sweat to her tiny forehead and introduces the challenges of living in a water-stressed part of the world.

Imagine arriving at a sandy riverbank, already exhausted from the walk. Imagine plunging that jug deep into murky water where mothers bathe their children, knowing the water you'll struggle to carry home is dirty. Swatting flies from your child's eyes, you long for her to be in school, learning to read and write so she can forge a better future for herself. But you need her to help with the back-breaking chore of fetching water. You might rest a bit with your fellow villagers, mustering the energy to make the trip back home.

Imagine knowing that tomorrow you'll do it all over again. But right now, you can focus on today only. Today, you need water.

Relief Flows Like Water

Valentina Matiku, 15 years old, doesn't have to imagine this scenario; it was her reality for most of her life. But with a US\$77,000 grant from Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), and the efforts of caring and compassionate Lions close to home



Funding from LCIF is instrumental in bringing the life-saving water that many worldwide take for granted to people like Matiku.

and continents away, Matiku and others from her village no longer have to make that daunting trek.

Lions in Austria learned of the scarcity of clean water in Tanzania and reached out to local Lions. Together with 18 Tanzanian Lions clubs and non-profit SEI SO FREI, they used the LCIF grant to expand access to water in several rural communities. These communities, which rely heavily on subsistence farming, struggle constantly to get the clean water they need for daily life.

This "Land for Life" project took about nine months and consisted of digging three wells and building six water tanks throughout the Mara



Mwita is proud that her school's water tank provides clean water to everyone in her village.



CHANGE THE WORLD

ONE COMMUNITY AT A TIME





Lions Clubs International
FOUNDATION

TOGETHER, WE CAN

Changing the world. It's why you became a Lion.
It's also why Lions Clubs International Foundation
– *our* Foundation – is empowering your service through
its most ambitious fundraising campaign in history.

As we embark on our second century of service, we see a world in need and caring
Lions ready to change it. But the reality is this: comfort and compassion alone
can't heal those suffering through disease, disaster, and other devastation. It takes
funding. It takes *Campaign 100: LCIF Empowering Service*.

It takes every Lion worldwide both *doing and giving*. Together, *we'll raise
\$300 million* to:

INCREASE

our service impact
in vision, youth,
disaster relief, and
humanitarian efforts

FIGHT

the global epidemic
of diabetes

EXPAND

our global causes to
childhood cancer,
hunger, and the
environment

WELCOME TO CAMPAIGN 100

TOGETHER, WE'LL CHANGE THE WORLD

YOUR WORLD IN NEED, YOUR FOUNDATION IN ACTION



253 million individuals are blind or visually impaired. ▶



LCIF will reduce avoidable blindness and visual impairment, and improve quality of life for those impacted, through SightFirst grants.

2/3 of children report being victims of bullying. ▶



LCIF will provide access to education, health services, and social programs, and provide youth skills-building programs, including Lions Quest.

Our planet experiences a 15% rise in natural disasters every year. ▶



LCIF will deeply engage in disaster relief efforts, preparing for whenever and wherever devastation strikes.

245 people die every day from measles. ▶



LCIF will support programs addressing the needs of at-risk and vulnerable populations disproportionately impacted by social and economic factors.

425 million people live with diabetes; this number may approach 630 million by 2045. ▶



LCIF will respond to the diabetes global epidemic through multi-faceted, comprehensive health initiatives.

Every 2 minutes a child is diagnosed with cancer. ▶



LCIF will strengthen medical and social services, increasing global life expectancy of children living with cancer.

820 million+ people go to bed hungry each night. ▶



LCIF will expand resources and infrastructure needed to address food shortages worldwide.

By 2025, 50% of the world's population will live in water-stressed areas. ▶



LCIF will protect environmental health globally, generating positive ecological and humanitarian impact.

YOUR \$100 GIFT CAN FUND...

- Lions Quest for a classroom for 1 year
- Immediate relief to 4 victims of natural disaster
- Diabetes screenings for 18 at-risk people
- Equipment treating 8 young cancer patients
- Access to food for 14 chronically hungry people
- Access to clean water for 14 people

MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY!

Donate online at LionsClubs.org/Change. Or turn the page to make your impact today.

GENEROUS GIVING DESERVES GENEROUS RECOGNITION

Earn a limited-edition Campaign 100 donor pin after giving just \$100! Continue your support and earn additional recognition – and Melvin Jones Fellow (MJF) credit – along the way! Clubs earn recognition, too. Donations count toward ongoing recognition like 100% MJF, 100% Progressive MJF, 100% Lions Share Participation, per-member-average banner patches, and special campaign recognition.

YOU'RE MINUTES AWAY FROM CHANGING THE WORLD

Donate now at LionsClubs.org/Change, OR detach this form and return it with your gift in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. Thank you!

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Email DonorAssistance@LionsClubs.org or call 630.203.3836 with questions.



ONE LION CAN ACCOMPLISH MUCH. TOGETHER, WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.



Natural disasters strike anywhere, any time. When they do, victims of fires, floods, and other devastation often benefit from funding from LCIF, facilitating rebuilding and healing one victim, one family, one community at a time.

In 2017, an angry wildfire began raging in Mariposa County, California. Consuming its way through 80,000 acres and seemingly everything in its path, the blaze forced nearly 5,000 people to evacuate. With an emergency grant from LCIF, local Lions were able to serve 4,500 meals each day to residents who suddenly found themselves displaced from their homes, their livelihoods, their lives.

Many say the world's needs are too great. Lions step in and serve. Together with our Foundation, we offer hope and impact lives. Campaign 100 will enable us to serve hundreds of millions of people here at home and continents afar.

Together, we can. Together, we will.

YOURS WITH A GIFT OF...



\$50



\$100



\$200



\$1,000



\$100

Receive this Campaign 100 donor pin after your cumulative campaign donations reach \$100. Additional pins are available as your giving increases!

LCIF_C042_EN_LM5/19

Empower More of This Service

As the challenges facing our world expand, so must our capacity to combat them. To build a future promising even greater service impact, LCIF—your foundation—has introduced **Campaign 100: LCIF Empowering Service**.

The most ambitious fundraising effort in LCIF history, Campaign 100 will span three years and aims to raise US\$300 million. Campaign 100 will empower Lions to serve hundreds of millions of people by increasing our service impact, fighting diabetes, and expanding our global causes.

INCREASE SERVICE IMPACT

LCIF will expand Lions' commitment to our communities, with a focus on **Vision, Youth, Disaster Relief, and Humanitarian efforts**.

FIGHT DIABETES

Together, we'll respond to this global epidemic, helping prevent diabetes through multi-faceted, comprehensive health initiatives targeted to the communities where we live and serve.

EXPAND OUR GLOBAL CAUSES

LCIF will identify areas of greatest need and opportunity; conduct pilot projects to develop expertise; and build sustainable, long-term programs related to **Hunger, Childhood Cancer, and the Environment**.

In 100 years, we've proven that Lions united in service can transform the lives of millions. With the help of every Lion in every club, LCIF is poised to make an even greater impact today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.

region. While crews focused on construction, volunteers got to work training residents to use new agriculture and fish farming equipment. The project has eased the burden of water scarcity and increased farming output for nearly 5,000 people in the region, and its ripple effect will be felt for generations to come.

In Their Own Words

It is easy to get lost in the numbers: US\$77,000 from LCIF, Lions in two countries, 5,000 beneficiaries, six tanks, three wells, etc. But the real test of a grant's success lies in its impact. That impact is perhaps best put into words by the people who feel it every day.

"Having a [well] in my village is a savior," says Matiku. "I used to go far away to fetch surface water in the dam where animals also drink." Thanks to the generosity of LCIF donors, Matiku and her family now have easy access to clean water. Now Matiku can focus on her education instead of her chores.

Mwacha Mwita, age 13, sees how much this LCIF grant project has improved the quality of life in her village. She is grateful that she does not have to carry water over long distances to water the trees, cook porridge, or wash plates anymore. "I enjoy being in school because I can drink water from the tank," says Mwita.



Empower More of This Service

For all the reasons you serve, please give.

Your gift of US\$100 to *Campaign 100: LCIF Empowering Service*—just US\$2 per week—can provide 14 people access to clean water! Young women like Valentina Matiku and Mwacha Mwita are counting on you. Visit lcif.org/donate to make a donation and ensure humanitarian efforts like this continue for generations to come. Or, fill out and return the pledge form included in this issue of LION Magazine.

SPEAKING UP

Women Lions Walk the Walk

The New Voices Initiative celebrates the extraordinary achievements of and contributions by women in Lions Clubs International.

The following four women have been chosen by IP Yngvadottir for their significant accomplishments in the areas of service, growth, leadership, and marketing.

As you celebrate these four women, consider the important role that you played in supporting and empowering the women of Lions. Together, Lions are doing so much to make the world a better place. Together, Lions' voices are inspiring people everywhere.

A portrait of Zeynep Kocasinan, a woman with short, wavy grey hair, smiling. She is wearing a black textured jacket over a white top, a pearl necklace, and a ring with a blue stone. She is holding a pair of glasses in her left hand.

Zeynep Kocasinan

CA4 Europa, District 118-R
Fethiye Muğla Lions Club
Muğla, Turkey
MEMBER SINCE 2007

Over the years, Zeynep Kocasinan has given away countless copies of the autobiography of Helen Keller. “Discovering how a family and a teacher can open up the world to a child who cannot see or hear amazed me,” she says. As she read more about those with disabilities, she realized that it wasn’t only them who struggled, but their mothers as well. “The lives of the children were difficult, and that difficulty was obvious,” she says. “However, the mothers were under other, different pressures.”

“My focus is on a peaceful world—one in which women can lead and speak without fear. As Lions, we are leading the way to a better world for all.”

Kocasinan has dedicated herself to empowering women in her community and raising environmental awareness across the region. Her focus on women's issues has led her to organize several ambitious programs, including a district-wide symposium and an award-winning project called "Non-Violent Communication—Communication for Peace."

Both projects emphasize ending violence against women and empowering them through legal rights education. Her vision has helped create many opportunities for women, especially for mothers of disabled children.

In all her work, Kocasinan is focused on non-violence and peace.

"I believe that supporting the environment is an act of peace; is an act of kindness and compassion," she says. "It creates a feeling of respect for life. It makes us aware that we cannot survive on our own. It makes us aware that we are a part of a bigger life. We are connected."

Kocasinan embodies the innovative leadership and global perspective that helps Lions overcome obstacles every day. "To be able to support anyone, we need to come from a space of acceptance," she says.

Her initiative as a Lion, in civic organizations, and professionally has made her a role model for many young men and women in her community and across her district. Her influence has empowered many women throughout Turkey to speak out on environmental causes. And her emphasis on peace and international relations demonstrates to the world what Lions can accomplish.

Her voice speaks guidance to those who share our vision.



On the importance of gender balance

As an industrial engineer, Kocasinan is used to being the only woman in the room. "There were times people would address me as Mr. Zeynep just because they were not used to having a female boss or a female engineer and they did not know where to place me or how to address me," she says.

Having attended an all-girls high school and serving in an all-women Lions club, she is also familiar with what it's like to be working only with women. "I have experienced the plusses and minuses of working and serving in gender unbalanced environments," she says. "Men and women need to work together to create a sustainable safe space, not limited by the perspective of one gender only."

Mi Yang

CA5 OSEAL, District 356-C

Jeonju Dong Haeng Lions Club

Jeonju, Korea

MEMBER SINCE 2007

There were days when Mi Yang would pull a blanket over her head so that no one would hear, and then cry and scream curses. She was watching her son, who had severe autism, close his mind against the world, locking himself away. She blamed the world for her situation.

Since becoming a Lion, Yang has been surprised to discover that despite her service to others, she is actually receiving more help than ever before.

“Lions has helped me become a person who contributes toward building a harmonious and

“We should spread our work far and wide, not to show off, but to inspire more people to participate in service.”

“But one day I suddenly began to question myself,” she says. “What kind of help have I given to the world? What kind of effort have I made for other people and my neighbors? I felt ashamed of myself and realized I should help others first to change the world toward the direction where I wish to be.”

And so she joined Lions.

She focuses on projects that help seniors living alone and children without parents, recognizing that socially marginalized people struggle not just with poverty but with a lack of emotional support. “I would like to give them hope and love by letting them feel that they are not alone and we are with them,” she says.

balanced world for us to live in together. I have learned the joy of sharing. I have met good people. I have also gained self-respect because I felt I was needed by other people.”

Her spirit and encouragement have inspired many to begin their own service journey with Lions. Within four months of chartering a club, she grew its membership from 84 charter members to 200 Lions, becoming the largest club in her district. With so many contributing to the good of their community, they have made an incredible impact on their neighbors’ lives and continue to inspire others to action.

Her voice speaks comfort to those who need hope.

MARKETING

Shyana Jayalath

CA6 ISAAME, District 306-A1
Colombo Host Lions Club
Ratmalana, Sri Lanka
MEMBER SINCE 2005



Shyana Jayalath feels strongly that no one should be in danger of cyber exploitation, and those disproportionately affected are women and girls.

She created the #StopShaming initiative to create awareness about the controversial issue of cyber exploitation and violence against young women.

“The act of blaming a woman for any sort of harassment is not limited to Sri Lanka,” says Jayalath. “It is a constant thorn in my side that women who are victims of any form of violence or harassment are shamed.”

“I am inspired by the strength, resilience and generosity of the human spirit!”

The innovative campaign proved to be so successful in her community that it was included in the district plan for the upcoming year. Building on the success of this campaign, Jayalath is planning a broader effort to highlight violence against women. Implementing social media, workshops, and coverage on traditional media, she is encouraging her club to speak out on behalf of those without a voice.

“Service is so much more than we have grown up with,” she says. “It’s no longer only charity. Service encompasses any action we do to help another person and addresses issues which are often swept under the carpet.”

Jayalath champions the vigilant advocacy and adaptability of Lions defending their communities from injustice.

Her voice speaks for those who cannot.

On Role Models

Jayalath shares a memory of her mother, sitting on a hospital bed coordinating the purchase of medicine to donate to children with cancer while she herself was being prepped for surgery to remove a tumor. While not a Lion, Jayalath calls her mother “one hell of a contributor,” and a very important role model to her growing up.

“A good role model,” says Jayalath “is someone who walks the talk, inspires and sets the standards.”

Maria José Rodrigues Pinto

CA3 FOLAC, District LA-3

Maceió Panalto da Jacutinga Lions Club

Maceió, Brazil

MEMBER SINCE 2011

Maria José Rodrigues Pinto leads a group at her parish every other month called “Coffee for Friends.” The trust she builds with them ensures they will listen when she most needs them to. “I want to promote their health and well-being,” she says.

A diabetic herself, Pinto knows the importance of self-care in managing the condition. And she’s seen first-hand how little some people in her country know about how to care for themselves.

Recognizing the need for diabetes education, Pinto wrote a book titled “Alimente-se Bem para Viver Bem” (“Eat Well to Live Well”), which illustrates the benefits of healthy lifestyles, especially for those living with diabetes.

“My journey in Lions has been full of wonderful experiences and successes, but mostly of dreams come true.”

Her enthusiasm has inspired many around her to action. Her club and her church group are quick to mobilize and serve. Pinto has launched several educational programs and more than 200 participants have already signed up for an initiative to prevent the accidental administering of glucose serum to diabetics.

Pinto envisions chartering a specialty club for diabetics and building an educational and resource center that will serve as the standard of service within her district.

Her voice speaks for those who need our help. 🗣️



Hear from New Voices leaders around the world about why we need these (and other) great women in Lions at lionmagazine.org.

📷 PHOTO BY FERNANDO MELLO





The Invisibles

The Invisibles

A cast of characters
deep in Florida's interior
help the unseen to see.

By Erin Kasdin



“ I struggle with what God wants me to do. Feed the hungry? Clothe the naked? Visit the imprisoned? Is that everybody or only U.S. citizens? ”

- Lion Margarita Romo, Dade City Hispanic American Club.

Past District Governor Shirley LePage zips down the narrow street in a brown Kia Sportage. She honks at a blood donation bus that has paused at an intersection and points toward a small gravel parking lot half a block east. The driver nods and puts the bus in gear. Before I can say anything she points at me through her open window and hollers, “I’m coming back for you, stay right there.” I stay.

It’s August in central Florida and the heat is visible, hanging in waves above the pavement. Catalina Morales walks up the front path of the Lions club office, a long ponytail swinging down her back, and holding a bright bouquet of balloons. “Buenos días!” she says, smiling. She’s just come from the Norma Godinez Arts and Education building where they’ve set up the food pantry, and she’s tying balloons on the mailbox to call attention to their health fair.

In a community with as many needs as Dade City, the Lions there try to provide as many services as they can in one stop. For many of the families a day off work is a luxury and it can’t be wasted.

Situated across six stations are a food pantry, diabetic screenings and retinopathy exams for adults, KidSight eye screenings for the kids, a blood donation bus, a mobile medical clinic, and a free lunch.

The stations were originally spaced a few blocks apart in order to control traffic and congestion. However, with the extreme heat,



Past District Governor Shirley LePage assures Eva Caraballo, 22, that the Dade City Lions will get her the eye care she needs.

“Let’s get this girl a screening.”

they’ve condensed them all into one location to minimize walking and keep folks in the air conditioning as long as possible. I edge under the shade of a water oak and wait for LePage.

Diane Hankins, club secretary and overall wonder woman walks up holding the hand of a short, athletic-looking girl in a Grateful Dead T-shirt. “Let’s get this girl a screening,” she says.

Eva wears a backwards baseball cap over her short, rust-colored curls. Freckles covering her porcelain features make her look young, but she’s 22. One eye fixes on me as we speak, while the other sits dreamily somewhere a little off to the left.



Catalina Morales
ties balloons to a
mailbox at the Dade
City club's office to
welcome community
members to the free
health clinic.

She's legally blind in her left eye from amblyopia (lazy eye) that wasn't corrected when she was younger, and her right eye is the only thing between her and complete darkness.

"I treat it like my baby," she says of her right eye.

But she doesn't have health insurance and the doctor she used to see at Walmart left in June. Her roommate saw in the paper that the Lions were holding this event, so she walked here. She walks everywhere because she doesn't want to hurt someone by driving. Sometimes in her work as a motel housekeeper she runs into things with her cart.

"I hate doctors," she tells me as we wait. She can only get the retinopathy exam today. The Lions' equipment to screen for vision problems won't work with her eye condition so she'll need to be referred.

When she was a kid she used to fight the eye doctor. "Looking back now, I wish I didn't," she says. Amblyopia is correctible when detected at a young age, and it's one of the many conditions Lions' KidSight screens for, helping people like Eva avoid lifelong consequences.

"You're a citizen?" LePage asks as she gets the paperwork for her referral. The Florida Lions Foundation for the Blind works with a network of doctors who will treat those in financial need. The local clubs who refer patients pay a US\$200 co-pay and the foundation pays the remainder. But the foundation doesn't cover those without legal residency or citizenship documents.

Fortunately for Eva, she is a citizen. But many in Dade City are not.

The Undocumented

As recently as 10 years ago this part of Dade City was known as Tommy Town. Exactly how it got that name isn't clear, though it's believed to have been built in the 1940s and '50s to provide housing for the migrant population, which at the time was comprised of German POWs. Eventually those POWs were replaced by migrant workers from central America, many of whom are undocumented.

Florida is home to an estimated 656,000

undocumented people. A large portion of them work on the state's 9.45 million acres of farm land, doing work that nearly no American citizens enlist for.

Farm work is by all accounts grueling, demanding long hours and offering little pay. It's also dangerous, especially for workers' eyes.

Exposure to agricultural chemicals, tools, and machinery, plus the long days exposed to ultraviolet light, airborne soil and particulates, pollen, varying levels of humidity, and plant components all contribute to the deterioration of sight in farmworkers. Yet they are very unlikely to ever have an eye screening or receive eye care.

That is, until Lions set up shop in Dade City.

The Granny

LePage is the type of person who doesn't beat around the bush. She talks about her

tough times in life, including being left on a doorstep as an infant, but waves most of it off with an "I'll tell you later" nonchalance. "Sometimes being broken yourself helps you understand others who are broken," she says.

She started a club in Dade City in 2009, she says, because she saw the need. She saw the lack of help for people with sight issues. She saw a community that, while rallying, was still a little broken.

When she stopped for directions she was told, "Do you know where you are? Turn around, get out of this area." There were gangs, drugs, and violence.

But now the streets are sunny and quiet. Small, well-maintained houses have plants on the front porch and hoses out for watering small gardens. There's a patch of kittens curled up nursing from their mother in the shade of a camphor tree.

"It's safe now," says LePage. And it's all



Many community members have taken a rare day off of work to attend the Dade City Lions' free health fair. Araceli, 45, (pictured with her two daughters) is a farmworker who typically works seven days a week.

because of the hard work of the Lions and an organization called Farmworkers Self Help [FSH].

The Matriarch

Lion Margarita Romo doesn't look her 80-odd years, even though on the day we sit down to talk she is fighting off a bad cold. She looks vibrant, strong, capable. In 2013 she was named to the Florida Civil Rights Hall of Fame.

"Broken people can't fix broken communities," says Romo.

The daughter of farmworkers, Romo started FSH 37 years ago to give migrant farmworkers a place to find solutions to the problems they faced. She knew farmworkers were strong and weren't looking for charity. "They were looking for a hand up, not a handout," she says.

FSH partners with Lions on many of the service projects they do in Dade City, and the community has changed as a result. Community members—many of whom are undocumented farmworkers—now have a place where they and their children can learn self-development and leadership skills, helping them to take control of their lives and destinies.

FSH provides emergency services, such as food and clothing, shelter, medical care, and immigration assistance when needed, and their partnership with Lions has enabled them to provide eyeglasses and surgeries to farmworkers who would otherwise not qualify for aid. While there are other programs in the state that offer low- or no-cost eye care, none do so for non-citizens.

"We'd have to lie," says Romo. "And people would go blind."

The Farmworker

Anna Ocasio (not her real name) has seven-year-old twin daughters who are waiting by the face-painting booth to get their eye exams. She has five more children at home. These are her youngest, and until two years ago she could barely see them.

Ocasio had an issue with her corneas and when she was 25 a doctor told her she would

need surgery, or she would go blind. But Ocasio is undocumented. She doesn't have health insurance and doesn't have the money to pay out of pocket for such a procedure. She grew depressed and was unable to work due to her deteriorating sight. Then, nearly twenty years later, she met Margarita Romo, who sent her to the Lions.

"When you aren't documented you're invisible," says Romo. But the Dade City Lions have made it their specialty to help those in the shadows, and they've developed

"We're connectors, navigators. Because of our work, a lot of people are alive."



Margarita Romo is the person everyone goes to for help in Dade City.

Bill Cohen, from the Tampa North Lions, supports the Dade City Lions when their funds run short.



a very small network of people willing to help.

Ocasio had surgery on both her eyes two years ago. Her right eye is “perfect.” The left still has some issues, but she continues to be treated by a doctor through the Lions.

Most importantly, she can see again.

The Benefactor

Bill Cohen’s mother belonged to the PTA and used to translate books into braille in the 1960s. His first real job was as a miniature golf operator when he was 12. He vacuumed the artificial grass and kept track of the balls and putters. He’s been working ever since.

And he never forgot how his mother volunteered to help the blind. It stuck with him. So when he became successful, he looked for a way to help others and found

Lions. Today, Cohen is club treasurer for the Tampa North Lions—and a big benefactor to the Dade City club.

Because they are a club made up almost entirely of farmworkers, the Dade City Lions often don’t have the money to do all the service that needs to be done. “These people work seven days a week,” says LePage. “They don’t have time for fundraisers.” But they do find the time to serve.

So, Cohen steps in. He pays members’ dues, covers co-pays, and finds pet projects to back whenever possible. His favorite was trip to SeaWorld for 60 kids in 2000. “These kids had never been out of their neighborhood,” he says.

He helps people other than the Dade City club, of course. Recently he came across a couple, Angel and Frank, married for 22 years



Girls peek into the packages at the food pantry, hoping to find their favorite goodies inside.

and living in an abandoned car in the parking lot of his bingo hall. He organized a fundraiser and got them money for a hotel room. Every day they go to join a group of “labor-ready” workers, hoping to soon land more permanent jobs. They continue to receive the support of Lions in the meantime.

They are grateful for his generosity and ask him how they will ever pay him back. “You’re not going to pay me back,” he says. “You’re going to go help someone else.”


From Beneficiaries to Lions

On the day of the health fair it’s clear how much the Dade City club provides to the community. Dozens of families are crammed into the small office, waiting for screenings. Children eat suckers and adults fill out forms. Those who have come from the food pantry eye the goods in their paper bags. One eight-

year-old girl says she hopes there are cookies in there. A woman next to her writes down a recipe for the pumpkin pie filling peeking out of one bag.

Ocasio takes her two girls in for an eye screening. She is there for the services—and also to help out. Wanting to give back to the community that gave so much to her, Ocasio became a Lion after her surgeries. “I’m thankful they saved my vision,” she says.

This is the essence of the Dade City club. They take those who are beneficiaries and turn them into Lions. This has been the plan all along. To fix the broken people so that they may fix their community.

“Everyone should know that farmworkers are the best Lions in the world,” says Romo. “They are true workers.” 



A Leo Saved My Life

Neither one of them
was supposed to
be there that night.

By Jay Copp

Bowling with friends, Garrett Towe, 17, was standing in his lane when he noticed a loud commotion two lanes over. A middle-aged man had collapsed. His body was shaking, and he threw up. "Does anybody know CPR?" someone shouted.

The irony of it all was striking. Towe had not intended to be at Ralphie's Fun Center in Glasgow, near Bowling Green, Kentucky. He and two of his friends had been planning to go to another bowling alley further away. But the mother of one of his friends was worried about the drive after her son had been in a minor car accident recently. So the teenagers changed plans and went to Ralphie's to ease her fears.

The man on the ground, Joseph Short, 54, also had no intention of bowling that night at Ralphie's. He had stopped in for a quick chat with the co-owner, who persuaded him to roll a few games.

Towe had learned CPR from the Red Cross as part of his training to be a lifeguard at a country club. That was a few years ago. He had never done CPR in a real emergency. "I walked over. I walked fast," he says of that night in December.

No one else jumped in.

"I was the only person there who knew what to do," he says. "My mindset was I can do this. Once you know how to do it, you don't really think about it."

Towe is six feet tall and 130 pounds soaking wet. He estimated that Short was nearly three times his weight. No matter. He pushed hard and then even harder. He heard a cracking sound. "I knew the sternum was breaking and that I was going the right depth. I knew I was pushing hard enough to get the blood flowing," he says.

Pushing for minutes, he completed four rounds. "He kind of jumped up and gasped. Then I lost the pulse," says Garrett.

A Life of Service

Towe's Leo club is small with a dozen members, but it is very active. Its service is innovative and wide-ranging. The Glasgow Barren Leo Club maintains a community garden and gathers art supplies for veterans engaged in art therapy. It also collects toys and clothes for the homeless

and supports a shelter for victims of domestic violence. "We try to make sure if there's a need we are available," says Towe, who joined when a friend recommended the club. "We can see the difference we make in our community."

The Leo club is sponsored by the Barren County Evening Lions Club.

Garrett is an excellent student. He plans to become a doctor and perhaps join Doctors Without Borders. His career aspirations are in sync with the kind of person he is, says his mother. "He's what I call an old soul. He's a little old man," says Ashley Young. "He's very sweet, very loving."

Towe looks out in particular for youths with disabilities. At school, he routinely carried the books of a student with

a disability and once kept his father waiting to drive him home from a party for another child with a disability because he didn't want to abruptly leave.

At Ralphie's, Towe was suddenly put in the position of saving the life of a 54-year-old stranger,

someone on disability and no longer able to run an ultra-heavy stamping press. Once he realized the man had no pulse, Towe put aside his fatigue and completed another two rounds of compressions. Then he was relieved by a police officer who had arrived, and the officer in turn was replaced by an emergency medical technician.

Saving A Life

Later that night, the EMT returned to the alley to tell Towe that Short had survived the cardiac arrest. The chances of surviving such an event is slim, the EMT told Towe.

"I would not have survived if not for him [Towe]," says Short. "I don't remember it. I got my ball, put on my shoes and the next thing I know I was in the ICU."

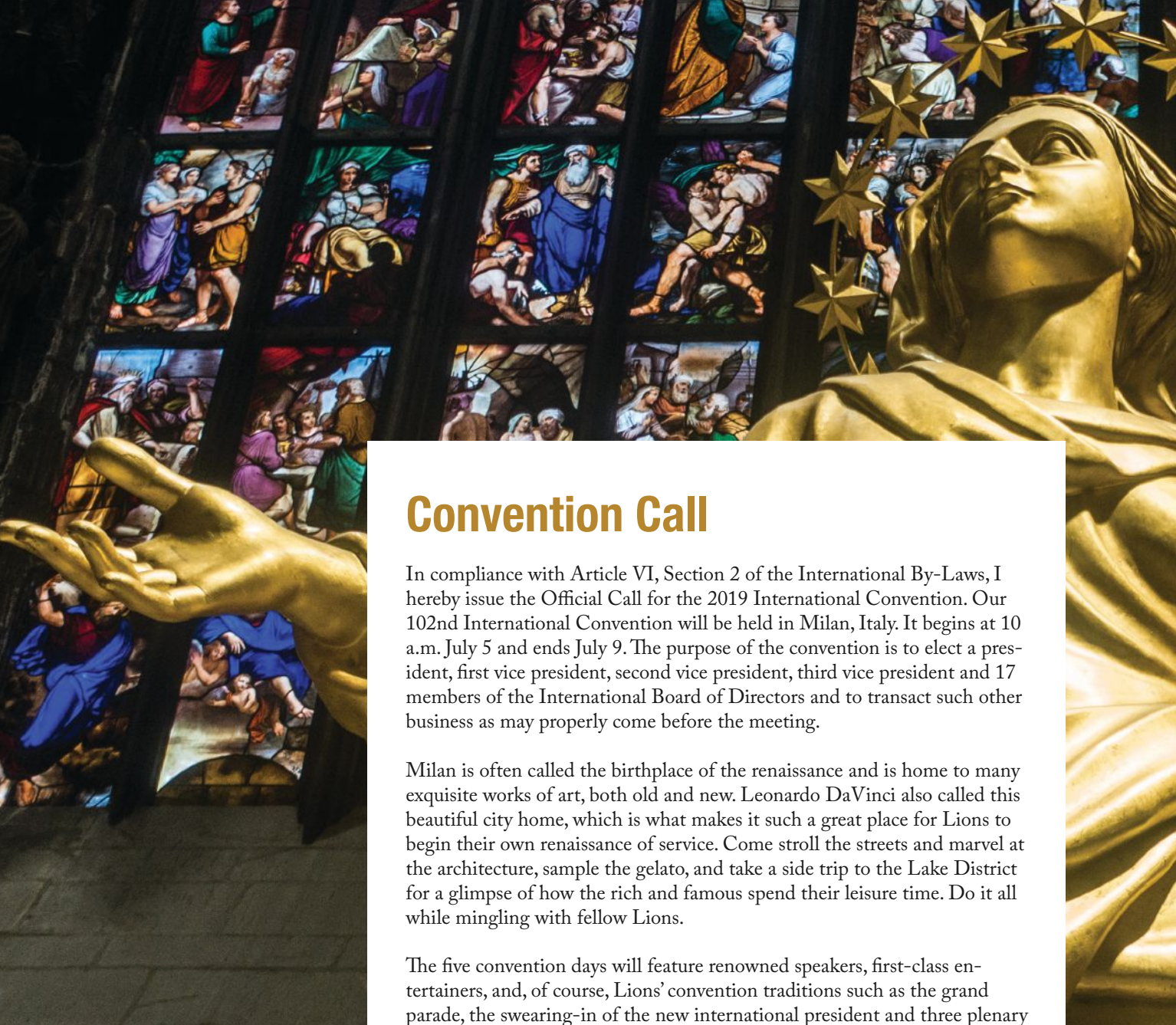
Short spent 18 days in the hospital. "I'm back to feeling normal. I'm doing what I want to do," he says. He's even bowled again.

Towe received recognition in the local newspaper, and the head of the county's emergency medical services unit came to his high school to present him with a certificate of appreciation. "He feels like he didn't do anything special, but he did, of course," says Lion William Mills, a past council chair.

"I just feel great he's alive," says Towe.

As for Short? "I'd like to take him bowling," he says.

"He kind of jumped up and gasped. Then I lost the pulse."



Convention Call

In compliance with Article VI, Section 2 of the International By-Laws, I hereby issue the Official Call for the 2019 International Convention. Our 102nd International Convention will be held in Milan, Italy. It begins at 10 a.m. July 5 and ends July 9. The purpose of the convention is to elect a president, first vice president, second vice president, third vice president and 17 members of the International Board of Directors and to transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

Milan is often called the birthplace of the renaissance and is home to many exquisite works of art, both old and new. Leonardo DaVinci also called this beautiful city home, which is what makes it such a great place for Lions to begin their own renaissance of service. Come stroll the streets and marvel at the architecture, sample the gelato, and take a side trip to the Lake District for a glimpse of how the rich and famous spend their leisure time. Do it all while mingling with fellow Lions.

The five convention days will feature renowned speakers, first-class entertainers, and, of course, Lions' convention traditions such as the grand parade, the swearing-in of the new international president and three plenary sessions that demonstrate the amazing range and scope of Lions' service. Former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Tony Blair will be one of the special guest speakers. And a special Business Session gives Lions an opportunity to hear from candidates for international director.

Convention week is a wonderful experience packed with fellowship, fun, and learning. Come spend time with fellow Lions, participate in one of the campfire sessions, and become inspired for another year of service.

Gudrun Yngvadottir

Gudrun Yngvadottir
International President



Official Notice 2019 International Convention, Milan, Italy



The following proposed amendments to the International Constitution will be reported to the delegates for vote at the 2019 International Convention.

ITEM 1: A RESOLUTION TO ADD A NEW CONSTITUTIONAL AREA OF AFRICA AND TO ADD REPRESENTATION OF ONE NEW INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR TO THE NEW CONSTITUTIONAL AREA OF AFRICA IN EVEN-NUMBERED YEARS; RENAME THE CONSTITUTIONAL AREA OF ISAAME TO ISAME; AND LIST THE CONSTITUTIONAL AREAS IN NUMERIC ORDER. (THIS AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION REQUIRES A 2/3 VOTE TO ADOPT)

SHALL THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION BE ADOPTED?

BE IT RESOLVED, That Article V, Section 3 of the International Constitution be amended by deleting the existing language in its entirety and substituting the language as set forth below:

Section 3.COMPOSITION AND ELECTION OF INTERNATIONAL BOARD BY CONSTITUTIONAL AREAS. The International Board of Directors shall be composed of the president, immediate past president, the first, second and third vice presidents and directors, which shall be elected as follows:

In each even-numbered year, eighteen (18) directors shall be elected, consisting of five (5) from clubs in the United States of America, its affiliates, Bermuda and the Bahamas; one (1) from clubs in South America, Central America, Mexico and Islands of the Caribbean Sea; three (3) from clubs in Europe; three (3) from clubs in the Orient and Southeast Asia; four (4) from clubs in India, South Asia and the Middle East; one (1) from clubs in Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Islands of the South Pacific; and one (1) from clubs in Africa;

In each odd-numbered year, seventeen (17) directors shall be elected, consisting of six (6) from clubs in the United States of America, its affiliates, Bermuda and the Bahamas; one (1) from clubs in Canada; one (1) from clubs in South America, Central America, Mexico and the Islands of the Caribbean Sea; three (3) from clubs in Europe; four (4) from clubs in the Orient and Southeast Asia; and two (2) from clubs in India, South Asia and the Middle East.

Candidates for Third Vice President



Salim Moussan

Salim Moussan of Beirut, Lebanon, is a retired businessman and member of Beirut St. Gabriel Lions Club. An international director from 1997 to 1999, he has twice been a board appointee, twice a group leader, and has chaired several leadership forums. He is fluent in three languages, has visited 96 countries, and has attended 31 consecutive international conventions, 84 area forums and more than 60 regional conferences. Recipient of several Lions awards, he was decorated with Lebanon's National Medal of Merit.



Fabrício Oliveira

Fabrício Oliveira of Catolé do Rocha, Brazil, served as an international director from 2006 to 2008. He is a businessman and business administrator, and has been a member of the Catolé do Rocha Lions Club since 1985. He is a Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow and has received the Global Vision Medal Award, the Ambassador of Good Will Award, and 12 International President's Awards. Twice a District Governors-Elect seminar group leader, Oliveira is also active in many professional and community organizations. He has been endorsed four times by Constitutional Area III.



Pravin Chhajed

Pravin Chhajed of Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India, served as an international director from 2001 to 2003. He is director of a textiles, travel, and event management company. Starting as a Leo in 1979, he has been part of the Ahmedabad Karnavati Lions Clubs since 1984 and has personally sponsored more than 500 members. He has served as project chairperson for the Lions Karnavati Shantaben Vishnubhai Patel Eye Hospital, chairperson of the 2005 DGE seminar in Hong Kong, chairperson for two ISAAME Forums and is currently vice chairman of Laji Mehrotra Lions School. He is a Melvin Jones Fellow, and the recipient of the Ambassador of Good Will Award, the association's highest honor.



Patricia “Patti” Hill

Dr. Patti Hill of Edmonton, Canada, is a psychologist, business owner, and member of the Edmonton Host Lions Club. International Director from 2007 to 2009, she served as the Leadership Chair. Dr. Hill has also served on Global Membership and Global Leadership Teams, as a Multi-National Coordinator for Campaign SightFirst II, Institute Faculty, Committee Member for USA/ Canada Lions Leadership Forum, and presenter at Forums and International Conventions. A Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow, Dr. Patti Hill also received the Inspiring Woman Award and remains active in service and in her professional organizations.



Somsakdi Lovisuth

Somsakdi Lovisuth of Bangkok, Thailand, served as an international director from 2004 to 2006 and Board Appointee from 2014 to 2015. He is the President of a high-tech electrical engineering company and has been a member of the Bangkok Cosmopolitan Lions Club since 1986. He has served as a Coordinating Lion for Cambodia, DGE Seminar Chairperson, LCIF MD Coordinator and GMT/ GLT Area Leader. As an LCIF Humanitarian Partner and SightFirst II Lead Gift Donor, he is the recipient of numerous awards, including the 100% District Governor Award, 14 Presidential Awards and the association's highest honor, the Ambassador of Good Will Award.



Rosane Teresinha Jahnke

Rosane Teresinha Jahnke served as international director from 2008 to 2010. A member of the Balneário Camboriu Centro Lions Club in Brazil, Rosane is a teacher, businesswoman and a lawyer. A Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow and a Helen Keller Knight of Sight recipient, she participated in the LCIF Steering Committee and was a Group Leader and a GLT Leader. She has participated in 21 international conventions and 19 forums, and always promotes the rights of children with special needs as well as cancer prevention awareness.



Hot Springs Village Evening Lion Lynne Harkleroad is surprised when she opens one of the club's new drop boxes for eyeglasses in Arkansas.

The **Hot Springs Village Evening Lions** in **Arkansas** celebrated their 45th anniversary and decided to improve their efforts to collect eyeglasses. They designed two eye-catching drop boxes that give community members an easy opportunity to donate to the cause.

David "Bud" Davis Jr., a Lion for 66 years and the last remaining charter member of the **Cecilton Lions Club** in **Maryland**, was honored by his club with his own bench.

The **Meridian Lions Club** in **Idaho** took on 100 service projects to commemorate LCI's 100th anniversary. It took a year and a half to complete them. Among the many projects members completed was the sewing of "cuddle cloths" for newborns in the neonatal intensive care unit at the hospital. Lions also raised money to donate to the YMCA, and held their annual summer rodeo to support other efforts.

In **New York** the **Wheatfield Lions** celebrated the end of a productive 2018—a year that included their first Picnic for the Blind, a community opioid forum, a Service Groups Steak Night to honor US and Canadian Lions as well as other groups like Rotary and Kiwanis, a pancake breakfast, and numerous service projects.

In **Massachusetts** the **Westport Lions** worked with high school student Cabot Priestner to raise \$1,525 for the Massachusetts Lions Eye Research Fund and also collected more than 1,000 used eyeglasses to support the Lions Recycle For Sight program. Priestner, who is colorblind, received his first pair of EnChroma eyeglasses, and wants to help improve vision for others.

The **Wyandotte Lions Club** of **Kansas** donated US\$25,000 to the Kansas City Kansas Community College for scholarships.

Past District Governor Dave Sampson received a Diamond Centennial Award at the **Avon Grove Lions Club** meeting in **Pennsylvania**.

In **Illinois** the **Morris Lions** purchased a new refrigerator/freezer for the Illinois Food Pantry and have made regular visits to help keep the pantry stocked. Lions also took on a rehab project at Santa's House, replacing the roof and cupola, painting, and making numerous interior improvements.



Morris Lion Steve Clark works on the rehab of Santa's House in Illinois.

The **Westerville Lions Club** in **Ohio** was honored by the City Council for 90 years of service to their community.

The **Stillwater Noon Lions** in **Oklahoma** checked the vision of 1,249 students in Stillwater schools. More than 120 students were referred to an eye specialist.

The **Bench Lions** in **Idaho** were educated about diabetes when a registered dietitian spoke to the club. The club also distributed gift bags to children with cancer at St. Luke's Children's Hospital.

The **Waterloo Lions Club** in **Illinois** took home a Governor's Hometown Award for volunteerism and community service. Since 1991 the Lions have served hundreds at their "Share the Feast" annual Thanksgiving meal, free to anyone wishing to join them at the table. Each year the number of guests grows.

In **Maryland** the **Thurmont Lions Club** raises money for charity each Christmas when Lions Doug Favorite and Don Kenney decorate their home with more than 200 trees and host house tours and dinner fundraisers. The Lions also collect food there for the homeless veterans' shelter in Washington D.C.

Five Lions from the **Snellville Lions Club** in **Georgia** go every week to the Georgia Lions Lighthouse to sort, wash, test and package eyeglasses for distribution to U.S. groups going on mission trips abroad. The club has multiple fundraising activities each year including pecan sales, Snellville Days, and an annual golf tournament.



Therapy dog JP sports his new Lion vest while visiting patients at the Southern Ocean Medical Center. The vest was a gift from the Stafford Township Lions Club in New Jersey.



The Montebello Lions Club of California, in partnership with the City of Montebello, replaced the LCI street signs at 11 major entry points to the city.



Into the Wild

Ho'opono Services for the Blind in Honolulu, Hawaii helps those with vision impairment transition to a life without sight. Here, as part of their week-long camp to promote employment they take a group of students on a hike.

LION



Lions Clubs International

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LANNIVERSARIES

MAY 2019

100 Years: Ada, Okla.

95 Years: Chillicothe Evening, Ohio; Des Plaines, Ill.; Lewisburg, Pa.; Winters, Texas; Lebanon, Pa.; Strathroy, Ontario, CAN

90 Years: Tempe, Ariz.; La Grande, Ore.; Converse, Ind.; Kenmore, N.Y.; Sedan, Kan.; Goldthwaite, Texas; Angleton, Texas; Henryetta, Okla; Parkston, S.D.; Sturgeon Bay, Wis.; Colusa, Calif.; Jamestown, N.D.; Washburn, N.D.; Middletown, Conn.

85 Years: Peekskill, N.Y.; Chester, S.C.; Washington Court House, Ohio; Clayton, Ga.; Wilmington, Ohio; Clarksville, Ga.; Cape Charles, Va.; Mandan, N.D.; Clifton, Colo.; Ottumwa Noon, Iowa; Mount Pleasant, Mich.; Dover, Pa.; Tallasee, Ala.; Sparta, Ill.; New Bethlehem, Pa.; Rolling Prairie, Ind.; Juneau, Wis.; Trenton, Ontario, CAN; Morris, Minn.; Tenaflly, N.J.; New Carlisle, Ind.; Parkhill, Ontario, CAN; Berlin, Pa.; Winterset, Iowa; West Earl, Pa.; Closter, N.J.; Confluence, Pa.; Faison, N.C.; Bedford Hills, N.Y.

75 Years: Mt Carmel, Pa.; Howe, Ind.; Pana, Ill.; Roscoe, Pa.; Eaton Rapids, Mich.; Bainbridge, Ind.; Langley, British Columbia, CAN; South Beloit, Ill.; Carlinville, Ill.; Moosic, Pa.; Shelby, Ind.; Olivet, Mich.; Lawrence, Ind.; Painesville, Ohio.

50 Years: Emerado Arvilla, N.D.; Colts Neck, N.J.; Warrensville Area, Pa.; Sand Hill, Pa.; New Providence, N.J.; Washington, Utah; Indian Trail, N.C.; Webster County, Ky.; Fleetwood, Pa.; Edmonton Golden Gate, Alberta, CAN; St Peters, Nova Scotia, CAN; Mehlville, Mo.; Dalton Noon, Ga.; Loretto, Minn.; Valley, Vt.; San Antonio Central Park, Texas; Benicia, Calif.; Penn Yan, N.Y.; Siren, Wis.

25 Years: Richmond Mandarin, British Columbia, CAN

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

