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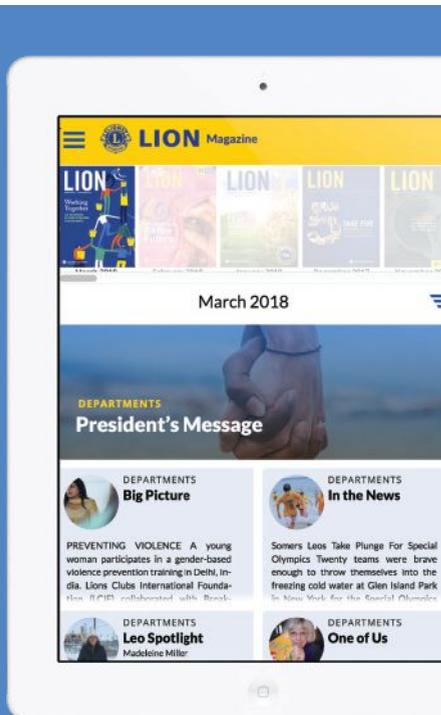
DECEMBER 2019 LIONMAGAZINE.ORG

The Power of Kindness

Lions give strength to
those with special needs



Lions Clubs International



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VIDEOS

WATCH THE TOP 10 LEO VIDEOS OF 2018

December 5, 2019 is International Leo Day. Celebrate by watching some of the top entries from last year's International Leo Day Video Contest.

WILLIAM'S DIABETES STORY

Learn how Lions in Kenya helped William, who almost lost his foot due to diabetic neuropathy.



THE VAULT



December 1958 July Snow Festival

A Wisconsin club buries snow for use in July.



November 1987 It's That Time of Year

See what Lions were gifting before the internet age.

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.

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Kindness Brings Warmth to the Giver and Receiver

Greetings, Lions.

What is kindness?

It is all the things Lions do: It's serving. In our communities and beyond.

But kindness is one of those words that can get overused, and the real meaning sometimes becomes lost. Kindness is any act that makes life better for any living thing, even for just a moment. Isn't that what we're really doing when we serve food or donate our time? Aren't we trying to give people a moment in which they feel important; a moment in which they are not alone?

Kindness can be something small: A tree planted on a city street. Or it can be grand: An entire Lions district pooling its resources to build a community center focused on gender equality education.

When done right, an act of kindness also feels good to the person performing it. This is true for all acts of kindness. And it's important to remember, especially at this time of year, that donating money is also an act of kindness. By donating, you are recognizing that there are some things that are beyond your ability to immediately fix. You are saying, "This is bigger than me, and I want to help." And one of the best ways to give is to your foundation, Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF).

As your International President, I want to wish all of you the bounty that comes from giving. May your acts of kindness as Lions bring you warmth this season.

Sincerely,

Jung-Yul Choi

Dr. Jung-Yul Choi

International President, Lions Clubs International



We Serve.



All-Woman Climbing Expedition Raises Funds for School

On August 6, 2019, seven women Lions from a ten-woman team reached the peak of Mount Kilimanjaro, in Tanzania. They have so far raised US\$42,000 so far for their efforts, and all donations will go directly to fund a school for children in Kenya.

The Kilimanjaro for Children project ("Kili for Kids") was inspired by the first woman International President, Gudrun Yngvadottir. The creator and coordinator of the project, Inna Flaga, came up with the idea to prove that women can reach every summit.

The team of ten women represented Italy, England, Denmark, Russia, Poland, Kenya, Romania, Nepal, the United Arab Emirates, and Switzerland.

The women pledged to climb Mount Kilimanjaro (5,895 meters), the highest mountain on the African continent, with the goal of raising US\$58,950 – US\$1 per woman per meter climbed – to build a school for children.

The women spent six days climbing, battling rain, ice, and altitude sickness. They hiked 11 to 13 hours each day. "To say that climbing to the summit of Kilimanjaro was a really difficult experience is putting it lightly," says Armine Oganessian, of the St Petersburg Golden Pelican Lions Club in Russia. "It was a challenge exceeding the limits of our imagination."

But the women followed the advice of one of their experienced guides: "Do not look up, but down to see what has been done so far. Always follow only the footsteps of the person standing in front of you. The summit will come soon."

The school will be built at the Amrita Center, near the capital of Nairobi, which educates orphans and children from poor families. The goal is to expand the capacity of the center from 200 to 600 children.

Looking Ahead



January

Hunger Awareness Month



February

Childhood Cancer Month
International Childhood Cancer
Day 2/15

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

A Fresh Face to Lead Arizona Lions

Isabel Ticlo, who was crowned Miss Arizona in 2018, has added a new title to her name: President. She has taken over the reins of the Chandler Lions Club in Chandler, Arizona.

The long-time Lion has been volunteering with the club since she was a Leo in high school. “It was like hanging out with friends for a good cause,” she says.

She has since graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in marketing and minors in communications and dance from Arizona State University and works in marketing while she pursues a master’s degree in business administration.

With all her free time, she now steers the active Chandler club. With 49 members, the club has a number of projects they run throughout the year, but Ticlo’s passion is for helping people with vision impairment.

“It’s something that we don’t think about every day because most of us are born with our sight,” she told the *SanTan Sun News*. “I’ve met so many people who lost their vision later in life. Adapting to that is terrifying, it’s frustrating. The solutions we can provide; whether they’re prevention solutions or adaptive ones, it helps to lessen that pain.”

Some of Chandler’s goals for her year as president are to reestablish a Leo-to-Lion connection through one-on-one mentoring, get more hands-on volunteering opportunities for members, and promote the iconic Chandler Lions event, “Blinded by DeLight,” in which community members experience what it’s like to go through everyday activities with no sight.

“Her youth and enthusiasm will help to bring more youth into our aging Lions organization,” former club president Ruth Jon Wick told the *SunTan Sun News*.

Club members are delighted, indeed.



Miss Arizona 2018 and Chandler Lions Club President, Isabel Ticlo, (Left) volunteers alongside her sister, Tiffany, who is president of the Hamilton High School Leo Club.

L IN THE NEWS

OVERHEARD

“It’s the great equalizer. It’s very freeing to be on top of a horse.”

—**Allie Chase**, of the Kettle Moraine Equine Lions Club on learning to ride. See story page 10.

“We’ve got a lot of people with chainsaws.”

—**Casey O’Dell**, President of the Camas Lions Club in Washougal, Washington. See story page 20.

“That’s just how real life is. Mia is not going to be in an environment of all visually impaired people forever. She is going to be in the real world with people who are sighted.”

—**Anel Achemendia**, whose visually impaired daughter participates in an integrated preschool supported by Lions. See story page 16.

BY THE NUMBERS

20,000

Square feet of chain link fencing for a new dog park built by Streator Hardscrabble Lions in Streator, Illinois.

10

Kilograms of supplies each member of an all-Lion team carried up more than 19,000 feet to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro.

486

Burgers sold by Dalles Lions at the Neon Cruise Weekend in Oregon.

35

Approximate beats per minute of a horse’s heart.

71,999

Number of nonprofits the King Lions Club beat out to be named Nonprofit of the Year for California Assembly District 32.

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the United Nations
Saturday, March 7, 2020
United Nations Headquarters
New York, NY, USA

CANADA

T'was the Morning Before Christmas...

There's a right way to do things in Nova Scotia, Canada, on Christmas Eve day.

Before the house is cleaned for company, before the last shopping is complete, the baking's begun, or the presents are quickly wrapped, you have breakfast. And you can thank the Kingston Lions for that.

While their community sleeps, the Lions are at the Kingston Lions Hall with the lights on, ovens hot, griddles warming up, and the smell of coffee wafting through the cold December air, because at 6 a.m., the doors will open.

Pancakes, sausages, and ham, scrambled eggs, hash browns, toast, coffee, tea, and juice await early risers at the Kingston Lions Christmas Eve Breakfast. In 1993, the first year of the breakfast, 100 people were served. By 2015, attendance had grown to 1,003 served in just over three hours, says Lion Pat Nixon. Now they average 825 each year.

Employees from local businesses beat the rush and come early, heading off to face a last day of frenzied customers. And families follow tradition and gather.

"At the Kingston Lions, we recognize that the work we do could not be done without the generous and ongoing support of the surrounding community and businesses, and for this we are truly grateful," says Lion Rick Hiplik. "The breakfast is a way for the Kingston Lions to thank the local community for their generous support."

The club tried to provide the breakfast at no charge, but generous community members would have nothing to do with it. They wanted to give money for others less fortunate, so in 2001 the Lions' breakfast became a breakfast with a freewill offering that's averaging a total of about US\$6,000 a year.

Santa and his elves always make time for a visit, but the real help outside the club comes from local Scouts, community leaders, clergy, and Lions' family members, all willing to serve generous portions and to wash dishes.

Lions purchase the food at Sobeys, the local grocery store, and since 2015, Sobeys has partnered with Lions, subsidizing the cost of supplies.

When the last people are fed at 10 a.m., cleanup begins, and usually by noon it's lights out again in Kingston Lions Hall. Seventy-five Kingston Lions are free to finish their own Christmas preparations, or to nap.



USA

In Tune With the Community

Across the city, in streets, parks, and plazas, on rooftops and in gardens, music flowed through Federal Way, Washington, on the summer solstice this year.

The Federal Way Lions were leading their city's Make Music Day, a one-day global celebration of the international language of music.

It's particularly fitting in Federal Way where the public school district is rated the fifth most diverse in the nation, and the public high school is the second most diverse in their state. More than 100 languages create a melody in the schools on any given day.

Make Music Day was started in France in 1982 to promote the natural music makers in all of us, and it has spread to more than 100 countries and 80 U.S. cities.

The purpose is to bring people together, says Lion Jan Barber who led her club's first year to take part in the celebration. "The project was intended to build harmony through the universal language of music. Federal Way has over 105 languages spoken in its schools, and so we created a fun event to celebrate diversity and culture on the first day of summer, with music, dancing, and art."

The celebration reimagines cities, towns, and states as stages where every kind of musician, young and old, amateur and professional, comes out to perform, to teach, to inspire.

In Federal Way, the opening flag ceremony was presented by the Sons of the American Revolution. Lion Dan Harrington from the Auburn Noon Lions Club played a trumpet medley, and the Washington Diamonds Drill Team created a parade and taught bucket drumming. Federal Way Lion Gaylen Floy, active in the King County Council of the Blind, taught free lessons in blues harmonica, and local libraries provided activities, including instrument-building classes and beginning ukulele.

The Federal Way Lions gave away drumsticks and harmonicas for learners of all ages.

Performances and classes covered a variety of music genres including big band, rock, choral, blues, jazz, barbershop, swing, ukulele, and more.

"Music builds community. We intentionally included youth, special needs children, and the nonprofit 'Music Mends Minds,'" says Barber. "This was not just performances; it included participation as we taught bucket drumming, Jazzercise, eastern swing, and blues harmonica."

There was even an instrument petting zoo.

Plans are already underway for a repeat in 2020.



Horse Power

For Lion Diane Besson, saving an old horse was just the beginning

By Erin Kasdin • Photos by Lauren Justice



Diane Besson with Victor, the Welsh pony she rescued.





Hailey, 12, walks better after she rides, making the lessons not only fun, but great physical therapy.

It was 2018 and Diane Besson was off to Muskego, Wisconsin, to pick up her eggs from the local CSA (community-sponsored agriculture) she'd joined. As she pulled up to the farm, she noticed a couple of tiny horses in a nearby pen. The only shelter was a small fabric Quonset. One of the horses looked incredibly malnourished. "I couldn't believe he had survived our last winter living in that hut," she wrote in an article for *WisconsinLion*. She found out the horse's name was Victor, and when she asked the farmer what was wrong with him, he told her, "That's what an old horse looks like."

She wasn't convinced.

She began to research horse care after watching his decline over several weeks. "It was apparent to me, but not his owners, that he was malnourished and would not survive another Wisconsin winter," she says. Other people must have been commenting too, because the owners had put a sign in front of his pen, saying, "This is what an old horse looks like."

Besson decided she would save him.

The Rescue

Besson had never owned a horse before, so she went to her friend, Lion Robin Salerno, for help. She let Besson groom her horses so she could begin to understand horse care. Besson also needed to find a place to keep Victor. Salerno suggested they drive down the road to Jericho Creek Farm to meet Wendy Konichek. Besson instantly felt at home at Jericho Creek. "It had a calm, quiet energy to it, and I instantly liked Wendy," she says.

Besson showed Konichek the photo of Victor.

"You get him here and I'll make room for him," said Konichek.

Besson hadn't exactly made friends with Victor's current owner, so she sought help from her husband, Lion Dan Besson. "I needed his political expertise and negotiation skills to convince the farmer to give us Victor," she says.

Dan went to talk to the farmer. He brought brochures for Jericho Creek Farm, and Besson credits that with convincing the farmer to let them take the horse. "I truly believe that seeing the brochures and the wonderful place Victor would be going helped convince the farmer and his wife to give me Victor. Granted, they weren't happy, but I think they knew I was an answer to their problem. They either couldn't afford to take care of Victor or were too ignorant of his needs. I think both."

Long in the Tooth

On July 25, 2018, Victor arrived at Jericho Creek Farm. All 30 horses whinnied a greeting to the tiny horse when the trailer pulled in.

Diane began coming to the farm three to four days a week to help with barn chores and see Victor, who she learned was actually a Welsh pony. It turns out, he had a dental condition that is common in older horses. The term "long in the tooth" comes from the propensity of older horses to grow long, irregularly shaped teeth. Those teeth then make it impossible to chew properly, and the horse can't digest enough nutrients. So, they become malnourished.

Victor was severely malnourished before Diane Besson stepped in.



Once his long tooth was addressed, Victor was able to start putting weight back on. And Besson, spending more and more time at the farm, began to see exactly what it was Konichek was up to at Jericho Creek.

Horse Power Healing

Wendy Konichek was already a well-known name in show-horse circles when she saw a demonstration by SMILES, a nonprofit offering equine therapy to those with special needs. “That planted the seed,” says Konichek. She had been looking for a way to give back to the community and it was a nice way to give purpose to the older horses on the farm.



Volunteers like Besson do the majority of the chores at Horse Power Healing Center, including feeding horses and mucking stalls.

Already working in the home healthcare field, Konichek was one of just 25 people to win a spot in the PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship) International certified riding instructor program. She went on to get a mental health certificate and one for working specifically with veterans, all through PATH.

She now offers several programs geared toward helping people through the power of horses: the Equine-Assisted Therapeutic program for children and adults with special needs; Horses for Hope, which is for people diagnosed with terminal illnesses; Horses for Heroes, which introduces veterans to horseback riding; and Healing for Horses, which rescues horses who are maltreated or neglected, all through the nonprofit Horse Power Healing Center (HPHC).

The Great Equalizer

“She really opens up when she’s on the horse,” says Judy, whose daughter, Emma, comes once a week to ride. “I can tell that it’s making her feel more confident.”

Emma, 23, has a condition called delayed myelination, which affects her complex and critical thinking. She has a warm, easy-going personality and a great sense of humor. Today she’s wearing a tie-dyed tee-shirt with an image of a cat attacking a pirate ship. When she’s not riding or working at a local auto parts warehouse, Emma loves dressing up and creates elaborate costumes, all on her own.

She’s only been riding since July, but, Emma says,

“Riding makes me feel good about myself.”

Brittany, mom to Haley, 12, who also comes once a week to ride, agrees. “She gets a lot of physical benefits that Wendy could tell you about, but honestly, the social aspect of it is even better. She goes to school and she tells all of her friends about riding horses, and it helps her interact with her peers,” she tells the morning talk show *The Morning Blend*, after the center had been nominated as a top nonprofit in the area.

Hailey was born with schizencephaly, a birth defect in which clefts form in the brain. The condition causes her to have high muscle tone and low muscle mass – a painful combination. Walking is difficult and she often uses an assistive device. But the motion of the horse helps her walk better.

“On Saturdays, she wakes up with a big smile and says, ‘Horseback riding!’” says Brittany.

Allie Chase is the local librarian and an Army veteran who participates in the Horses for Heroes program. She’s also a Lion. And she has a lot of good things to say about Konichek and the HPHC programs. “Wendy has been a Lion long before she became a Lion,” she says. “I’ve seen a lot of things she’s gone out of her way to do.” Like making sure all of her students have show clothes if they’re participating in an event, or buying boots for one man who needed them but couldn’t afford them.

Chase has gained a lot of confidence by learning to ride. “It’s the great equalizer,” she says. “It’s very freeing to be on top of a horse.”

There's One Drawback, Though

Lessons are seasonal and weather dependent. There's no indoor riding arena. So, between mid-October and mid-March, students go about their non-horseback riding lives. For most, the difference is noticeable.

"It's so blatant," says Brittany. While she does swim in the winter to keep physically active, Hailey's walking is "so much better" over the summer when's she's riding, and regresses over the long winter months, she says.

That's where Lions are hoping to step in.

Besson, who had been a Lion for just a year when she found HPHC, and husband, Dan, who is a long-time Lion and Zone Chair, saw an opportunity to create a specialty branch club that could focus on supporting the needs of HPHC, including raising the funds for the new indoor facility.

Besson approached Konichek with the idea. "The only thing I knew about Lions was that they had the corn stand," says Konichek. But she soon learned they were a lot more than corn. "What impressed me most was that all the money donated went right back into the community."

"The Lions name holds credibility."

They've Got the Horse, They Need the Cart

The Kettle Moraine Equine Lions Club is now in its second year and is focused on several goals. While a big focus of their fundraising efforts is for an indoor area (with a later goal of building an entire indoor complex, complete with housing facilities for overnights or weekend camps), there are some smaller items on their plate as well.

"We have the horse, now we need the cart," says Besson, who is still a Hales Corner Lion, but acts as the liaison between the two clubs. One benefactor donated a Norwegian Fjord horse for pulling a cart. But the club still needs US\$7,700 of its US\$8,700 goal to purchase a wheelchair-accessible harness and cart.

"We're still learning," says Besson, of fundraising. But she's confident that accomplishing their goals as Lions will be far easier than trying to do it alone. "The Lions name holds credibility," she says.



Wendy Konichek became a Lion when she realized they have the same mission as she does -- to give back to the community.





Hailey and her mom, Brittany, play with their new puppy, Finn, who typically joins them on lesson day at the stable.

“I See the Possibilities”

In Horse Power Healing Center, Besson sees a place that epitomizes what it means to be a Lion. “There was a need, and Wendy stepped forward to serve and to help. That included horse care and rehabilitation, but it also included the needs of our fellow men and women — those veterans who served this country and those men, women, and children born with special needs.”

Victor passed away in April, but Besson feels good knowing he lived a good life in the end. She strokes the nose of a white horse she helped Konichek rescue. Konichek calls him “Diane’s horse.” Her manner around all the horses is calm and confident. It’s hard to imagine she knew nothing about them just a year and a half ago. But she is clearly at home here now.

After being reluctant to join Lions too soon after retiring at first, she now seems right at home in the yellow vest. It was the Welsh pony named Victor, who had been written off as too old for a good life, that brought her here. And now, it’s the students and their families at HPHC, who refuse to be written off, who keep her coming back.

“I watch as a mom or dad are able to let down their guard while their child is in Wendy’s care. I see the joy in the faces of all the riders while enjoying their independence and freedom, sitting atop their horse. I look and I see the possibilities.”

“This is when I truly became a Lion,” she says. 🐾



Discover how Lions with shared interests are serving at lionsclubs.org/specialtyclubs.

FRIENDSHIP IS



MIAMI PRESCHOOL PUTS SIGHTED AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED TODDLERS TOGETHER FOR A LESSON IN INCLUSION

BY JOAN CARY

A young boy had just finished watching a movie about Helen Keller with his parents when his mother asked him if he knew anyone who is blind.

He said, "No."

"But you go to school with blind children," she reminded him.

"No I don't," he said.

"We are all the same."

Miami Lion Virginia Jacko loves to share this story about one of their pre-kindergarten students at the Learning Center for Children in the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

"When it comes down to it," says Jacko, "that's what it's all about. We are all the same."

Jacko, the president and CEO of the Lion-supported Lighthouse in Miami's Little Havana neighborhood, spearheaded the school, the country's first known toddler and pre-kindergarten program that is a 50-50 mix of sighted and visually impaired students.

The Learning Center is now halfway through its third academic year and three years into a four-year study being conducted by the University of Miami to evaluate the impact of inclusion on the very young.

"The goal is for total immersion," says Jacko. "For me, as a newly blind adult, I found that too often the blind only hung around the blind, and often the sighted did not know how to interact with the blind."

She hopes their school will help to change that.





The Downtown Miami Lions Club and the Rotary Club of Miami jointly founded the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind in 1930. Three years later, the Lions club bought a small bungalow in the Little Havana neighborhood to permanently house the Lighthouse, and in 1946 the club built a large, two-story addition onto the bungalow at a cost of US\$480,000 [current dollars].

Over the years, further additions were built as a result of community fundraising so that now the Lighthouse occupies almost a full city block. A parking garage was also added, and in August of 2017, the Learning Center for Children opened with a Matching grant of US\$30,000 from LCIF and US\$30,000 from the Miami Lions for the construction of an inclusive playground.

In these classrooms for toddlers and pre-kindergarteners, Florida-certified early childhood teachers work alongside Florida-certified teachers for the visually impaired. Sighted and visually impaired children play and learn side-by-side, every toy, book, cubby, desk, and chair labelled in both print and braille.

“There’s environmental print all around for children who are sighted,” says Isabel Chica, director of children’s programs. “Here we have also created a braille environment.”

“Parents of sighted children have thanked the school for helping them raise an empathetic child.”

While all of the children are exposed to braille, more direct instruction in braille depends on the child, she says. Any child, sighted or visually impaired, who wants to explore braille, can, but the focus is not on teaching everyone braille. It’s on giving the children what they need to be successful.

“We want to develop relationships early on for children,” says Chica. “We want the visually impaired to be able to be mainstreamed so they grow, and we want their sighted peers to work comfortably alongside them, and not only have an understanding of what visually impaired means, but to know that they [the visually impaired] are just as capable.”

“We want to level the playing field.”

“If we’re telling a story, the children can access that in braille, in regular print, and in large print,” explains Jacko.

Anel Achemendia’s daughter, Mia Pena, was in the center’s blind babies program at age 1, and now at age

3 she attends the 50-50 toddler program Monday through Friday.

Mia was born blind in her right eye and with low vision in her left. “The doctor recommended we visit the Lighthouse, and honestly it was life changing,” says Achemendia. “I cannot put into words how much I appreciate that this place exists, or how thankful I am for what they do for our daughter.”

“The 50-50 program, for me that’s as close to reality as you can get. That’s just how real life is. Mia is not going to be in an environment of all visually impaired people forever. She is going to be in the real world with people who are sighted.”

In school, Mia has made friends with both visually impaired and sighted children, and her mother expects that in a few years she will attend a Miami-Dade County public school in the neighborhood, just like her older sister, Delilah Arias, who is 7.

Delilah is sighted and her parents chose to enroll her in the center for pre-kindergarten on the first year it was open, not knowing she would someday have a visually impaired sister.

Achemendia says the experience has made Delilah more empathetic and understanding of the differences in people. “It also opened her eyes to the fact that you can do so much, even when you have a visual impairment. She is more kind, more patient with her sister,” she says. “She goes to the Lighthouse for summer programs, and it’s good because when you are mainstream you don’t see a lot of visually impaired children.”

According to the University of Miami, many parents report that the 50-50 component has helped their child feel comfortable in diverse social situations at school and with their families outside of school. Visually impaired children who avoided peers began enjoying their peer interaction, holding hands, and playing with others.

Parents of sighted children have thanked the school for helping them raise an empathetic child.

“We have a society without much empathy,” says Jacko. “Our children score very high on empathy.” 



CLEANUP CREW

Lions get their weed wackers out for a hands-on day of service

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JACOB GRANNEMAN

The Camas Lions Club in Washougal, Washington, is building community partnerships with the goal of taking on unfulfilled needs in Camas and Washougal. They're starting by serving those who serve at the beloved Inter-Faith Treasure House.

On Saturday, August 17, Lions came together to address several yard work issues at the house, and worked with Triangle Resources just down the road to cover all the debris removal costs.

The project is hoped to be the first of many, according to Lions Casey and Stephanie O'Dell; the husband and wife team who work as club president and membership chair, respectively.

Camas Lions Club member Brian Scott takes a break to smile during his clubs' clean up at the Inter-Faith Treasure House in Washougal.



Lions Club members Dick Golladay (left) and Chris Dierickx (right) cut back an overgrown laurel hedge.



The Camas Lions came ready to work, chainsaws in hand.

“The opportunity with the Treasure House presented itself when we got a new member and Casey and I went to visit,” Stephanie said. “We saw all of the good work that other volunteers were doing, but they had this unmet need to do more of a labor-intensive project. And that’s exactly what a lot of our membership loves to do.”

Beginning very soon, the club will also formally undergo a thorough Community Needs Assessment to evaluate how the organization can best serve the community. Partnerships with the cities, schools, churches, and businesses are expected to result.

In following with the global tradition of Lions to “serve those with the most need,” the Camas club saw the work being done by the Treasure House as just that. Since 1969, the house has worked with and for those in need of assistance and social services in Camas and Washougal.

“It’s community helping community, and the more we can partner together, the better off our community will be,” said Treasure House Director Nancy Wilson. “That’s just going to make an amazing difference, and then by that, then you don’t have to spend that money and you can buy food with it, or you can pay a utility with it.”

Treasure House currently has four staff members in addition to Wilson, along with 150 volunteers who contribute more than 1,000 hours a month to the organization. During the week and Saturday, Treasure House’s food pantry gives out food boxes to people in need.

This equates to roughly 6,500 pounds of food going into the

“We’re always looking for ways to be in the community, what kind of community service things can we do.”

Wilson, who recently became a member of the Camas Lions Club, explained several of the needs at the facility. Now, the club is considering adopting Treasure House as an ongoing project.

community every month, feeding 300 to 400 families, Wilson said.

According to funds, the house also assists Camas and Washougal residents with rent and utility costs, and provides holiday food boxes with Christmas gifts. Recently, the

house began the Backpack Program, filling 170 bags of food for students at Camas Schools.

“It’s a great pilot project for how we put projects together,” Casey said. “This is right up our alley. We love doing yard work and cutting things down. We’ve got a lot of people with chainsaws.”

As an annual project, the Camas Lions take point on clean up at J.D. Currie Youth Camp, on the north side of Lacamas Lake. With a small army of tractors and chainsaws, the group cleans the grounds, clears trails, and makes it safe for campers.

At present, the Camas Lions have 28 members and meet twice a month.

“Camas Lions Club is going through a bit of a transformation,” Stephanie said. “We want to do an assessment and figure out what needs our community has that are not being met.”

Stephanie explained that the process of the study will likely take some time, but projects like the one at the Treasure House are opportunities to start having an impact right away and activate members who have a passion for service projects.

The O’Dells also expressed a great desire to network with more businesses, schools, and nonprofits in Camas and Washougal. Triangle Resources, which does debris recycling, offered to work with the Lions, after being connected through a member.

“We’re a community-based company, and for us to be able to have an opportunity to give back, it’s a good thing,” said Chris Peet, of Triangle Resources. “In order to be a good neighbor, a good community member, it’s good to be on the plus side.”

Over the course of the day, the Lions crew removed hundreds of pounds of debris; entirely removing

a laurel hedge which was causing carpenter ant problems throughout the warehouse.

“We’re always looking for ways to be in the community, what kind of community service things we can do,” said Lion Su Scott, who participated in the cleanup. “Luckily, it’s a really nice day for working. A lot of us have our own equipment, and with sheer numbers you can get a lot of work done. Plus, it’s a lot of fun.”

In addition to the hedge, the club also weed-whacked, trimmed bushes, cleaned garden beds, removed all debris, and pressure washed the grounds and walkways.

“It’s what our club does,” said Lion Chris Dierickx. “I haven’t been as active as I used to be because I’ve been busy with kids going off to college and stuff. When I got the email, I said, ‘I’m free!’ so, I’m doing my part as a member of the club.” **L**



Stephanie O’Dell, membership chair of Camas Lions Club, trims hedges.

SightFirst Gives New Life to People in Burkina Faso

BY JAMIE KONIGSFELD

LCIF's SightFirst program has been restoring and protecting sight for almost 30 years and is now present in 102 countries. This extraordinary program develops comprehensive eye care systems providing aid to underserved populations by developing comprehensive eye care systems.

Projects include training eye care professionals and management personnel, upgrading the infrastructure of existing eye care systems, improving access to education and rehabilitation for people who are blind or visually impaired, and increasing public awareness of the importance of eye health. Through the support of LCIF, Lions, and partners, SightFirst focuses on eye care challenges as simple as an uncorrected refractive error to something as complex as a bacterial infection, such as trachoma. They make it possible for Lions to put a stop to avoidable blindness.

Lions Create Change

Approximately 80 percent of global vision impairment can be prevented. As Knights of the Blind, Lions take this statistic to heart, and work to improve the lives of people across the world who are in danger of losing their vision. In Burkina Faso, a two-year SightFirst project is providing eye care access in areas where eye care is unaffordable. Supported by a US\$110,746 LCIF SightFirst grant, Lions and a local organization, One Dollar Glasses, are establishing four clinics where patients will have their vision screened at no cost. In addition, eyeglasses will be for sale at a much lower rate than at local markets, or free for those who cannot afford it. The project, which began in 2018, is expected to screen 124,000 people and will distribute 26,400 pairs of eyeglasses.

Meet some of the lives this project has changed throughout its first year:

François

François couldn't see clearly more than 10 inches (25 cm) ahead. Yet, the 65-year-old man left his village at four o'clock in the morning to travel on his motorbike 29 miles (45 km). The trip was not easy. The road was rocky and in dangerous condition. He had a few mishaps along the way and followed other motorists closely so he knew where to go. He hoped the trip would be worth it.

Though François needed eye care badly, it was unaffordable in his village. Then one day, François' friend mentioned one of the new clinics helping

locals who could not afford eye care. François made the long and arduous trek and arrived at the clinic where an optician screened his vision and determined the correct prescription for his eyeglasses. François was able to purchase the eyeglasses for 5,000 CFA (just US\$10). When he put them on, he smiled. He told the optician he could see everything perfectly.

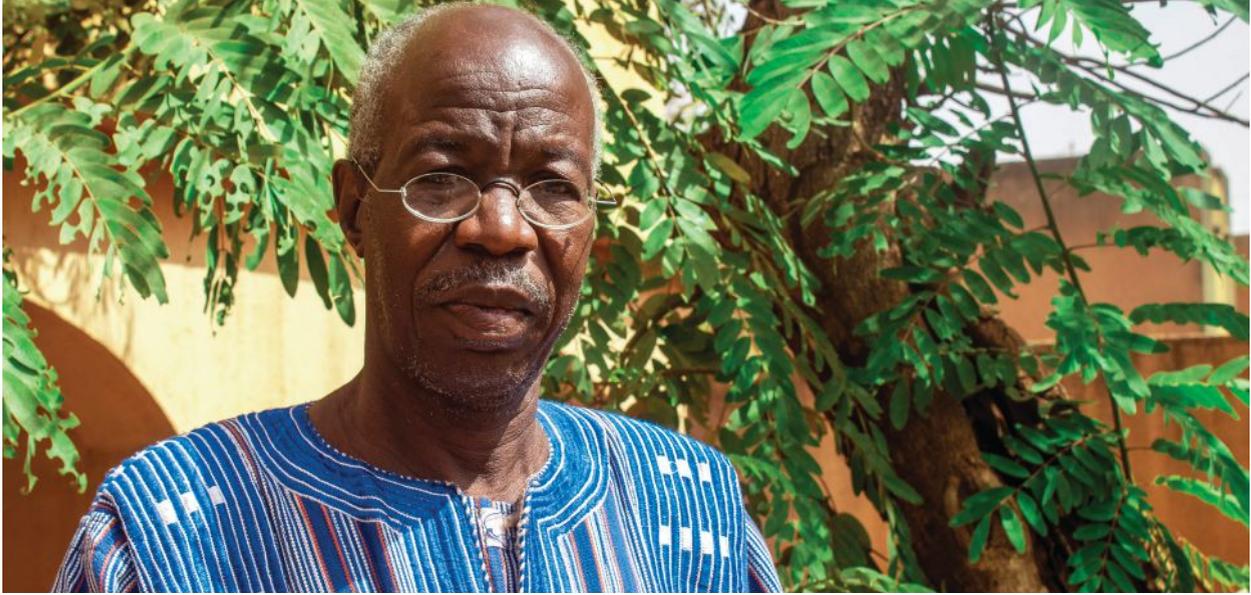
François left on his motorbike and headed home. This time, he didn't need to follow anyone.

Idrissa

Every morning, Idrissa wakes and heads out to his bistro. His specialty is avocado sandwiches, made with tomatoes, onions, and avocados on a fresh baguette; it is how many people in his neighborhood start their day. Idrissa loves what he does. There is just one problem – a big problem. Idrissa has very poor eyesight. Even as the owner of a successful business, the 30-year-old could not afford eyeglasses.

Once involved in all aspects of his bistro, Idrissa can no longer use a motorbike to deliver sandwiches, so he relies on his brother to make the deliveries. He misses the interactions with his customers. He misses looking for new opportunities to grow his bistro.

Meanwhile, word of a new clinic was making its way to Idrissa's neighborhood. His brother heard about the clinic and told



François, wearing his new eyeglasses.

Idrissa about the opportunity for free vision testing and affordable eyeglasses. Longing to end his daily frustrations, Idrissa made his way to the clinic where he had the first eye examination of his life. Afterward, he put on the eyeglasses he purchased, and his life changed in an instant. He started delivering sandwiches again, visiting with his customers, winning new customers, and growing the business. He smiles as customers come through the door.

At the age of 30, Idrissa feels like a new person, and he wants others to have the same experience. On a wall in his bistro hangs a poster promoting the clinic, so others struggling with poor vision can have a chance at a new life, too.

Constan

Four years ago, Constan completely lost his vision. He was suffering with glaucoma, an eye disease that often doesn't show any symptoms until it's in an advanced stage. After some unfortunate mishandling of the condition, he became irreversibly blind. In 2019, at the age of 29, Constan didn't have a job and could not support himself. That is, until SightFirst established a nearby eye clinic. The clinic needed someone who could produce eyeglasses and Constan was fit for the role. Newly trained, Constan is now employed as a producer, earning a living and creating eyeglasses that will change the lives of thousands of people.

Thanks to support from LCIF's SightFirst program, local Lions, and One Dollar Glasses, people in less

fortunate circumstances are gaining their independence, including François, Idrissa, and Constan.

Visit lcif.org/campaign100 to learn how Campaign 100 is empowering Lions leading the charge to rid the world of infectious blindness, reduce avoidable blindness and visual impairment, and improve overall quality of life of those with blindness or visual impairment.



Idrissa prepares his specialty, an avocado sandwich.

CLUB NEWS

Every year, the **Sale Creek Lions** in **Tennessee** host the Kids' Christmas Party with Santa. Children's names are submitted by teachers. Santa gives each child a new coat, shoes, and an outfit of clothes, plus toys. Families receive a basket of fruit and boxes of groceries, and each child receives a large framed picture of their visit with Santa. The club buys toys and clothes, plus fruit and groceries. Area churches chip in for groceries, and local citizens fill a barrel with new toys.

The **Up County 88 Lions** in **California** had an Omelet Dinner and Raffle for US\$15 per person. Proceeds benefitted community service, and guests were asked to bring items to be recycled.

In **Pennsylvania**, the **McKeesport Lions Club** partnered with the city to present free concerts each Sunday evening in the summer. Members of the club built the band shell in the 1930s. The series finished up Labor Day weekend with a ribfest featuring multiple concerts each day and culminating with fireworks.

Past District Governor David Hunsberger and the **Avon Grove Lions** in **Pennsylvania** welcomed three new members to the club.

The children of Sale Creek, Tennessee, enjoyed a pizza dinner with Santa at the traditional Kids' Christmas Party hosted by the Sale Creek Lions.



The **King Lions Club** was named Nonprofit Organization of the Year for California Assembly District 32. The Lions club is the only service club to be chosen out of 72,000 active nonprofits in the state of **California**.

The **Orchard Park Lions** in **New York** held their 25th annual Quaker Days Cars & Motorcycle Show and Cruise in the heart of their village, raising money for good causes. The Lions also awarded scholarships to five Orchard Park students.

The **Centennial Airport Lions Club** of **Colorado** has been serving hamburgers, hot dogs, and brats from a lunch stand next to the Air Traffic Control Tower at Centennial Airport for 16 years. Every Friday through the summer, four to six Lions serve an average of 50 customers during the lunch period. In December, the proceeds are donated to various Lion organizations and charities at the club's Christmas breakfast.

IN MEMORIAM

Past International Director Robert G. "Bob" Tonjes died on August 21, 2019. He was 90 years old. PID Tonjes became a Lion in 1956 and was a charter member of the Prairie Village Lions Club. When they disbanded in 2012 after 50 years of service, he joined the Overland Park Host Lions in Kansas. He served as international director from 1987 to 1989. After graduation from Valparaiso University in Indiana he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and served four years with the Air Force Auditor General, including one year in Greenland. His many Lion awards include two Contributing Membership Bronze awards, three Presidential awards, and the Ambassador of Good Will, the highest award presented to a Lion. The late past director enjoyed a career with Kansas City Power & Light Co. In 1961, he met Lorraine Pritchard on a blind date. They were married for 57 years.

In **Massachusetts**, the **Fairhaven Lions** prepare, plant, and maintain the Memorial Gardens at Fairhaven Senior Center. All produce is given to the seniors. Lions also prepped the bocce court this summer, cleaned picnic tables and chairs, and then had a game of competitive bocce, pitting Lion men against Lion women. Sympathies to the male Lions. A rematch will follow.

In **Oregon**, **The Dalles Lions** cooked breakfast and lunch at the Car Show in the Shade, and then Lunch at The Dallesport Drags, all part of Neon Cruise Weekend. They sold 486 burgers, 100 hotdogs, and 160 kielbasas in addition to nachos, drinks, and ice cream.

In **California**, the **Lemon Grove Lions** hosted two Lion Youth Exchange Students from Japan who had a chance to greet other Lions at a summer meeting.

In **Illinois**, the **Streator Hardscrabble Lions** wanted to do something different. With the financial support of the community, they raised US\$25,000 to build the Hardscrabble Lions Dog Park. A “Yappy Hour” kicked off fundraising. Club members donated their time and expertise to build a shelter, put in benches, and add landscaping. With separate sides for large dogs and small dogs, the park includes water fountains for pets and humans, and is open dawn to dusk year round.



Streator Hardscrabble Lions in Illinois added benches to their new Streator Hardscrabble Lions Dog Park.

IN MEMORIAM

Past International President Everett J. “Ebb” Grindstaff, a prominent and beloved lifelong citizen of Ballinger, Texas, died on July 8, 2019. He was 88. An attorney in his hometown, he joined the Ballinger Lions in 1956 and served as international president from 1982 to 1983. He traveled to 50 countries and met hundreds of influential leaders including five U.S. presidents and Pope John Paul II. He received the Ambassador of Good Will Award, the highest honor bestowed upon Lion members, is a Melvin Jones Fellow, a Jack Welch Fellow of the Lions Camp, a Texas Lions Foundation Fellow, and received numerous other awards including the Dr. Charles Best Award from the American Diabetes Association, the highest award of that association. PIP Grindstaff wrote two books, “LION Crossing the Sinai,” and “Texas Lions Celebrating 100 Years,” and he was working on a biography when he died.

IN MEMORIAM

PID Enrique Estefan Fadul Past International Director Enrique Estefan Fadul died on Sept. 2, 2019. He was 88. PID Fadul joined the Tenjo Lions Club 64 years ago and in 1958 chartered the Bogota Norte Lions Club in Columbia. He held many offices at the club and district level, twice serving as a district governor. He was recognized by many as a leading proponent of Lions in Columbia for many years. For his dedication, the past international director was recognized with numerous awards including the Ambassador of Good Will Award, the highest honor bestowed upon association members. The late past international director was proud of the success of the rehabilitation center for hearing and speech-impaired children sponsored by his Lions club. He served as its director for 38 years, supporting the children in need and their families.

LION



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LANNIVERSARIES

DECEMBER 2019

100 Years: Wichita Downtown, Kan.; Muskegon Host, Mich.; Shawnee, Okla.

95 Years: Forsyth, Mont.; Thermopolis, Wyo.; Seaforth, Ontario, CAN; Buckhannon, W.V.; Nutley, N.J.; Port Washington, N.Y.; Palestine, Ill.; Coatesville Area, Pa.; Atlantic Highlands, N.J.; Stroudsburg, Pa.

90 Years: Cut Bank, Mont.; Seiling, Okla.; Lovelock, Nev.; Winnemucca Host, Nev.; Panguitch, Utah; Montgomery, W.V.

85 Years: Logan, Utah; New Bedford, Mass.

80 Years: Milverton, Ontario, CAN; Suffern, N.Y.; Crete, Ill.; Roseville, Ohio; Dewitt, Ark.; Brooklyn Greenpoint, N.Y. Yorktown, Texas; Mesquite Host, Texas; Canton, Miss.

75 Years: Burnaby Host, British Columbia, CAN; Bangs, Texas; Truth or Consequences, N.M.; Houston Heights, Texas; Los Banos, Calif.; Union Bridge, Md.; Ventnor Margate, N.J.; Didsbury, Alberta, CAN; Belle River, Ontario, CAN; Johnston, Iowa; Old Orchard Beach, Maine; Hamlet, N.C.; Southport, Ind.; Hatfield, Mass.; Dover, Ohio; Zurich, Ontario, CAN; Nettle Creek, Ind.; Chattahoochee, Fla.

50 Years: Suffield, Ohio; Mt. Olive, N.J.; Omaha Westside, Neb.; Windham, N.H.; Hebron, Conn.; Madison Township, Ohio; Huntsville Pacesetters, Ala.; Swartz Creek, Mich.; Malahat, British Columbia, CAN; Whycocomagh, Nova Scotia, CAN

25 Years: South San Francisco Golden Gate, Calif.; Minitonas District, Manitoba, CAN; Pocatello Southeast Idaho, Idaho; Salt Lake City Red Butte, Utah



Time to Eat the Donuts

Pauline Nickerson is the matriarch of the Nickerson Family Farm in Clear Lake, Iowa, where 3,400 ears of corn are shucked each summer for the Clear Lake Evening Lions' fundraiser. She gets up early on shucking day and makes these beauties from scratch to have something to feed the volunteers.



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