

LION



Lions Clubs International

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**'I got my glasses from Lions'
...and Went on to Be a Success**



15

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VOL. 93 NO. 2

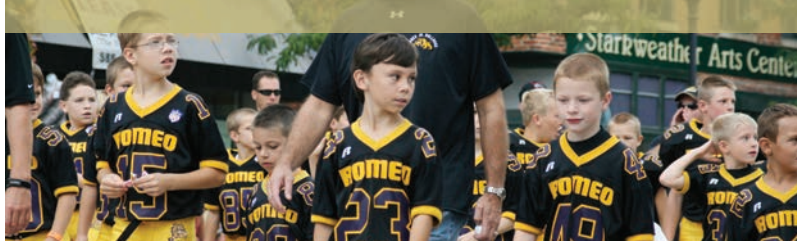
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MISSION STATEMENT OF LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL:

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

SERVING TOGETHER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Service at the Forefront for Lions



Scruggs serves on an eyeglass mission.

A few years ago I took part in an eyeglass mission. Some of the elderly people we helped had not seen well in years. You can imagine their joy when their vision was improved. I will never forget one elderly grandmother who received her first pair of glasses and then gazed at photos of her grandchildren. Tears rushed down her cheeks. I was moved with my own emotions. There is not a better feeling when you can see how you have helped someone. That grandmother got her sight back, but I saw first-hand the value of our service and the importance of Lions recycling eyeglasses.

This October I am asking Lions to make a service commitment. Certainly, Lions exemplify selfless service, but Lions and their clubs can take community service to another level. We do a great job but we can do more.

The service pledge complements the global service action campaigns this year. I am urging Lions to provide expanded service related to youth, sight, hunger and the environment during specific times of the year (see page 30). Our service is truly a beacon of hope.

We must continuously remind ourselves we are all about service. Perhaps the fellowship is what attracted some of us to Lions, and we don't want to discount the satisfaction we gain from our Lions friends, but Lions remain Lions because of the satisfaction they get from helping those in need. If we are not making a difference in people's lives, we are no different from any social organization. Our motto "We Serve" is our mission.

Our actions tell the world who we are. Therefore, in October I urge each Lion to make a conscious decision to become even more involved in club service activities. Please formalize this renewed commitment by completing the Lions online service commitment pledge. (Go to www.lionsclubs.org and search for service commitment pledge.) Completing the pledge will give you an extra motivation to become more involved in community service. The end result will be that someone in your community will have a better life and you will have that good feeling, realizing you have made the difference.

All clubs should take part in the commitment to service campaign by assessing their level of service, the needs of their community and the steps to be taken to expand their service. Clubs should pay particular attention to their signature service project, or implement one if they do not have one. A club should have a project for which it is known and admired. Signature or significant projects enhance our visibility, increase the pride of members and serve as a reason for membership in the club.

Next month let's be the best Lions we can be by purposely re-committing ourselves to service. Let's be who we are: L-I-O-N-S, Loving Individuals Offering Needed Service.

Sid L. Scruggs III
Lions Clubs International President



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

MADDEN OF INDIANA ELECTED AS 2ND VP

Wayne A. Madden of Auburn, Indiana, was elected international second vice president July 2 at the 93rd International Convention in Sydney, Australia. Madden is slated to become international president in 2012-13 (following Sid L. Scruggs III of Vass, North Carolina, this year and Dr. Wing-Kun Tam of China Hong Kong in 2011-12). More than 12,000 Lions and guests attended the convention, where Bhutan was recognized as the 206th nation or geographic region in Lionism and Lions Clubs International announced a \$350,000 pilot program in partnership with Bausch + Lomb to treat and prevent pediatric cataract. The October issue of the LION will provide full convention coverage.



Madden was elected international second vice president.

LCIF LAUNCHES BILLBOARD CAMPAIGN

Begun in July and running through the fall, Lions Clubs International Foundation is raising public awareness of vision and also the Foundation through 1,000 billboard advertisements along U.S. roads.

The billboards encourage people to think about the importance of their vision while highlighting that saving sight is a primary initiative of LCIF. The billboards read: "Our Vision is that You Don't Lose Yours" and encourage the public to visit www.lcif.org/sight for more information.



BOAT-FLOAT WINS HONOR

The bow of the USS New York was forged from steel pulled from the wreckage of the World Trade Center after Sept. 11. Joe Verga, 2009-10 president of the Bergenfield Lions Club in New Jersey, was inspired by that seagoing living memorial. The club's float, dubbed the Living Memorial, won top honors at the Bergenfield Memorial Day Parade.



The Bergenfield Lions replicated the USS New York on this float.

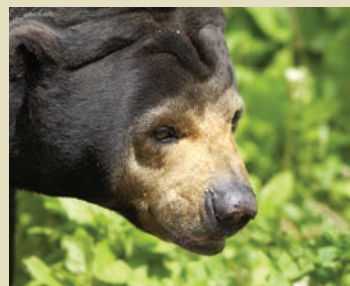
DOG DEVOURS RAFFLE TICKETS

The dog ate his raffle tickets. Lion Al Ainsley of Port Austin, Michigan, left Lily, a 2-year-old golden retriever, alone in his truck with an envelope containing \$500 in cash

and \$500 in his club's raffle tickets. When he returned to the truck, Lily had a "bad dog" look and a gnawed corner of the envelope was on the floor. She had taken a pass on the currency but swallowed the sold tickets. Fortunately, Ainsley was able to identify the Lion who sold the eaten stubs and eventually the names of the buyers. None of the tickets Lily ate won or made the final 10 of the raffle. But Mike White, Ainsley's nephew and Lily's owner, won \$2,500 as one of the raffle winners. "It's just an amazing coincidence," says Ainsley.

LIONS HELP LIONS

Oregon Lions' concern for sight extends to the animal kingdom. The Portland Downtown Lions Club raised funds for a portable slit lamp for the Oregon Zoo. "When your patients range in size from small birds to six-ton elephants, you need flexible, high-quality veterinary equipment that suits a wide range of medical needs. The digital slit lamp meets all those qualifications," zoo veterinarian Mitch Finnegan told the Oregon LION. Among the animals to benefit from the slit lamp are Neka, Kya and Zawadi Mungu, three lions.



This Malayan sun bear at the Oregon Zoo was examined with the new slit lamp.

Photo courtesy of Michael Durham/Oregon Zoo

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

WELCOME TO THE CLUB!

Talena Hengst, 28, is not only a new Lion but she's also a pioneer in specialty Lions clubs. A Special Olympics athlete, Hengst has been the president of the newly chartered Chippewa Valley Pioneer Lions Club in Wisconsin since February. The club is comprised of athletes and their families who work together to give back to the community.

LION: Talena Hengst

CLUB: Chippewa Valley Pioneer Lions Club, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

OCCUPATION: Grocery cashier/bagger

MY CLUB: My club is made up of individuals with special needs who are also Special Olympics athletes like me. Our families, Special Olympics coaches and volunteers are also members. Together, we want to learn and give back to the community.

FAVORITE FOOD: Liver with no onions. I have always liked it since I was a kid. I would eat my sisters' helpings because they didn't like it. Now I send them a picture of the liver from my phone whenever my mom cooks it. They send back messages like "ick!" and "gross!"

FAVORITE TV SHOW: "American Idol" because I like music and like to see new singers. I also like the old TV program "MacGyver" because Mac was so cool to make something out of nothing.

LAST BOOK I READ: Garfield Treasury — the illustrations are so funny.

WHY I BECAME A LION: I have been given a chance to do something that I would not have done on my own.

PROJECTS I'D LIKE TO SEE MY CLUB TAKE ON:

Things that will help others like collecting and giving glasses. Something special for sick kids and older people who can't help themselves.



Welcomed a new Lion into the club who you think deserves a bit of recognition? E-mail us a brief description of your Lion and the reason you're nominating him or her at lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org. Please include "Welcome to the Club" in your subject line.



The trailer advertises Lions.

TRAILER MAKES AN IMPRESSION

Canadian Lions in central Ontario wanted to do more than put a Lions logo on their trailer. So they used a "wrap," a large vinyl sheet commonly seen on city buses, that depicts friendly, smiling Lions and examples of Lions' service. The wrap includes a Lions' Web site address. The six-by-10-foot trailer was first used to sell hot dogs when a club sponsored a safe driving roadside program. An upcoming use is a club's environmental show featuring hybrid cars, windmills and other green products. When not in use, the trailer is parked in a high-traffic area such as a McDonald's parking lot. "Billboards were way too expensive. This was better," says Janice Campbell, A-12 publicity chair. Costing less than \$1,000, the wrap was funded by a public relations grant from Lions Clubs International.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

CLUB OF THE MONTH

EDMONDS LIONS CLUB, WASHINGTON

FOUNDED: Feb. 1, 1947

COMMUNITY SERVED: Edmonds, Washington, population 42,000. The town is on Puget Sound and lacks any big national chain stores. Ferries, restaurants, coffee houses and small-town activity are the heart of this community.

MEMBERSHIP: 31 members ranging in age from 23 to 88. They include a judge, a diver, a school administrator, a postmaster and a railroad engineer.

MEETING MATTERS: The club meets the second and fourth Monday evening of the month at Stevens Hospital in Edmonds. At the end of meetings, each member shares a happy moment.

FUNDRAISING EFFORTS: The club displays 305 flags in the community on holidays and special days. In the fall, they have a food bank raffle and were able to donate more than \$3,500 last year. The club holds a garage sale to raise money and assists with the Taste of Edmonds, White Canes and Macy's parade.

SERVICE PROJECTS: The club provides \$3,500 in scholarship, picks up trash at the train station, provides Thanksgiving baskets to the needy, assists with the Louis Braille school, helps purchase equipment for the blind and has provided Braille menus for local restaurants. They also provide flowers for those unable to leave their home in order to brighten their day. The flowers are donated by Stadium Flowers. Members pick up the flowers once a month to arrange into bouquets for rehabilitation centers, hospitals and individual homes.

CLAIM TO FAME: The club built Blind Park in 1976, which has Braille markers describing various species of trees and flowers. Facilities receiving the flowers request the service because it does so much for the residents' spirits.

WHY BE A LION? "Our parents and grandparents were involved with Lions and loved the organization. We have a great scholarship program and feel good when we see our efforts in the local community. It feels good to give back."
—Charles Brady, club secretary.



OVERHEARD

"People are living in hard times, but it seems like there is always someone out there to help you out. These people are a blessing. It is just such a blessing."

—Emily Griffin, one of 10 heads of households to receive a sumptuous meal and gift basket from the Alexandria Heart City Pacesetters Lions Club in Louisiana. From thetowntalk.com.

"If they don't have the equipment, all they can do is stand outside and throw water on it."

—Clyde Gilliam, 2009-2010 president of the Frankton Lions Club in Indiana, after his club helped supply airpicks for fire-fighters to enter burning buildings. From the Herald Bulletin.

"If you wear glasses, don't set them down."

—Walt Krumm, a Lion who runs a Lions' eyeglass recycling center in Ocala, Florida, and who once accidentally donated his own pair. From the Gainesville Sun.

NEXT MONTH'S LION

Couldn't make it to Sydney for the 93rd International Convention? No worries, mate. We'll tell you all about it—and show you as well with an array of dazzling photos.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

BY THE NUMBERS

1,000,000

Cans collected and recycled in a little more than three years by the Brookings-Harbor Lions Club in Oregon. Kans for Kids raises funds for eye exams, glasses, cataract surgeries, hearing aids, clothing, computers, camps and other causes.

11

Families whose yards were raked and tidied up by Lions in Medfield, Massachusetts, and high school students.

24,000

Coats given to children during the past dozen years in the Coats for Kids project of the Yuba City Sunset Buttes Lions Club in California.

150

Spectators at the Husband of the Year contest sponsored by Lions in Waipapa, New Zealand. Contestants did tasks such as cake decorating and dress making.

200

Police officers and others at the Cantonment Police Station in India given a free eye check-up by Lions clubs and the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. Fifty-eight police officers received free eye glasses.

\$321,000

Dollars raised by LCIF during the international convention in Sydney: \$237,000 from the Lions of Australia Convention Host Committee and \$84,000 onsite at the LCIF booth.

27

Women inducted as charter members of the Spearfish Queen City Lions Club in South Dakota.

8 YEARS AGO IN THE LION SEPTEMBER 2002

Lions Clubs International expands to China. Immediate Past President J. Frank Moore III officiates at the charter ceremony of the China Shenzhen Lions Club.



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IDEAS THAT ROAR

BIG IMPACT WITH LIONS CLUB SERVICE PROJECTS

COMMUNITY SERVICE CAN BE FUN

When other people see how much fun Lions have in pursuit of service, they'll want to join, too.

Photo courtesy of Free Wheelchair Mission

SERVICE IDEA FREE WHEELCHAIRS



The wheelchairs provide mobility and freedom for children in El Salvador.

Wheels Keep Turning for Free Wheelchair Project

Florida Lion Martin Murphy recalls the first few times he tried to assemble wheelchairs Lions were putting together as part of a project to send them to Latin America for those in need. "They're sent unassembled from China, and the first time I put one together, it took me three days. Once I realized that I had to rewrite the instructions into understandable English, it took just a couple of hours."

Murphy, a past district 35-A governor, and other Lions are dedicated to providing wheelchairs to the poor so that they can experience mobility. The chairs cost \$53 apiece to manufacture, but are assembled by volunteers. They can be shipped to any port of entry in the world. Clubs in southern Florida support the fundraising efforts by selling pins for \$10

each. These funds help get the chairs from the ports into the hands of those who need them, very often a costly and difficult trip.

Lions became involved when 2009-10 Governor Edgar Roa, a native of Nicaragua, met Lions Rich Schwag and Dayami Garcia at a Lions club meeting in Managua. The pair had partnered with the non-profit Free Wheelchair Mission (www.freewheelchairmission.org) to distribute 575 wheelchairs in that country. Both Garcia and Schwag, Vermont residents, joined a Lions club in their community and then helped charter the new Miami NE Latino Lions Club, a cyber club. Schwag, who a decade earlier founded a humanitarian medical assistance organization (www.cubacaribe.com), served as the club's charter president.

"It made sense for our Vermont Lions club to become aligned with the Miami district because Lions there are keenly interested in helping their compatriots in Latin America," Schwag explains. "Since we're an Internet club, our members can be from anywhere—so we specialize in members who are already committed to various kinds of international humanitarian projects. We also maintain our local Vermont projects. We have one foot in Latin America, one foot in the Green Mountains."

"It costs between \$4,000 to \$6,000 to get each container of 550 wheelchairs through customs, pay for internal shipping from the port to the distribution center, pay expenses for assembly, although this is often accomplished by volunteers—and document all distribution."

Lions are in the process of sending a second container of wheelchairs to Nicaragua and he says that they are readying more chairs for Guatemala, Haiti, Columbia, Honduras and Brazil. Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, a town on the Atlantic Ocean with no roads to the rest of the country for most of the year, is one place where wheelchairs were given.

"We had designated 40 wheelchairs for this community after Lion Garcia and I visited the area by plane. We met with vice mayor Martha Downs, who uses a wheelchair, and ascertained that she would be a great partner," Schwag explains. "These chairs had to go by truck from the central distribution center in Juigalpa to the town of Rama, then by riverboat to the ocean, then by barge to Puerto Cabezas. It took the better part of a year, but all 40 have arrived."

LCIF NEEDS YOU

Remaining strong is key to LCIF's humanitarian agenda. Donate a percentage of your profits to the foundation to keep it working for others around the world.

SUPPORT YOUTH

Sponsoring a Leo club gives young people an opportunity to serve as well as showing them how they may continue their humanitarian actions in the future as Lions.

PARTNER WITH OTHERS

Community partnerships work. The more people who are engaged in service, the better.

Members of the Burr Ridge-Hinsdale-Oak Brook Lions Club in Illinois saw fallen branches into manageable pieces for pick-up during an untimely spring snowstorm.

April [Snow] Showers Bring Lions

It was supposed to be a routine brush cutting in the woods on a sunny spring day, but the temperature plummeted, winds picked up and snow showered down on Lions. Members of the Burr Ridge-Hinsdale-Oak Brook Lions Club in Illinois still showed up ready to work, outfitted in winter wear instead of short sleeves, during a clean-up project in the well-known Fullersburg Woods. The area houses a museum and nature center and is frequented heavily by visitors and walkers.

Cutting fallen limbs for pickup by forestry personnel and cleaning out brush was a tough job made a lot tougher by the sleet and snow Lions encountered. Wielding hand saws, the Lions crew of men and women cut and stacked several bundles of brush to clear a portion of the woods of dangerous overhanging limbs. Club members regularly plan projects to clear the area of debris and litter.



SERVICE IDEA ROUTINE BRUSH CUTTING

Photo by Elaine Fisher

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IDEAS THAT ROAR

BIG IMPACT WITH LIONS CLUB SERVICE PROJECTS

YOUTH VOLUNTEERISM IS VITAL

A recent study showed that more than 18 million young people have spent time volunteering. Nurture that commitment to service by sponsoring a Leo club.

A Date Night with Dad

There are plenty of ways that dads and daughters can bond, but in Chesterton, Indiana, that connection takes place on the dance floor. “The Little Sweetheart Swirl is a date night with Dad,” explains Robin Smith, 2009-10 club president. “Our dance is open to all girls aged 5 to 12 and their dads, granddads, uncles and even adult brothers.”

Held on a Sunday close to Valentine’s Day for the past three years, the 2010 event saw 171 little girls accompanied by their “dates,” who came not only from Chesterton but

nearby communities as well. Lions raised \$700, but more importantly, stresses Smith, is the opportunity that Lions give parents to enjoy their children without distractions. “It’s where little girls can dress up and be the center of Daddy’s attention for an evening. The event has been such a big hit and has brought our Lions club some great publicity. It’s also given us a great venue to recruit new members. This year alone there are four potential members who are very interested in serving with our club.”

The idea for a little parental bonding on the dance floor was sparked when Smith’s husband, District 25-A Governor Mike Smith, accompanied their daughter, Mikaela, to a similar function sponsored at a park three years ago. “They had so much fun, we thought it would be a neat activity for the

young girls in our town. Individual schools and churches have dances of this kind occasionally, but there isn’t one open to the public.” One of the most popular dancers is Chester, the club’s Lion mascot, who spends most of the evening out on the dance floor with groups of giggling admirers.

Lions charge \$20 per couple for the dance and dinner, but additional children are only \$5. Each child receives a raffle ticket and drawings are held throughout the night for child-friendly gifts such as hair accessories or simple jewelry.

“The feedback from the attendees has been so positive,” Smith emphasizes. She likes to hear comments from happy girls—and dads—exiting the dance. “Daddy had an awesome night with you,” one father told his daughter at the night’s conclusion. There’s no question that the Lions Sweetheart Swirl is a hometown favorite. “The smiles and giggles were enough to know we had a successful night,” Smith says.

SERVICE IDEA DANCE FLOOR



Chester the Lion takes a spin around the dance floor with Mikaela Smith.

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THE ST. JOHN AMBULANCE
CADETS.

1 EUROPE ENGLAND

Lions 'Recycle' a Vital Storefront

The closing of the Allied Carpet Showroom last November was another blow to Worthing, a historic seaside city in southeast England. It represented the largest empty shop in the center of the city of 100,000.

But Worthing Lions brought back some holiday spirit to their city by "recycling" the space, inviting 36 charities and community groups to share the 12,500-square-foot showroom. For six weeks leading up to Christmas, the Autistic Society, Acorn Pregnancy, Career Support and other groups promoted their services and sold vintage or "upcycled" goods to support their activities. Artists and craftsman showed their wares and hosted workshops. The Lions not only staffed a booth but offered free cake and coffee.

Some 12,000 visitors streamed through the showroom. What could have been a blot on the commercial landscape instead became a hub of activity and sign of a community's vitality, resilience and resources despite tough economic times.

"A lot of the groups involved were small, grassroots organizations who wouldn't usually have that kind of exposure, so it was very important for Worthing's community sector. Many exceeded their fundraising targets and recruited new volunteers," said Dan Thompson, the founder of the Empty Shops Network. The network encourages communities to preserve the vitality of town centers by "recycling" empty shops with art galleries, studios and small businesses.

Thompson's group estimates that 72,000 shops will have closed in 2009 in England. The nation of shopkeepers is losing its identity because of the dismal economy, the preference for online shopping and the rise of large national chain stores.

The empty shop initiative was one of the largest of its kind in the country. The 35-member Lions club worked on the initiative with the Worthing Borough Council, which owned the property. The Lions advertised the enterprise as an "Upmarket" because it was a step above a typical resale event.

After Christmas, Thompson used the showroom for children's activities, and in February the Lions held two estate sales. The space has not been used since because of the burden of utilities and other overhead costs.

But the experience was a positive one. "We feel that the recycling of these empty premises was a great success—not so much for the money raised but for the fantastic pr and raising the profile of Lionism with the general public," said John Sayles, club president.



Above: A charity publicizes its services at the Lions' "Upmarket" in Worthing.

Below: The Davidson School Girls Choir sings carols at the Upmarket. Lions later donated \$765 for music folders for the choir.





THE LIONS CLUB OF THOUBAL IN INDIA PARTICIPATED IN AN INITIATIVE THAT REMEDIATED THE CATARACTS OF MORE THAN 60 PEOPLE FREE OF CHARGE.



THE LIONS CLUB OF MOOLOOLABA IN AUSTRALIA DONATED A HELICOPTER CHAIR VALUED AT \$25,000 TO AID PARAMEDICS.



THE LIONS CLUB OF PKHARA CHAUTARI IN NEPAL WORKED TO RESTORE THE SIGHT OF FIVE FAMILY MEMBERS WHO ALL SUFFERED FROM CATARACTS.

2 ASIA JAPAN

Tennis, anyone? That was the question posed to the 70 members of the Kofu Lions Club in Japan. The club president had proposed sponsoring a tennis tournament to mark the club's 50th anniversary. After much discussion, the club voted on the proposal, the first time in its history to vote on a project.

A majority voted yes, and the Kofu International Ladies Open was held at Yamanashi Gakuin University. The tournament was an International Tennis Federation event, or one of the Circuit tournaments in which players earn points to compete in one of the four Grand Slams. Thirty-two singles players and 16 doubles teams competed in the Lions' tournament.

"On our 50th anniversary we wanted to do something more substantial than a mere ceremony," said Lion Shinya Tomioka, the tournament coordinator and general manager of the Yamanashi Gakuin women's tennis team. Some Lions were concerned that the prize money made their venture too commercial. Those objections led to the vote. But the majority of members agreed with Yoshitaro Arizumi, club president, that "we needed an innovative change for the future of Lions."

The future of young people also was tied up in the tournament. The club used the tournament to support promising young tennis players.



Anniversary Ace in Japan

The tournament raised the visibility of Lions.

‘I Got My Glasses from Lions’

Those Thousands of Boys and Girls
Who Get Their Glasses from Lions?
They Grow Up Grateful and Successful

by Maria Blackburn

Thousands of times every month, Lions clubs provide eyeglasses to people who need them.

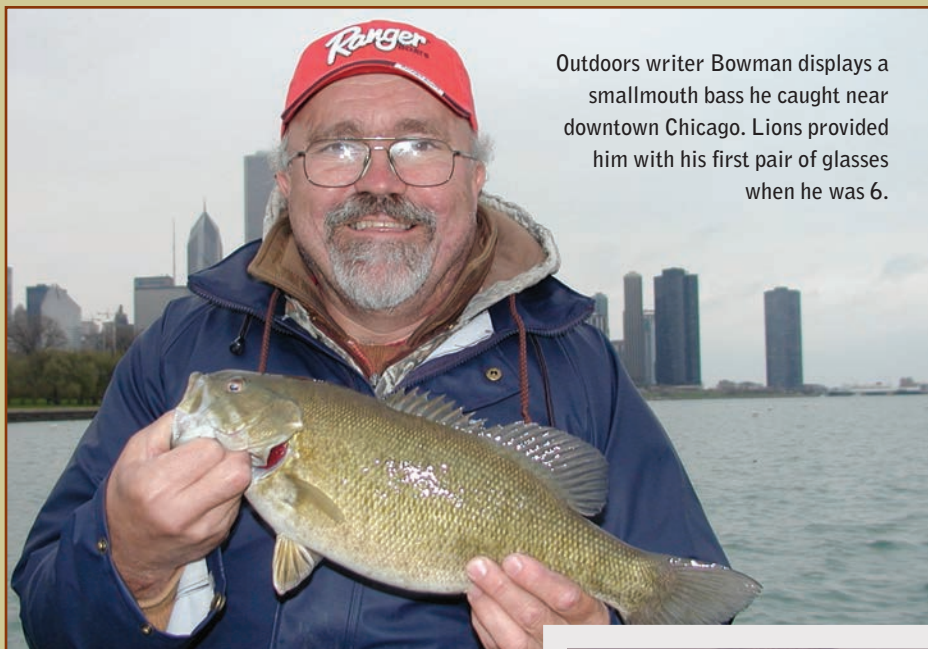
It is a small deed with enormous impact. When the Lions give someone a pair of eyeglasses, the gift is bigger than just two lenses and a frame, says George Walter, a South Daytona, Florida, property manager who received glasses from the Lions in 1954. They opened up a whole new world.

“I didn’t realize what I couldn’t see until I got glasses,” Walter says. “All of a sudden things other people took for granted, like bees and flowers, I could see.”

It’s not a gift that gets forgotten. From a mayor in suburban Illinois to a Russian-born author now living in California to a veteran Chicago journalist, decades later they remember the difference that glasses from the Lions made in their lives.

Dale Bowman, Chicago, Illinois

Dale Bowman’s work as a columnist for the Chicago Sun-Times has him combing fields, streams and mountains for good stories. One week might find the award-winning outdoors writer hiking through woods to write about fishing in Monster Lake, another week he’s chronicling the tale of a forager’s massive morel.



Outdoors writer Bowman displays a smallmouth bass he caught near downtown Chicago. Lions provided him with his first pair of glasses when he was 6.



“I didn’t realize what I couldn’t see until I got glasses.”

Being a good reporter isn’t just about writing, it’s about listening. The idea is to make a connection with people so they share their stories. Sometimes when they do, the writer has an opportunity to share his, too.

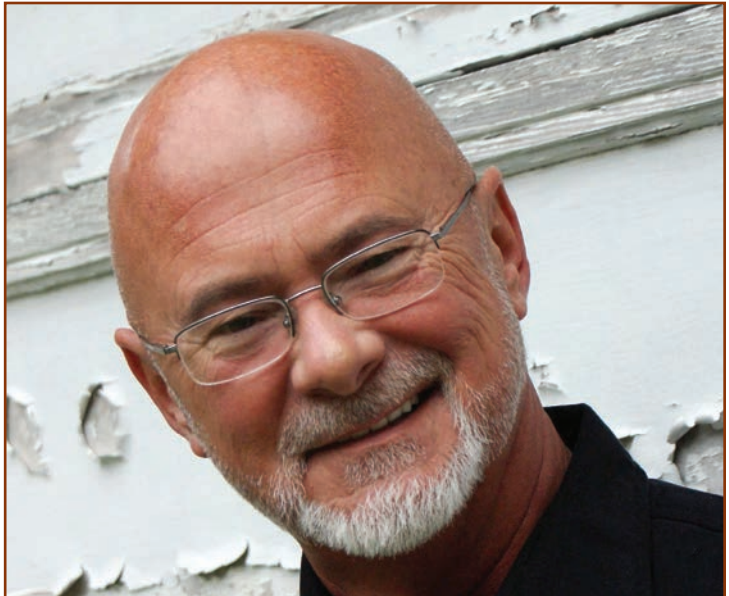
That’s what happened 20 years ago when Bowman was working on a profile of Paul Martin, a well-known wrestler and TV personality. The men met over breakfast and during the interview Martin told the reporter he was writing a book about the history of Lions Clubs International. The two started talking about the Lions and the conversation sparked a memory of Bowman’s about something meaningful the Lions had done for him a number of decades before.

Bowman was a country kid growing up in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, the fifth of six children. He had just started first grade and was in tears every day at school. “Nobody could figure out why,” he says. “Then my best friend Johnny King figured it out. I’m not sure how. I was crying because I couldn’t read the blackboard.”

The 6-year-old needed glasses. But his family had no money to buy them. “My father worked in a stone quarry and probably wasn’t bringing home much more than \$100 a week at the time,” says Bowman, 52. “The cost of glasses was so much there was absolutely no chance we were going to be able to afford them.”

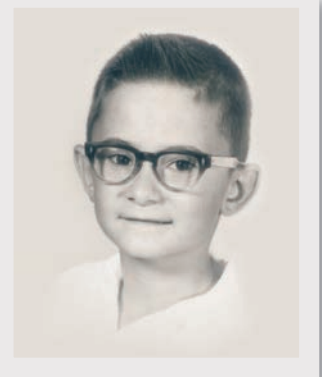
The school nurse referred the boy to the Salisbury Township Lions Club and before too long, Bowman had his glasses. They were thick with heavy, black rectangular frames. Kids at school made fun of the way he looked, but he didn’t care. He could see.

Soon after he got his glasses, his dad was made foreman of the quarry and Bowman no longer needed help from the Lions. He grew up, finished school and forgot all about his Lion’s glasses until his meeting with Martin 16 years later. “He reminded me of where I came from,” he says. “It made me realize that I had reached a point in my life where maybe I should probably start thinking about giving something back.”



Brads as a young boy and today.

Since then, whenever Bowman encounters Lions selling candy, he searches his pockets for money. Instead of tossing in coins, he tosses in paper bills. And whenever he has one, he’ll contribute a \$20. “They always look twice when I drop a \$20 in, but that’s my way to pay back.”



Paul Brads, Lawrenceville, Georgia

Paul Brads never thought he was poor. Sure there were five kids in his family and his father’s work as a Baptist preacher didn’t pay much. But growing up in Germantown, Ohio, there was always food on the table, clothes and shoes to wear, library books to read.

On a warm May afternoon in 1961, the last day of third grade, Brads’ father picked the 8-year-old up early from school and drove him 12 miles to Dayton to get his

'I Got My Glasses from Lions'

first pair of glasses. The retired phone company manager remembers how exotic it felt to ride the elevator to the optician's office on the 15th floor. And he recalls how sharp and clear the world looked through his new lenses. "It was so cool," he says. "Colors were brighter. The trees weren't just big circles. I noticed the shapes of the leaves. Even the fabric in my Dad's car seemed different."

Brads never asked where his glasses came from: He just assumed that his parents bought them. It wasn't until he was in his 20s that his sister Zola told him that the Lions were behind the purchase. "Why didn't you tell me?" Brads remembers asking his father. "Well, I guess it's just because you liked for things to be better than they were," he was told.

He considered what his father said for a minute and realized that he was right. "I was a happy kid but more than anything I always wanted to fit in," says Brads, now 58 and the father of two grown children. "I would have been chagrined if anyone had perceived me as poor and I think that's why Dad never said anything. He didn't want me to be embarrassed."

Brads worked for the phone company for 30 years, taught school and now works in finance for a nationwide car dealership. As an adult, he's not embarrassed to be the recipient of glasses from the Lions. In fact, he's so comfortable with the fact that he freely shares it with people he meets and with those who read his blog (www.red-necklatte.com). "Getting glasses as an 8-year-old changed my life completely because I don't think anyone realized how badly I couldn't see until I went to the eye doctor," he says. "I'm humbled to think that someone cared enough to do something that good for me."

George Pradel, Naperville, Illinois

As a lifelong resident of Naperville, George Pradel has watched his community blossom from a sleepy country town with 4,500 residents to a bustling city of 147,000 people that regularly ranks as one of the best places to live in the United States.

Pradel is proud of his city, its walkable downtown and excellent schools, and since he became mayor 15 years ago, he's had ample opportunity to share Naperville with people he meets. What truly makes his city special, he

likes to say, is the people who live there. That's something he learned more than 60 years ago.

Back in 1947 Pradel was one of 30 students in Naperville's Bronsonville Elementary, a one-room red brick school house. The fifth grader's "lazy eye" vision made the words in his schoolbooks run together, and when his teacher Irene Kocher noticed he was struggling, she told his mother she thought he might need glasses. The news was troubling. "Times were tough and my dad was not making very much money, maybe only \$45 a week," he says. The family of six was growing quickly and Pradel knew they didn't have an extra \$15 for glasses.

But Miss Kocher knew what to do. "I have a friend who is a Lion and we're going to submit your name for glasses," she told him. Within a few weeks, Pradel was wearing his first pair of glasses nonstop. "They weren't real pretty but they were practical," he says of the thick brown and clear plastic frames. "I was so tickled I wore them every chance I got."

Shortly after Pradel joined the town's police force in 1966, his friend Everett Gregory invited him to join the

Mayor Pradel welcomes a favorite son of Naperville:
Olympics skating champion Evan Lysacek.



“They weren’t real pretty but they were practical,” George Pradel says of the thick brown and clear plastic frames.

Naperville Noon Lions Club. He didn’t need to think twice. “Because of what the Lions have done for me I wanted to give back in a big way.” During the last forty years, he’s raised money for the Lions and participated actively in the club. He has a special affinity for the annual 5K road race the Lions sponsor in Naperville, which drew almost 5,000 runners last year.

While writing about the upcoming race in the city newsletter a few years ago, Pradel shared that the Lions had bought him his first pair of glasses. “I have no shame about that,” he confessed. “The Lions club is so friendly to everyone and has done so much for our city, I just wanted people to know how much the Lions mean to me.”

Ray Guin, Midlothian, Virginia

Ray Guin doesn’t remember exactly when or how it happened, but one autumn day in 1954 when he was running or jumping or doing any of the things you might expect a 9-year-old boy to do, his thick, brown eyeglasses snapped right in half.

The glasses were beyond repair, and the Raleigh, North Carolina boy’s family couldn’t afford new ones. Guin’s father, a truck driver, suffered a back injury in an accident and was unable to work full time to support his wife and three sons. “We were living almost in abject poverty, all of us in a little bitty apartment, just barely getting by,” he remembers.

In school, Guin, who was nearsighted, had to move his desk next to the blackboard to see. Unable to see well enough to play ball after school with his friends, he spent the sunny Indian summer afternoons indoors. “I basically couldn’t do anything,” Guin says.

Then someone at school notified the local Lions that Guin and his 14-year-old brother Gaylord needed new glasses. That weekend a Lion came to their apartment and took the brothers to the optician for eye exams and glasses. The gentleman was a stranger, but he made the

two boys feel at ease. “We’re going to get you some glasses,” he told them. His tone was kind and caring and the exchange made a big impression on the young boy. “He went out of his way to make us feel comfortable and not embarrassed by our situation.”

Guin never forgot the act of kindness. An optician for more than 40 years, he joined the Richmond James River



Guin volunteers at the Remote Area Medical Expedition.

Lions Club in 1998 because he wanted to use his training as an eye care professional to help people in need. Now in addition to providing free eyeglasses at his shop to about 140 people per year who have been referred to him by the Lions, he volunteers for a week in July as part of a Remote Area Medical Expedition to southwest Virginia, the poorest part of the state. Guin works 14-hour days in an Army tent alongside his fellow Lions giving eye exams and dispensing 1,000 pairs of free eyeglasses to people so poor that many of them have never before received medical care.

The days are long and the pace is grueling, but Guin wouldn’t trade the experience for the world. “Anytime anyone asks me, ‘Why are you doing this?’ I tell them it’s because someone did the same thing for me once,” he says. “I’ll never forget that.”

Zaraysky poses in 1979 with her older sister and today she has traded in her glasses for contacts.



Susanna Zaraysky, Cupertino, California

Much of Susanna Zaraysky's life has been defined by two things: Her vision problems and her ease at picking up new languages.

Her eyesight was an issue from the beginning. Zaraysky, 33, was born in Leningrad and diagnosed with such severe strabismus or crossed eyes that at the age of two she was placed in a school for developmentally disabled children.

Her parents, both engineers, immigrated to the United States with their two daughters in search of better jobs and by 1985 they were living in San Jose, California. Zaraysky, then 9 and in fifth grade, had a wandering eye and astigmatism and wore round, thick, Coke-bottle glasses. "All the kids made fun of me," she says. When her parents were between jobs and she needed new glasses, they asked her school, Eisenhower Elementary, for help and Zaraysky received a voucher from her local Lions club for a new pair of glasses with an updated prescription. "It was so important that I got them," she says.

Zaraysky's father was not fluent in English and as a child she was often asked to serve as their interpreter. She picked up languages quickly, capable of copying accents well enough to sound like a native speaker. "I felt like the unwilling guide in the Tower of Babel," she says. "I found myself interpreting for others and often being the only person who could understand almost everybody."

As a teen she had surgery to correct her wandering eye and traded in her glasses for contacts. She graduated from college, worked and traveled. Along the way, Zaraysky became fluent in seven languages, never fully understanding why languages came so easily to her. Then at the age of 29 she discovered the answer. Zaraysky realized that could only see in 2D not 3D, and her limited vision made her hearing very sensitive. That sensitivity, coupled with the realization that she heard language as music not as words, was the source of her talent. "It's as though my ears are the third dimension that I don't have with my vision," explains Zaraysky.

She has made peace with her imperfect vision and no longer sees it as a disability. Just recently she wrote and published a book, *Language is Music* (Kaleidomundi,

2009), in which she offers advice on learning foreign languages. "I have this ability to listen and to communicate that most people don't have," Zaraysky says. "It's as though I've turned lemons into lemonade."

George Walter, South Daytona, Florida

The eyeglasses come in, the eyeglasses go out: Thick glasses with fat Grandpa lenses, delicate readers with glittery wire rims, smart designer specs that look barely worn.

George Walter sees them all. As chairman of eyeglass recycling for the Ormond By the Sea Lions Club, it's his job to go around town to collect donated glasses. Walter packages up the glasses and sends them to Orlando for processing, never knowing where they will eventually end up. Once in a while the club gets a letter from a grateful recipient of a pair of glasses from the Lions. "Thank you," the letters say. "I didn't realize what I couldn't see."

Walter knows just how they feel. Back when he was a fifth grader and living in Elverson, Pennsylvania, he wrote a letter like that himself. "Dear Lions Club," it said. "Thank you for the glasses. Now I can read the blackboard."

He explains, "My parents were separated and my mother was raising seven children on my father's military disability income of \$100 a month." When his teacher, Mrs. Macklroy, noticed that Walter was having a problem seeing in class, she told the local Lions. Soon afterward the 10-year-old became the proud owner of his very first pair of glasses.

The glasses, dark maroon with a silver stripe, were small, but their impact was enormous. "When I first put on my glasses everything became so much clearer," says Walter, a 66-year-old property manager for a senior mobile home community. "I could look out the window and see what was going on outside. The glasses opened up a whole new world."

The letters his club receives today are far from fancy. They're short and simple messages of heartfelt thanks. When Walter reads them he gets a warm feeling inside, happy with the knowledge that as a Lion he's had a small part in opening a new world for someone, just as someone did for him. "My little bit of help helps a whole lot of people."

The balloon toss at the Peach festivals is a popular attraction.



Fixtures of Fun

Decades-old Projects Unite Communities
While Putting Lions Front and Center

by David McKay Wilson

Back in 1931, when orchards spread over the hills of Romeo, Michigan, Katrina Schumacher's grandfather rallied the peach growers. They agreed to hold a community celebration to promote their industry at harvest time during Labor Day weekend.

The Peach Festival caught on, and by the 1950s the Romeo Lions Club was running the three-day event. Schumacher has since taken over the family peach orchard, and she's looking forward to the 79th annual Peach Festival this September. Nearly 300,000 people from across the region will descend on the town of 3,500 to eat peach pie, drink beer, play soccer, ogle classic cars, ride the Ferris wheel and watch the Floral Parade come marching down Main Street.

"The Lions are the inspiration," says Schumacher, whose company bakes 1,000 deep-dish peach pies for the weekend. "It's a crucial part of our community. Nothing brings our town together like the Peach Festival."

Lions net an estimated \$150,000, which represents 75 percent of the money they raise during the course of the year. It serves as the foundation for the good works supported by the Romeo Lions.



Crowds line the streets to
cheer the Peach Queen and
her court.

“The youth of today are the future leaders of tomorrow.”

“It’s incumbent on us to keep it going,” says Gary Schocke, the former township supervisor who has served as president of the Peach Festival for 20 years. “We couldn’t survive without it. And it’s how the Lions club here has kept alive.”

Clubs throughout the United States and America sponsor decades-old popular events such as the Peach Festival that years ago became something much more than a fundraiser or project. The events often are the biggest single gathering of the year for area residents. They help define the place for community members and stand near the center of the community’s collective identity and memory.

A youth football team
parades at the Peach
Festival.



For Lions, their project enables them to become woven into the fabric of the community. By tapping into a vital community need, they become an essential part of the public life of the community. They not only raise funds and provide service but also raise their visibility and the spirits of their neighbors.

Speech Contest

Longtime projects unite the Lions through volunteerism – both within their clubs and across an entire state. In California, Multiple District 4's annual Student Speakers Contest involves up to 1,500 students from the state's districts as they compete for \$103,000 in college scholarships.

"The Lions made a commitment to the high school students of our state," says Al Ohrmund, who for the past five years has served as president of the Student Speaker Foundation of the Lions of California. "The youth of today are the future leaders of tomorrow."

When District 4 in California was split into five sub-districts in 1937, Fred Smith, who later became president of Lions Club International, still wanted to stay connected to other Lions throughout the state. So that year the Student Speakers Contest was born. Clubs across the state held contests on the topic of Americanism. Benjamin Hoover of Modesto High School won a \$100 savings bond for his college education.

The winner today receives \$21,000 in a competition that progresses with six levels, beginning at individual Lions clubs and working its way up through area competitions. The 15 district winners each receive \$4,500; the four area winners receive \$6,500. They compete for the grand prize scholarship of \$10,000.

The 2009 winner, Eric Brewster of Long Beach Polytechnic High School, delivered his first of six speeches on "Water – Will California Be Left High and Dry?" at the Long Beach Petroleum Club, where the Downtown Long Beach Lions Club meets each Friday at noon. He gave the 10-minute speech a final time in June at the Council of Governors Joint Meeting held in Cathedral City, where he delivered it with passion and clarity.

"Giving us the chance to speak, to communicate, lending us an ear – it is perhaps the greatest gift you can offer," Brewster told the Lions.

This year, in keeping with the national debate on health-care reform, students are grappling with the topic, "Universal Health Care – How Would It Affect Us?"

Kitty Kramer, a member of the Woodlands Reveille Lions Club, chaired the event at her club. She recruited the three judges, which included the local newspaper editor.

The Student Speakers Contest in California dates from 1937.



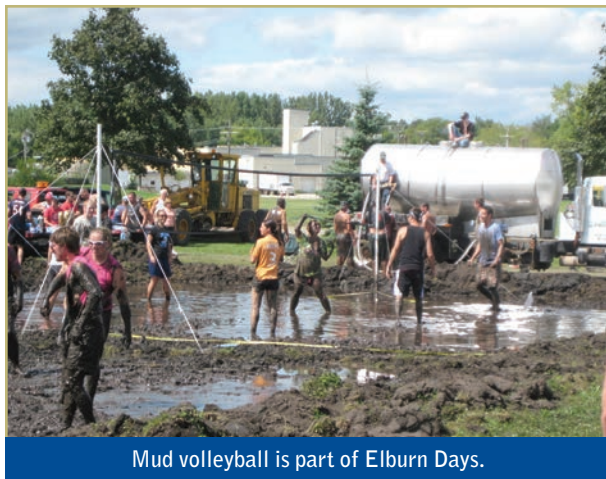
Lions served as door monitors and timers. Students are judged on a 100-point scale that scores them on originality, delivery, sincerity, persuasiveness, enunciation, cohesiveness and overall effectiveness. "It's amazing how calm, cool and collected the students were," she says.

Elburn Days

Forty-four miles west of downtown Chicago, Elburn is a small farm town with corn fields stretching for miles. For three days in late August, its population of 5,000 welcomes tens of thousands of visitors. The Lions club's Elburn Days is a high point of summer and a fixture on the calendar since 1929.

The festival is a family-friendly weekend, with musical entertainment, recreational events and an ear-splitting tractor pull that draws hundreds of spectators. On the main stage, teens compete in the Elburn Idol contest, strutting their stuff before a panel of local judges while top regional bands come on later in the evening.

Fixtures of Fun



Mud volleyball is part of Elburn Days.

Saturday morning dawns with a five-kilometer road race from the Elburn fire station and the annual Elburn Boys Scouts pancake breakfast at Lions Park. Downtown Elburn comes alive with sidewalk sales, a flea market and rummage sale. There's a used-book sale at the library, a craft show sponsored by the Elburn Chamber of Commerce and an antique tractor show of prized farm equipment from bygone days. On Sunday morning, there's a community worship service on the Main Stage and local farmers bring their summer harvest to sell.

"We have never called it Lions Day – it's called Elburn Days and we can only pull it off with the complete cooperation of the entire town," says Gordy Dierschow, an Elburn Lion who has volunteered for 34 years and last year was in charge of the event's 36 "porto-potties" and four 30-yard Dumpsters.

Kids cavort at the carnival while their elders play bingo. When it gets too hot, patrons cool off watching an ice-cream eating contest or settle in at the beer garden down for a cool lager on a steamy August evening. Members of the local 4-H clubs bring their livestock – pigs, steers, cattle and sheep – and the animals get auctioned off on Sunday.

The event takes place on the 27-acre park owned by the Lions. It's a mighty volunteer effort by the 175-member Elburn Lions, the state's biggest club. Al Lee, treasurer of the Elburn Lions, says about 130 members are capable of working, and they all volunteer for at least three days.

Proceeds of the annual event fund Lions charities for the visually impaired, those with diabetes and several local charities.

"We have a good time with whatever we do," says Lee. "I volunteer because I want to make life better for someone who is less fortunate. We're fortunate that so many volunteer."

He runs the beer tent, so he's setting up for several days before it opens on Friday. In 2009, they drained 50 cases of Mike's Hard Lemonade and 105 half-barrels of Miller High Life and Miller Lite. With 160 cups of beer per barrel, that's close to 17,000 servings of beer during three days.

"We have eight taps, and from 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. and we hardly ever turn off the tapper," says Lee.

The tractor pull, which features massive, roaring rigs from the Illini State Pullers Association, attracts a big crowd, many of whom drive their pick-ups along the course, and hangs out all day watching the massive machines strain with their heavy loads along a 100-yard dirt course as plumes of smoke fill the air.

An added attraction in 2009 was the Mud Volleyball Tournament, played on the rutted course after the tractors had torn up the dirt track. The track gets flooded with water, creating a mud pit that's provides a soft landing for volleyball players diving for blazing spikes. "It got pretty wild," says Lee.



Photo by Jotham Stein

Elburn Days is all about fun.

Santa greets residents in the Georgetown Lions Santa Claus Parade in 1949.



Santa Parade

When Robert Mahannah was a child in the late 1960s, he'd come with his sister, Margaret, down to the Georgetown Lions Santa Claus Parade in the early afternoon in mid-November in the suburban Ontario town about 30 miles west of Toronto. They'd line the sidewalk on blustery November afternoons, watching their grandfather lead a team of horses from their dairy farm pulling a festive float down Guelph Street to the Georgetown Fairgrounds.

The parade, which will celebrate its 80th anniversary this November, signaled to local children—and the merchants readying their wares for the holiday marketplace—that Christmas was near. “It was time to pick out your favorite toy,” recalls Mahannah. “We couldn’t wait.”

On the 75th anniversary, the Georgetown Lions veered from tradition and decided to hold the parade at night. Al Watt, club president, says the change has infused new energy in the parade, as the floats are now lit up with thousands of lights as they parade through the town’s main commercial corridor.

As darkness settles on the town, families gather along the sidewalk. They wrap themselves in blankets sitting in lawn chairs, on tailgates or in makeshift shelters to shield

themselves from the cold. Merchants set out free hot chocolate and coffee along the way as the spectators await the parade, two hours of holiday magic.

First comes the police cruiser, followed by blaring, flashing fire trucks from the Georgetown Fire Department. The Georgetown Lions Color Party leads the parade. Twenty Lions, dressed in the club’s black winter coats and red Santa’s hats, carry flags from Canada’s provinces, the United States and the Lions Club International.

They march to the drone of the Georgetown Pipe Band, the town’s bagpipe ensemble that plays Christmas carols as they march by in kilts. Then come the floats: St. Andrews United Church with its choir singing about the birth of

Jesus and the Brampton Fall Fair Float, with 12,000 lights aglow. The final float, built by the Georgetown Lions, ferries Santa Claus along the parade route.

The parade is the town’s biggest event, and an estimated 10,000 revelers lined the streets in 2009 to watch and listen as 66 bands and floats come by. “It has been going 79 years, and we aren’t going to stop,” says Watt, a Lion for 30 years. “It’s one of the most fun things that we do.”

Mahannah and Shirley McCallum helped build the float for the Brampton Fall Fair, which features several reindeer and a multi-colored Rudolf, led by reins that appear to be moving as the lights blink on and off in sequence. The 20-foot-long wagon is pulled by 1947 McCormack tractor, which was used to till the fields of McCallum’s great-grandfather. Three 7,000-watt generators power the lights.

“I love the nighttime parade,” Mahannah says. “We’ve had snow, we’ve had rain and one night it was so foggy you could barely see. The lights illuminated the fog and it was really like we were in a dream.”

Georgetown Lion Doug Welden stuffs a few pillows under the Santa costume, dons a fake beard and rides the Lions float, as he has done for the past 15 years. He sits

“There’s wonderful camaraderie in that kitchen,” says Hultink. “Through all the moaning and groaning, we have lots of fun.”

atop the Georgetown Lions float, waving to the children, calling out the names of those he knows as he passes by. On cold November nights, he’s certain to don several layers of long underwear and sweaters to keep him warm in the late November chill. “It’s as much fun for me as it is for the kids,” says Welden. “I get them singing *Jingle Bells* and *Let it Snow* as we go along.”

Colorful Carnival

For 85 years, the Dunville Lions Club has attracted fun-seekers to this small town at the mouth of the Grand River for its annual carnival in southern Ontario, about 50 miles west of Buffalo, New York. This year’s carnival coincided with the town’s sesquicentennial, so the celebration had added meaning to the townspeople and those who came to visit in early August.

At one time, the carnival covered the entire Lions Park, and teens from across the region would descend on Dunnville for three days of merrymaking. Today, the carnival is geared more toward younger children, with pony rides, a climbing wall, amusement rides and a mini-rodeo, with cattle roping.

For the adults, there’s bingo, a food concession and an exhibition of classic cars. This year, the Lions scheduled a display of raptors as well as a demonstration of fire safety procedures by the Ontario provincial firefighters, who erected a smoke-house and taught how to survive a blaze.

To spark interest in the fair and draw more visitors, Hank Hultink, first vice-president of the Dunville Lions Club, says the club seeks corporate sponsorships, which allows free pony rides or free use of the climbing wall for a few hours. “Word spreads darn fast if it’s free,” says Hultink. “We get more people there, we sell more food and we pick up a buck or two.”

The club makes money for its charitable donations at its food operation, which serves onion rings, hot dogs and a banquet burger – a hamburger with bacon and smothered in cheese. “There’s wonderful camaraderie in that kitchen,” says Hultink. “Through all the moaning and groaning, we have lots of fun.”

Lions Follies

Since 1936, the Temple Founders Lions Club has brought townspeople together to laugh and share jokes about the town located 130 miles south of Dallas. The show, which began in depths of the Depression, was called the Minstrel Burlesque and held at the Municipal Auditorium. Seventy-four years later, the show, now called the Lions Follies, plays to packed houses at the 487-seat Cultural Activities Center. It’s the club’s biggest fundraiser, netting about \$20,000.

“The whole community feels like they are in on the inside jokes,” says Lion George White, who has collaborated on writing the scripts for the past 27 years with Dr. Gary Gosney. “If you come from out of town, you won’t quite get it. They might need an interpreter in the audience.”

In 2009, the show was the Temple Lions version of *The Honeymooners*. That year, Gosney played Ralph Cramden, the character popularized by Jackie Gleason. This year, 29 of the club’s 100 members were in the cast for a show that was a spoof on the hit television classic, *The Andy Griffith Show*, with Gosney playing Aunt Bee. The show also includes a segment called News Botch, which is a take-off on the local TV station’s *News Watch* program. The station’s News Strong motto becomes News Wrong in the Follies.

Each year, the Follies deliver a message. This year, it focused, in a humorous way, on the need for an arts district in downtown Temple. “You throw it out in a funny way, and you make people think,” says White.

Any event in town is fodder for the Follies. When bats had infested the local football stadium, White and Gosney went to work. When the bats suddenly disappeared, the owner of the local Tex-Mex restaurant was poked in the ribs on stage. “We reported that the restaurant was having a White Wing Special, and asked, ‘Coincidence? We think not,’ ” says White. “It’s all in good fun, and the whole community looks forward to it.”

Tips for Cultivating Volunteers

Annual events can stress a club with huge demands for volunteer help to pull it off for yet another year. How do you avoid burnout and encourage volunteers to come back for another year?

Al Lee, a longtime volunteer at Elburn Days, says a key to success is providing special perks for the hard-working volunteers. At the main festival location, volunteers eat and drink for free in a private hospitality room. Strong leadership is essential as well, so the volunteers clearly know what they are expected to do. "You need a strong, intelligent leader who is fair," says Lee. "You can't have a figurehead and hope that the event pulls itself off."

Recruitment of new volunteers is essential. While a core group of organizers may come back year after year, Lions say bringing in new blood is key to a successful event. Bill Evers, 96, of Dunville, Ontario, has seen volunteers come and go during the past 40 years he has volunteered at the Dunville Lions annual carnival. Evers says Lions shouldn't be shy in soliciting help. "All you have to do is ask," says Evers. "That's the way you have to do it."

Many of the Lions festivals include help from other organizations. Some Lions tap nonprofit groups that will benefit from donations raised at the event. It's a way for Lions to expand their reach and find the staff to help with the myriad jobs that need attention.

At the Peach Festival in Michigan, the Lions pay the local Boy Scouts to help clean up after the masses depart. "They are like ants," says Gary Schocke of the Romeo Lions. "They do a great job." Having fun at the event is a sure-fire way to attract volunteers. That's the attitude at the Lions Follies, the satirical show put on each year since 1936 by the Temple Founder Lions Club in Texas. "Success breeds success, and people want to be a part of it," says Lion George White. "It's a way to help people

and have fun too. Even though it takes time and effort, you get that real Lions feeling – 'we are doing this because the money we raise is going to help a lot of people.' "

Changing with the Times

Since 1937, Lions in California have sponsored a statewide competition in speech for high school students. Here are some of the topics.

- 2010 – Universal Health Care
- 2009 – Water – Will California be Left High and Dry?
- 2008 – Immigration – My Solution
- 2007 – Global Warming – Fact or Fiction
- 2006 – The Internet – Hero or Villain
- 1995 – The Media – Do They Go too Far?
- 1990 – What the American Flag Means to Me
- 1985 – Television – Master or Servant?
- 1980 – Taxpayer's Revolt – Where Will it Lead?
- 1975 – America's Future – Where Now?
- 1970 – Generation Gap – Fact or Fantasy?
- 1965 – Maturity – Its Privileges and Responsibilities
- 1960 – People to People – Key to World Understanding
- 1955 – Safety Through Sane Living
- 1950 – Education in American Ideals – Basis for International Understanding
- 1945 – What My Parents Mean to Me
- 1940 – The Will to be Free
- 1937 – Americanism

Jack Stewart of the Fulshear-Simonton Lions Club in Texas straightens a headstone in the historic Black Cemetery in Fulshear.

Photo by Mariann Heath



October is Service Commitment Month

A Lion since 1986, Joanne Parrott sold raffle tickets each year to support Camp Dogwood in North Carolina. This spring, for the first time, she visited the camp for the blind. For four days, she sorted eyeglasses, washed chairs, sealed boats and painted lines in the parking lot.

October is Service Commitment Month

The campers had not yet arrived for the season, but she saw how accommodating the setting was for them. The room numbers were in Braille. Flagstones on the paths indicated the direction for hikers with canes. There was a peaceful sensory garden and museum with tactile displays.

"It was just amazing. I could see why we were raising the money," she says. "It's like being near the Grand Canyon. It's indescribable. You have to go there." She says she will rearrange her work schedule to volunteer at the camp when it's operating. She's also sure she'll sell more than her share of raffle tickets next year. "I know I'll work harder to sell them. I feel like I know why we do what we do," she says.

Lion Parrott has learned that doing service has compelled her to do even more service. She is not tired or complacent or fully satisfied. She finds herself reinvigorated and wanting to do more.

This Lion year International President Sid L. Scruggs III is encouraging Lions to follow the example of peers such as Parrott and commit themselves to service more than ever. He designated October as service commitment month and is asking Lions to sign an online commitment service pledge. (Go to www.lionsclubs.org and search for service commitment pledge.)

The pledge is non-binding. No one will check in subsequent months to see if a Lion who has signed the form has indeed increased his or her service. But the pledge serves as a kind of oath or promise for a Lion to be the best Lion they can be and not to be satisfied with a routine commitment. Lions can print the pledge and place it in their wallet or purse, affix it to a wall in the club house or otherwise display it at a club meeting.

"Lions are all about service. We do a terrific job in serving our communities. But we can do better. We need to do better. There are so many unmet needs, and governments at every level and in nearly every part of the world are not able to meet these needs. Lions are the beacon of hope for our communities," says Scruggs.

October is traditionally Growth Month in which Lions are asked to recruit new members. That emphasis on growing the association remains. But Lions also are being asked to commit themselves to service to strengthen their clubs and the association

The commitment to service is part of Scruggs' general emphasis on service, particularly hands-on or direct service. Four special service events are slated for the Lion year. In August, Lions were asked to shine a beacon of hope on youth by planning programs in conjunction with the United Nations World Youth Day. In October, Lions are asked to support blindness prevention projects in conjunction with Lions' World Sight Day and to assist the visually impaired. Around the holidays, the emphasis is in alleviating hunger and in April, in support of Earth Day, the focus is on environmental projects.

Scruggs also is encouraging clubs to join in the recommitment to service. A club may choose to assess its level of service and determine the best way to strengthen its community service. A highly successful strategy is to adopt or expand a signature project, a club activity for which it is known and admired.

"My club is very involved in the VIP (Visually Impaired Persons) Fishing Tournament. Our members love going there. We bring a lot of joy to people with physical challenges and we have a great time doing it," says Scruggs.

Indeed, studies have shown that volunteering amply rewards volunteers. Service improves volunteers' problem solving skills, their ability to connect with others and gives an overall sense of self-satisfaction. Service even results in numerous health benefits, according to the Washington-based Corporation for National and Community Service. Volunteers tend to have greater longevity, higher functional ability, lower rates of depression and less incidence of heart disease.

Of course, Lions' first concern is for those being helped. Lions know the smiles or hugs they receive indicate the positive result of their service. But sometimes beneficiaries put in words what the service means.

Some participants in the VIP fishing event ride a bus for as much as 12 hours to get there. They often know no one. They can't see. They are trying a new skill. They walk on a wooden pier. They hear the ocean roar. District Governor Gwen White of North Carolina recalls Lion Don Henry patiently explaining procedures to a participant, describing the ocean and pier and then softly telling her to not be afraid. "I'm not frightened," she replied. "I've got God on my right hand and a Lion on my left."

Global Service Action Campaigns Light the Way

Service initiatives and seasons have much in common. President Sid L. Scruggs III has issued a call for global service action campaigns—four of them—during his presidential year. Shining a light on service is the goal, and each of these quarterly campaigns will help the Lions’ beacon burn a little brighter. For people in need all over the world, these seasonal global campaigns will each focus on a specific need. The world may revolve around the sun, but Lions’ projects have always been moved by human need and how to meet these growing challenges.

In August, Lions were urged to *Engage Our Youth* by involving Leos and other young people in service activities. Next month, *Sharing the Vision* highlights our specific goal of helping the world to see, a mandate that has been central to our core foundation since Helen Keller first challenged Lions to become “Knights of the Blind” in 1925. Many Lions clubs have year-round sight activities, but since World Sight Day is held in October, this presents an ideal time to put the spotlight on these pursuits.

The world will be watching as Lions focus attention on preventing blindness and promoting clear vision. Scruggs and his wife, Judy, will take part in a celebration Oct. 7 and 8 in Osaka, Japan, marking the 12th year of Lions’ worldwide participation in this global event. One planned activity is helping to inaugurate a new feature at a local zoo with the mayor, a Lion, that will add to the enjoyment of visually impaired and blind visitors. Another is donating equipment to a school for the blind. Several outreach events are also scheduled to be held at the Nippon Lighthouse for the Blind.

Involve the whole community in your club’s efforts to share the vision. Plan an eyeglass collection campaign or an activity to benefit the visually impaired. Sponsor a vision screening or a hands-on service project that helps a blind citizen, such as making home repairs or other useful acts. Recognize and thank all those who help Lions throughout the year with their support and participation



Valencia El Trigal Lions in Venezuela provide glasses to children after a vision screening.

With more than 314 million people living with low vision or blindness, Lions continue as a beacon of hope.

in projects that help those in need. Lions do, of course, work year-round on sight projects, but October’s service action campaign is a time to recognize and renew that commitment to saving and restoring sight, and assisting the blind and visually impaired.

In December/January, let’s shine our Lions light on *Relieving the Hunger*. With the global economic downturn, more families are finding it as difficult to put food on the table at the end of the year as it is in the beginning. No child should go to bed hungry. It’s estimated that more than one billion people live in a constant state of hunger. A total of 15 percent of those suffering live in developed countries.

Malnutrition stunts minds and bodies. It disrupts lives and learning; it destroys the future before children have an opportunity to even know what they’re capable of



20 IDEAS FOR VISION SERVICE PROJECTS

achieving. Plan projects that will help feed those in need. Support hunger relief organizations and local food pantries. Collect food and nourish people today so they can find the strength for a healthier and better future.

Protecting the Environment is April's service campaign. Adopt a stretch of highway to clear of debris and litter. Pick a park to beautify. Plant a community garden. Collect laptop and cell phone batteries for proper disposal and recycling. Many unused cell phones are proving to be lifelines for victims of domestic violence when they are donated to police departments. Check to see if your community has a need for these older devices.

We're known worldwide for our commitment to helping others. These global service action campaigns will change even more lives. Share the vision in October, and keep the Lions light shining brightly on what has always been at the heart of our association: helping others see. With more than 314 million people living with low vision or blindness, Lions continue as a beacon of hope. Each global service campaign is a reminder of how and why we serve.

For more information and campaign updates, visit www.lionsclubs.org or contact programs@lionsclubs.org.

1. Work with local eye care professionals to organize an eye health and safety presentation for school children.
2. Arrange sport and recreational activities for persons who are visually impaired such as bowling, fishing or swimming.
3. Sponsor a Braille exhibit at your local library.
4. Organize transportation service to medical and other appointments for persons who are blind or visually impaired.
5. Volunteer at a rehabilitation or vocational training center for the blind/visually impaired.
6. Volunteer at a recreational camp for children or adults who are blind or visually impaired. Provide campers with meals or transportation, or help with camp clean-up and repairs.
7. Conduct vision and diabetes screenings for elderly persons at local residential living facilities.
8. Encourage a parent of a blind child to enroll in free, distance education courses offered by LCI partner, The Hadley School for the Blind.
9. Contact the nearest Lions Eye Bank to obtain literature and donor cards. At a planned event, distribute materials to the public, encouraging them to make a pledge to donate their eyes for sight-saving procedures, education and research.
10. Contact local schools to learn if they need aids and appliances, books and technological products for students with vision loss.
11. Organize a community "sight walk" to raise funds in support of your nearest Lions camp for children who are blind and visually impaired.
12. Arrange for a person with a guide dog to be a guest presenter at your club's community event.
13. Collaborate or consult with a blindness professional in an effort to educate the community (citizens, business owners, etc.) in ways they can effectively interact with a person who is blind or visually impaired.
14. Volunteer at a local eye bank or a Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center.
15. Help bring textbooks and literature to life. Volunteer to read books and periodicals for blind and visually impaired persons.
16. Hold an educational event to promote diabetes awareness and related vision loss.
17. Become aware of the various vision loss/blindness resources in the community; create a resource directory and share it with parents, educators and medical professionals in your community.
18. To promote awareness of the common causes of vision loss and blindness, collaborate with eye care professionals to hold a community educational event.
19. Send collected eyeglasses to the nearest Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center.
20. Organize a community self-help group for persons who are blind/visually impaired or for their families.



Iowa Lions on the ‘Cutting Edge’

Greg Schmidt furiously scrubs his hands and forearms as his research assistant, Vickie LeGare, watches with a hint of impatience.

The duo from the Iowa Lions Eye Bank in Iowa City is about to prepare a cornea for research into a year-old procedure called Descemet’s Membrane Endothelial Keratoplasty (DMEK) — a type of corneal transplant.

Thanks to Schmidt, the newest innovation in corneal transplants actually comes from outside the operating room.

Until recently, surgeons at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics and around the country performed all aspects of the procedure in the operating room — from preparing the cornea sliver to transplanting it. But this

causes many problems, professionals said, because any surgical mistakes during the cornea preparation would cause them to reschedule the surgery.

Now, Schmidt is the one who prepares the cornea for transplant, meaning surgeons are given corneas ready for immediate transplantation.

“This is thrilling,” Schmidt said. “Everyone in the Eye Bank has a part in the donor process.”

The procedure, Schmidt said, is “cutting edge” in the world of corneal transplants.

For more than 100 years, doctors used a technique known as a full-penetrating keratoplasty. This procedure involved a transplant of the entire cornea and often did not correct the patient’s condition.

A technician from the Iowa Lions Eye Bank shows the actual result of a DMEK/DMAEK transplant at the UIHC.



The donated portion of the cornea is shown after a DMEK procedure.



Eye Bank technician Greg Schmidt prepares to begin a Laser Assisted Keratoplasty (LAK) procedure at the UIHC. The LAK procedure reduces patient recovery time by increasing the surface area of the wound.

But Schmidt's research could help the roughly 40,000 patients who receive cornea transplants each year, according to the Eye Bank Association of America.

Two years ago, a researcher in the Netherlands developed the procedure to which Schmidt is now devoted. It involves only the removal of a single layer of cells. Schmidt compared this thickness to 15 sheets of paper contained in a ream of more than 500 sheets.

In order to remove such a thin section, Schmidt pumps air into the cornea with a needle. When this air supply creates a bubble, it's ready for removal and eventual transplant. Schmidt said the procedure is virtually undetectable and takes very little time to regain full vision.

Robert Mullins, a UI associate professor, relies on Schmidt's services for much of his cornea research. "The idea that you can keep a lot of your own cornea and only replace the cells that are failing is an innovative and important advance in the field," Mullins said.

Schmidt has not only had an effect on cornea transplants in Iowa City, he's garnering attention around the country. "Greg Schmidt is amazing; he's a pioneer," said Marianne Price, the executive director of the Cornea Research Foundation of America. "It's a delicate surgery. It's helpful to have that portion done ahead of time."

Photos and story courtesy of the The Daily Iowan. Photos by Charlie Anderson/The Daily Iowan. Story by Sam Lane/The Daily Iowan.

LOOKING INTO OUR NATIONS SCENES

R THE J
ANGELES, CA



Freedom Ride



Lions welcome the blind teenagers to Washington, D.C., Nadia Kaplan (with purse) lines up the youth.

An epic bus journey across America in 1962 unlocked the potential of two dozen blind teenagers

by Maria Blackburn

As soon as the ferry docked at Liberty Island, Linda Woodbury and her friends were off and running. It was July of 1962 and Woodbury, one of 24 Southern California teenagers visiting New York City on a 10-week cross-country sightseeing trip, had energy to burn. After so many days of being cooped up on a bus, it felt good to be outside where she could stretch her legs and feel the grass beneath her feet.

Vowing to be the first to the top, the 15-year-old Santa Ana girl raced her friends to the base of the Statue of Liberty and began bounding up the circular staircase, the hard soles of their shoes clattering against the metal steps. Round and round they went, their hands sliding along the cool polished railing. The narrow stairwell filled with shouting as they climbed the 354 steps.

Just when the ascent seemed it would never end, Woodbury found herself standing at an open window inside Lady Liberty's crown, New York City spread out 22 stories below. Boats cut through the waves of New York Harbor just offshore. In the distance the Chrysler Building glittered in the sun. Woodbury, who is blind, couldn't see the view. Neither could her friends. They relied on the sighted adults in their group to answer their questions about what spread out before them. Until their chaperones arrived, the teens walked around the platform, taking it all in and talking excitedly about what they discovered.

As Woodbury stood there with the wind blowing in her hair, she was struck by the magnitude of the experience. How fortunate she was to be on this trip, to have the opportunity to spend the summer exploring the country, surrounded by people who recognized that the blind could be independent and self-reliant. The words to her favorite Woody Guthrie song ran inside her head: "This land is your land, this land is my land; From California to

the New York Island; From the Redwood Forest to the Gulf Stream waters; This land was made for you and me."

"This is America," she thought. "It belongs to everyone, sighted and blind. We get to come here because we're free."

Start the Revolution

Taking 24 blind teenagers on a sightseeing tour of the United States might not seem like such a major event today. In the early 1960s when Norman Kaplan, founder of the Los Angeles-based Foundation for the Junior Blind, conceived the trip, it was nothing less than revolutionary.

Then, many blind children grew up sheltered, attended special schools and traveled little. Children with disabilities weren't regularly mainstreamed into public schools. Kaplan's philosophy was different. "I don't know about blind children," he liked to say. "But I do know about children." And children, according to Kaplan, needed to take tours to learn about the country's history. They needed to ride horses and drive bumper cars, to visit the Grand Canyon and Niagara Falls, meet presidents and ordinary people. With the help of minor adaptations like sighted guides, the children in his foundation needed to experience the world outside of their own. It was critical not just to their present, but to their future. Blind children would soon grow up to be blind adults and Kaplan wanted to make sure they could lead productive lives, find meaningful work and be independent. The 10,000-mile journey was a way to help set them on that path.

"Norm got it that some of the kids were in for rough adult years," says Mike Cole, retired administrator of the California Orientation Center for the Blind who was a 16-year-old junior at John Marshall High School in Los Angeles when he went on the trip. "But he believed people could shape their own destinies. He knew blind people who had become self-sufficient, people who were good at

coping in a rough and competitive world, so he knew blindness was not the issue. He saw his role as encouraging us, and I think he knew he might be one of the only sighted adults in our lives that encouraged us with such feeling.”

Kaplan knew he couldn't do it alone. So he called on the Lions for help. Some 72 Lions clubs from across the country pitched in to make the trip a reality. The Lions raised money so that the teens didn't have to pay a dime for their journey. They planned outings in their towns, and opened their homes to provide food and lodging to their road-weary visitors.

The trip, christened BY LIONS (Blind Youths Looking Into Our Nation's Scenes), lasted just 68 days. But its impact lasted a lifetime. Today some 48 years later as small business owners, administrators of social service agencies, teachers, homeowners, parents and grandparents, the participants look back on their cross-country trip and credit it with making them believe that they could take risks, be successful, be themselves.

“What the trip me taught me most of all, really, was to never give up,” says Woodbury, who holds a master's degree in speech communications and whose career has included serving as a consultant to Fortune 500 companies, founding two businesses and administering programs to people with disabilities. “There's always a way. It's not can you do something, it's how can you do something.”

In the Spotlight

From the beginning, the kids knew the trip was going to be special, although they weren't quite sure what to expect.

Norman Kaplan's wife, Nadia, planned the itinerary, which took them to 32 states and featured 52 planned stops including the White House. The trip wasn't just about the teens seeing the country; it was also about the country seeing them. “At that time technology hadn't made the kind of employment possible that's possible today for blind people,” Woodbury explains. “Blind people were kind of in the closet. There were sometimes embarrassed to be out in the street.”

The foundation, now called Junior Blind of America, served hundreds of blind children through their Saturday programs, Friday night teen dances and summer sleep away camp, Camp Bloomfield. There was no way all of them could go on the trip. The 12 boys and 12 girls were handpicked for their maturity, positive attitudes and ability to get around well on their own.

There was Linda, the adventurer; Loretta, the prankster who loved to dance; and Dennis, the soft-spoken piano player. There was Greg the mimic, who could do a credible imitation of Norman Kaplan, Betsy, the youngest in the group, who packed her first pair of high heels for the trip, and Mike, who was fearless. “We were

President Kennedy greets the teenagers in the Rose Garden. Mike Cole is to the left of Kennedy.



a pretty feisty group,” says Cole, who was used to traveling the city of Los Angeles on his own with his guide dog, P.S. “We believed we represented new ways of thinking and behaving about blind people. I think we had an attitude about being in charge of our lives.”

It was an attitude that had long been fostered by their families as well as the Kaplans. Despite the fact that mainstreaming people with disabilities in public schools was not yet the national model, most of the teens on the trip attended regular public schools. At home the children learned to ride bikes, bait fishing hooks, cook and do everything their sighted siblings and neighbors did. At Junior Blind events they socialized with other blind kids from the region and made friends. “We were expected to just be like other kids,” Woodbury says. “And when you’re expected to be like that you just do it.”

Norman Kaplan stayed to run Camp Bloomfield, and Nadia Kaplan served as the trip’s director and brought along their daughters, Fawn and Penny. In addition, there were six counselors, all young adults who had worked as counselors at the camp and knew the kids, as well as a bus driver and two USC film students who photographed the trip.

On June 24, the teens bid their families goodbye, boarded the bus and set out on their journey. Betsy Whitney, then 12, felt butterflies in her stomach as the bus pulled away from the curb outside the foundation’s Wiltshire Boulevard headquarters. “I knew it was going to be an adventure,” she says. “And I was always up for an adventure.”

On the Road

The bus, donated by employees of North American Aviation, was hardly a cushy ride. There was no air conditioning and no bathroom. The bus broke down almost weekly. And every square inch of space was crammed with people, luggage and equipment, like the three typewriters teens would use to write letters home and thank-you notes to the Lions who hosted them. “The bus wasn’t a school bus, although it felt like one,” says Lew Sitzler, then a 19-year-old counselor who regularly stretched out on the bus floor in the aisle to get some sleep.

A typical travel day would find the group on the bus for 10 to 12 hours at a time. The teens talked, caught up on sleep and wrote letters. Sometimes Kaplan or one of the counselors would get on the PA system and describe the scenery outside the windows. Often they would sing to pass the time, harmonizing on rock and roll, folk and gospel tunes. Ray Charles was a hero and “I Like It Like That” was one of their favorite songs. “Get blind folks together and they’re apt to sing, often wonderfully,” Cole says.

On tour days they woke up early in the morning to eat breakfast and be on their way. Every stop was different. They smelled sulfur in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, stuck their hands in a vat of peanut butter on a tour of the Hershey Chocolate factory in Hershey, Pennsylvania, and explored the contours of Rodin’s sculpture “The Kiss” with their hands at an East Coast art museum. They



The group visits the Caverns of Luray in Virginia.

trekked through Tom Sawyer's cave in Hannibal, Missouri, visited a slew of Civil War graveyards and toured the Library of Congress.

"Every day I knew there was going to be something exciting," says Woodbury, who remembers experiences as varied as winning a cow milking contest at a Texas ranch and meeting with U.S. senators and representatives in a fancy Capitol Hill dining room. "I would wake up every morning with an excited feeling in my stomach and an air of expectation that something was going to happen."

"Get blind folks together and they're apt to sing, often wonderfully."

The group didn't just meet one U.S. president, they met two. What Whitney recalls most clearly about the visit to the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library in Independence, Missouri, wasn't shaking the hand of the nation's 33rd president, but the weather on that blistering hot July 4th day. "I was wearing a navy blue suit, a white blouse, nylons and high heels," she says. "I was so tired and so hot that I fell asleep standing up."

A visit to the White House and meeting with President John F. Kennedy in the Rose Garden was chronicled by newspapers and TV stations across the country. Loretta Moore of San Diego, then 14, nearly fainted from excitement. "When President Kennedy walked over to me and took my hand I thought I was going to lose it," she says. "My knees were just weak. Here was the president of the United States holding my hand. How many people ever get to do that?"

Despite all of the fun they were having, traveling non-stop for 10 weeks was demanding. The teens were responsible for being on time, packing and keeping track of all of their belongings, doing their own laundry, and carrying their own bags. Kaplan was loving, but firm. "It's nice to be nice," she reminded them again and again. She expected her charges to behave, to act polite and be respectful. "Nadia made it very clear to us what the rules were but she always had our dignity at the forefront," Woodbury says.

Kaplan Recalls Historic Trip

When Nadia and Norman Kaplan wanted to take a group of blind teens from their recreational and educational program for blind children on a cross country sightseeing trip in the summer of 1962, they knew exactly who to call on to make it happen: The Lions.

Norman Kaplan was a Lion and the Los Angeles-based charity he founded, Foundation for the Junior Blind, had worked closely with two local clubs in the past. Nadia Kaplan, who was director of the charity's summer camp and a young mother of two daughters, made the itinerary for the trip, which would take the teens to 72 cities across the United States. "We sent the local Lions clubs the list of where we wanted to go and we got them to sponsor us in each city," remembers Nadia Kaplan, now 89. "Every time we approached a town we didn't quite know where we were going to sleep. The Lions club made the arrangements.

"It was a great and wonderful trip. We covered everything – history, politics, geology, industry and sightseeing. I can't even tell you how many highlights there were."

Their bus, crammed with luggage and people, was on the road 10 to 12 hours at a time and served as a kind of "home on wheels." "I remember the girls putting nail polish on and putting their hair up in curlers, which they took down just before we arrived at our destination," she says. "They had guitars and they sang and slept and talked as we moved from city to city."

From the start, Kaplan knew the trip itself was historic. "It was the first time anything like this had been attempted with blind children," says Kaplan, who has written a book on the experience titled *American Odyssey: Blind Teenagers Discover America*. "It was most unusual. Many of the people we met were startled that anyone would take blind children on a sightseeing trip."

The impact of the trip was felt for years afterward, not just by the teens but by the Lions and others they met along the way. "It made a difference to so many," she says. "We opened up their eyes."

– Maria Blackburn



Accompanied by a Lion,
four teenagers visit the farm
fields of Blair, Nebraska.



The Lions helped ease the difficulty of keeping to such a busy schedule and being away from home. Wherever the bus stopped for the night, whether it was in Williams, Arizona, or Williamsburg, Virginia, local Lions greeted the teens and escorted them to fried chicken picnic suppers and dances they had organized. At the end of the night, the Lions would show them to the hotels, college dorms and private homes they had arranged for their overnight stay. They were a warm, welcoming presence.

"We knew when we would get to a place that we were just going to love those Lions. There was no question about it. We could not wait to meet them," says Woodbury, who still stays in touch with the wife of a Lion that she met on the trip.

Whitney recalls spending the night at the home of a Lion in a small Nebraska town and waking up in the morning to discover that his wife had washed, dried and ironed every article of clothing in her suitcase, even though they were already clean. "They were so nice to me," she

says. "They acted like they were honored that I was staying with them and they really felt that way. Their kindness was astonishing."

Many of the trip's most memorable moments sprang from events that weren't on the group's detailed itinerary. There were thunderstorms in Ohio that brought a pouring rain and crashing thunder that the group of California kids had never before experienced. They staged epic pillow fights and pulled goofy pranks on one other, like stealing the clothes someone had laid out on their bed for the next day. "We were really comfortable with each other," says Whitney. "We felt safe with each other. We cared for each other."

The event that galvanized the group occurred one-third of the way through the trip in Bluefield, West Virginia. It was almost dusk when the bus arrived in town and the teens, who were scheduled to tour a coal mine and receive the keys to the city the following day, were hungry and eager to get off the bus. When Nadia Kaplan returned to the bus from checking in at their hotel, she told the teens the news: due to local segregation laws, Greg, Loretta and Essie, who are African American, would have to stay apart from the group that night in a hotel that allowed people of color.

The teens were astonished. Some of the younger ones burst into tears. Although the Civil Rights Act wouldn't be passed for another two years, they were largely unaware that segregation was still going on in the United States. These were the kids that they had laughed with, cried with, shared meals with and spent thousands of hours with. These kids were their friends. It wasn't fair they were being singled out because of the color of their skin.

"We saw no color and it wasn't just because of our eyes," Woodbury says. "The whole idea of racial inequality was foreign to us. We tried so hard to believe ourselves as equal. If blacks weren't equal then what about blind people?"

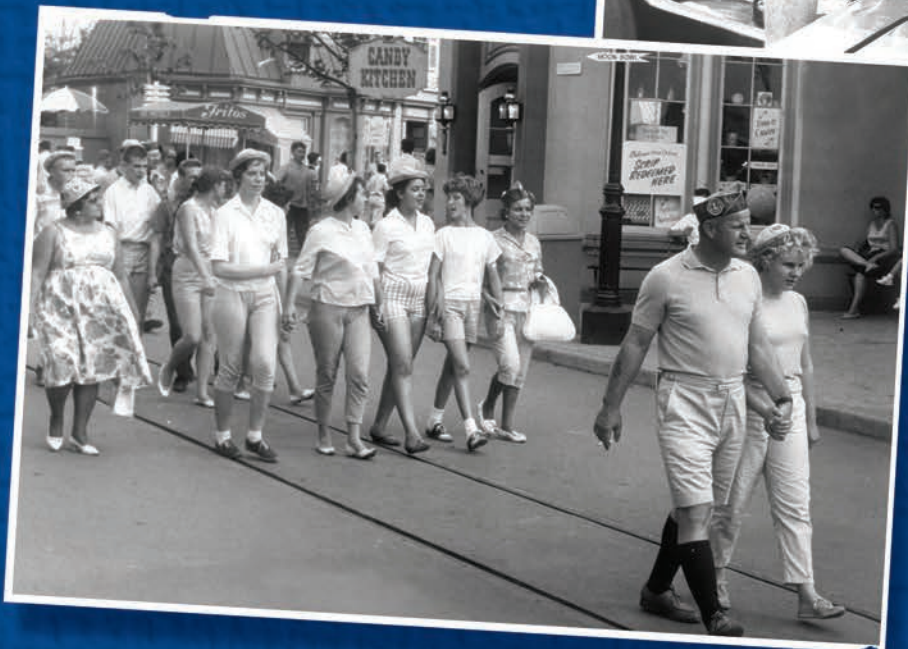
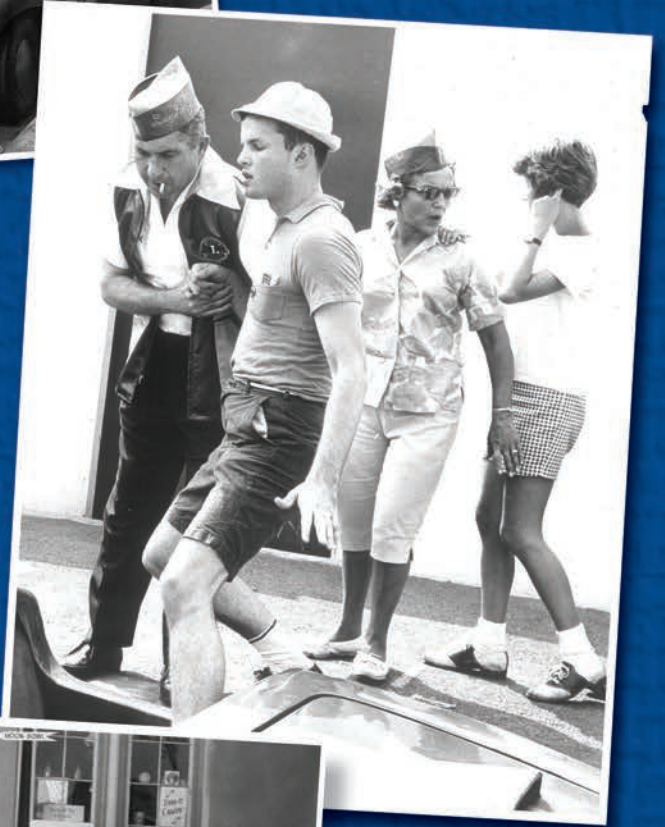
Kaplan let the teens decide what to do. They determined that as guests of the Lions club the most gracious way to proceed was to not make a fuss. "I was unhappy with the decision but felt there were few options," says Sitzer. "Sometimes more is accomplished with diplomacy than confrontation."

But when the group disembarked from the bus only to discover that the hotel wouldn't even let the three African-American teens eat in the same dining room as the group, they took a stand. Everyone trooped down to the basement to eat dinner together. "It was all of us or none of us," Woodbury says. "If I remember correctly even the mayor of the town came down to the basement and ate with us. It was an amazing day. All eyes were opened."



Coney Island

*Lions escort the teenagers
at Coney Island in New York.*



Turning Point

The travelers returned home in late August, exhausted and exhilarated. In the years that followed they moved away from home, attended college, settled into careers and started families of their own. As they made their way in a sighted world and their independence blossomed, they continued to be inspired by the trip, the friends they made and the experiences they shared.

"I always had a lot of freedom growing up but I was very shy," says Woodbury, now 63 and living in Albany, California, where she works as administrator for the state orientation center for the blind. "After that trip it was like having a bunch of people who were like me who were jumping out there with me into society. It gave me a sense of wholeness and boldness."

They knew they had been places and done things that many sighted Americans had not. The knowledge changed them, says Whitney, the founder of a successful Braille translation services company in Hawaii. "I'm much more accepting and more understanding of other people because of all the experiences I had on the trip," she says, happily adding that today she lives in the most diverse county in the United States. "I really did grow up."

And for Sitzer and Cole, the trip afforded them the opportunity to fully realize the importance of creating change. Both men were active in the civil rights movement in college and went on to become teachers. Sitzer taught high school history for years and has been an active volunteer in his Northern California community. Cole, who lives in Berkeley, California, became an advocate and activist for people with disabilities with a particular focus on working with the blind in the fields of access, orientation and rehabilitation. "Everything in your life contributes to who you are," says Cole. "But I think that it's fair to say I developed a certain desire to make a difference because of the trip."

About 10 years ago, Cole, Woodbury, Moore and a few others from the BY LIONS trip got together for a reunion and spent a few hours exchanging memories and catching up on each other's lives. The closeness they felt to one another was there just as it had been dozens of years before. "So many of us made great strides in different ways," says Moore, who is 62 and has worked as an instructor at the San Diego Center for the Blind for more than 25 years. "Isn't it neat to make friendships with people that continue to inspire you?"

Linda (nee Filson) Woodbury visits the NBC studio in New York.



Lions Elect Leaders in Sydney

Delegates to the 93rd international convention in Sydney, Australia, in July elected the Lions leaders for 2010-11. Sid L. Scruggs III of North Carolina was elected international president. Dr. Wing-Kun Tam of China Hong Kong was elected international first vice president. Wayne A. Madden of Indiana was elected international second vice president. Immediate Past President Eberhard J. Wirfs of Germany became chairperson of LCIF. (Full convention coverage will be in the October issue.)

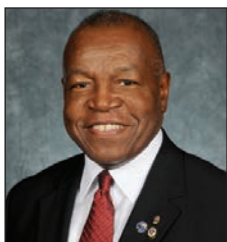
Delegates also elected 16 international directors—two from the India/South Asia/Africa/Middle East constitu-

tional area, one from Australia/New Zealand/Papua New Guinea/Indonesia/Islands of the South Pacific, three from Europe, two from Orient/Southeast Asia, one from South America/Central America/Mexico/Islands of the Caribbean Sea and seven from the United States/U.S. affiliates/Bermuda/Bahamas. The directors serve for two years. (The names of the second year directors are on page 2.)

Visit the Web site of Lions Clubs International for biographies of the new directors as well as biographies and photos of the four international officers and second year directors.



Yamandu P. Acosta
Eufaula, Alabama USA



Douglas X. Alexander
Brooklyn, New York USA



Gary Anderson
Grand Rapids,
Michigan USA



Narendra S. Bhandari
Pune, India



Janez Bohorič
Kranj, Slovenia



James A. Cavallaro
Springfield,
Pennsylvania USA



Ta-Lung Chiang
Multiple District 300
Taiwan



Per K. Christensen
Aalborg, Denmark



Edison Karnopp
Santa Cruz Do Sul,
Brazil



Dr. Sang-Do Lee
Daejeon, Republic of
Korea



Sonja Pulley
Portland, Oregon USA



Krishna Reddy
Bangalore, India



Robert G. Smith
Sacramento, California
USA



Eugene M. Spiess
Moore, South Carolina
USA



Eddy Widjanarko
Surabaya, Indonesia



Seiki Yamaura
Tokyo, Japan



Gudrun Yngvadottir
Gardabaer, Iceland

Fighting Blindness Through Training

SightFirst is fighting blindness by shining a light on training.

The Korat Public Institute of Public Health Ophthalmology at Maharat Nakhon Ratchasima Regional Hospital in Thailand is a leading example of the impact training eye care specialists has on blindness prevention. The program at Korat attracts students from all over Asia. The students receive comprehensive training in eye care service and delivery. Many come from areas with minimal eye health services and with vast eye health needs.

“I decided to learn about refractive error and low vision in this program because it affects many people in my country and around the world,” said Wauta Laka of Cambodia, a recent graduate of the Korat program.

The training of eye care professionals has always been and remains a central component to SightFirst’s fight against blindness. To date, more than

345,000 ophthalmologists, ophthalmic nurses, professional eye care workers and village health workers have been trained through funding from Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF).

Since 1993, SightFirst has approved 11 grants totaling US\$1.5 million to the Korat Institute. The program provides training that builds and strengthens human resources, including both national health managers and mid-level ophthalmic personnel, to prevent blindness.

The benefits of the course extend well beyond the borders of Thailand. When the national program managers return home, the trainings are adapted and implemented into country-level plans. The knowledge needed to impact the fight against blindness reaches more people.

“Korat graduates are all at very key positions in their regions, within the Ministries of Health, as well as in

the local eye care institutions,” said Dr. K Konyama, director of the Korat Institute of Public Ophthalmology, “In addition, they are all continuing to work for the future success of blindness prevention and eye care system development.”

Through SightFirst grants, the program has trained about 300 people from 17 different countries. Students have come to the program from Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

LCIF, along with the help of Lions worldwide, continues to prevent blindness and restore sight through the training of eye care specialists who will sustain and enhance eye care services well into the future.



Korat students screen a boy.



**Lions Clubs International
FOUNDATION**

LCIF to Fight Measles with Gates Foundation

Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) is working with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support the Measles Initiative to protect children from measles and increase routine immunizations. Four African countries have been chosen for a special Lions-Measles Initiative pilot program, funded jointly by LCIF and the Gates Foundation.

“Lions have always been committed to saving sight at all levels in communities,” said Eberhard J. Wirfs, LCIF chairperson. “I have seen firsthand the devastating effects of measles and other diseases, and Lions will play a prominent role in fighting this disease and preventing childhood blindness.”

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), measles is a highly contagious viral disease transmitted via droplets from the nose, mouth and throat of infected persons. Although vaccinations are readily available in developed countries, the disease remains a heavy public health burden in developing countries. The disease can be prevented altogether through vaccination. It is also a major cause of preventable blindness, particularly among children, affecting the same underserved populations. There are an estimated 30 million to 40 million cases of measles each year, resulting in nearly 750,000 deaths. During 2001-2008, global measles mortality declined by 78 percent, from an estimated 733,000 deaths in 2000 to 164,000 in 2008, yet the reduction in measles mortality has been leveling off since 2007.

“We are coming to this area to accelerate the vaccination program to reach more people and stop measles from coming back again and again,” said Lion Dr. Tebebe Berhan, project chairperson in Ethiopia.

The Measles Initiative is a long-term partnership among world leaders in public health that aims to globally reduce the number of deaths from measles. UNICEF, WHO, the American Red Cross, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the United Nations Foundation are among the organizations supporting these efforts.

To support the Lions-Measles Initiative pilot program, the Gates Foundation awarded a \$400,000 grant to LCIF, and LCIF will contribute an additional \$300,000.

“Mali by itself cannot face this problem because it’s not only a Mali problem. This is why partnership is very important. The more people we have, the better it is for us,” said Lion Mama Tapo, project chairperson in Mali.

Lions will focus on three main areas: advocacy at the local, regional and national levels; direct involvement in social marketing and vaccination activities; and financial support. Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mali and Nigeria will host the first four pilot programs. These countries have been identified by WHO and UNICEF as priority countries given the high rate of measles and the need for increased vaccinations and overall strategy to decrease the rate of deaths. Lions’ leadership teams in the four pilot countries will coordinate program implementation and documentation of activities through the beginning of 2011.

“Lions have been known for playing a role in the eradication of preventable blindness in Nigeria, all over Africa and the whole world,” said International Director H.O.B. Lawal, project chairperson in Nigeria. “Now Lions are coming with this Measles initiative. I feel very, very proud to be part of this moment.”



Children in Ethiopia and three other African nations will receive measles vaccinations through a new LCIF partnership effort with Gates Foundation for the Measles Initiative. Children are most at-risk for the disease.



Lions Clubs International
FOUNDATION

Building Bridges

Club Crosses the Generation Gap with New Facilities

The Dewey Beach Lions Club in Delaware has a lovely new 4,000-square-foot meeting hall that seats 120 with a full kitchen and bar area. While building the sparkling facility, the club also built up its ranks, adding about 33 new members in two years. Even better, their average age was just 40.

While the clubhouse allows the Lions to offer services such as public bathrooms for those using the adjacent playground and meeting space for a host of non-profit clubs, the construction itself brought the club together and allowed the next generation of Lions to roar.

"They turned the whole project over to the three of us – the president, vice president and second vice president," said Ron Krajewski, 34, a six-year Lion member who served as president and is now on the board of directors. "The three of us on a day-to-day basis were the ones making a decision."

And the turning over of responsibilities and projects to younger members, Krajewski said, has been the key to the club's growth.

"That's the secret to growing a Lions club. You need to bring in one or two new members and you need to allow them to grow and trust them and allow them to bring their friends," Krajewski said.

This is how President Chris Moody, 35, sees his club growing.

"When I was brought in several years ago I brought in several of my friends to the club and now they're bringing their friends," Moody said. "Once you can get a few of the younger members into the club it has the ability to grow rapidly."

As new members came into the club, Krajewski said he agreed it was

activities to the club's roster, including a new fishing derby.

"We have events that are kind of outside of the box," Krajewski said.

And longtime members are pleased with the results. Dennis Diehl said the clubhouse has been a 10-year project for the club, but resulted in two years of intensive planning and construction for Krajewski.

"What he did getting this building built was just incredible," Diehl said. "I'm hoping to use the kitchen to teach Down Syndrome kids kitchen skills and be able to get them jobs in some of the restaurants in the area."

And inviting new groups of people to use the facilities is yet another avenue for potential club growth.

"This is something that has always been envisioned because instead

of necessarily giving money we can provide a facility," said Krajewski.

Krajewski said the building itself is a case study in how changing up leadership and empowering members leads to growth.

"This is what you need to do. You're either going to change or you're going to die," Krajewski said.



important that they felt comfortable and had a voice. Lions with decades of membership experience yielded some of their leadership to newcomers.

"The older members have really embraced the change and that's honestly one of the biggest driving forces," Krajewski said. "You can see a pattern here of younger members stepping up and the club allowing that to happen."

The newer members have added

Bridge & BBQ a Great Combo

You wouldn't expect to find authentic Kansas City barbeque in Lake Havasu City, but then you wouldn't expect to find the London Bridge, either. And yet, both are there. The bridge came in 1971, brought to Arizona by developer Robert McCulloch. The barbeque came a few decades later, brought by the Daybreakers Lions Club of Lake Havasu City. Lions sponsored their first Kansas City Barbeque Society-sanctioned contest in February in a park with the famed bridge serving as a scenic backdrop. Arizonans clearly aren't afraid to tackle the new and unusual. "We're a small group, some 16 members strong, and all of our members work on every project," says Ann Roberts, District 21-A Governor for 2009-10 and a Daybreakers Lion. Before

Lions knew it, she says, "The project took on a life of its own, becoming the largest such event in Arizona."

Called the "HAVA BBQ London Bridge Style," the competition attracted as many as 20,000 visitors who sampled and watched as 72 grilling teams from 15 states vied for the \$10,000 grand prize. A total of 72 certified judges, one for each team, came from 14 states to critique — and all had to be sanctioned by the KCBS. Judges attend classes where they learn to focus on elements such as taste, tenderness and appearance of individual food entries.

When Lions sought the right to sponsor the competition, Roberts says attracting enough people wasn't a concern. "Our city's population nearly doubles as the winter visitors arrive," she points out. The desire to host an official spot on the tour was born after Lions held a smaller barbeque competition on their own in 2009 that was so well received the public clamored for more. Lions decided that barbeque may just have been their fundraising destiny. "Every club is looking for an opportunity to develop a new



Lake Havasu's London Bridge appears to be right at home in Arizona.

fundraiser." They were fearless in their pursuit of hosting the KCBS event. Working with the organization's representatives, "We became intimately familiar with the competitive barbeque world," Roberts admits.

It didn't take much convincing for the barbeque society to grant the club a coveted spot on the 2010 BBQ Tour, however. "Our weather here in Lake Havasu City, usually in the 70s in late February, was one of the KCBS's primary considerations," she explains. With 10,000 members, the organization is the largest devoted to barbeque and grilling enthusiasts and conducts more than 300 annual competitions. Lions received the first spot west of the Mississippi on the tour.

Lions encouraged visitors who attended on Friday and Saturday to observe and interact with the grilling teams. For those who didn't fancy barbeque, vendors sold other food items. The main draw, of course, was barbeque, slathered in a variety of homemade, secret sauce or simply grilled to perfection and served falling off the bone. There were several categories for judging, including salsa and "Anything Butt." Door prizes were also awarded for Best Team Booth and a People's Choice Award.

Lions sold "BBQ Bucks," tokens that allowed visitors to buy meals, food samples and drinks. A portion of each BBQ Buck went to local organizations. More than \$15,000 was raised.

"We pride ourselves on giving back to the community, and budget more than 75 percent of our financial aid to local charities," Roberts says. Lake Havasu City Lions, like many clubs, focus on activities that benefit local and global vision initiatives. They also donate to other projects including a food bank, college scholarships, Havasu for Youth/Project Graduation, Haven House and the Lions Dog Park.

Chili Sale Promotes Service and Saves Lives

Lions in McKinney, Texas, are locally famous for their 57-year chili supper tradition, the club's single biggest fundraiser. This year more than 400 diners helped Lions earn \$7,000. Profits from the much anticipated two-hour sale support the Texas Lions Camp in Kerrville, provide glasses and hearing aids to students, make possible donations to the local food pantry and Salvation Army and supply fans to help McKinney's residents in need stay safe and comfortable during the state's extreme heat.

One donation given by Lions didn't just change a life—it saved one. Five years ago, Lions approached local high school officials and asked how the club could help. A defibrillator was needed for sports events, so Lions gave the school \$2,000 to purchase one. A short time later during a soccer game, a player collapsed and the defibrillator was successfully used.

Jack Crampton, a 45-year member, explains the long history between the club and high school. "It was 1924 and the school was in desperate need of uniforms for their team," he recounts. "Once we heard about the need, our club was front and center with the offer to not only purchase the uniforms but some miscellaneous equipment as well. It was just after that the school asked permission to name their team 'The Lions' in honor and appreciation for what the club had done."

Last year, Lions spent more than \$13,000 on eye exams and glasses for children and adults and gave \$10,000 in donations. High school student Seaver Bowen, who has a hearing disorder, had endured an earlier, unsuccessful surgery. Bowen's father recently returned from a tour of duty in the

Middle East and discovered that his insurance did not cover hearing aids. The club partnered with a local audiologist to cover the costs of testing, ear molds, batteries and other aids. Bowen's hearing improved considerably and he's now doing better in school.



Lori Ellis gives McKinney Mayor Brian Loughmiller a preview taste of the club's famous chili.

CLUB BRIEFINGS

ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **Brookville-Timberlake Lions Clubs** in **Lynchburg, Virginia**, provide a Christmas party for kids who might not otherwise have a happy holiday. The Davis Ballowe Underprivileged Children's Christmas Party is named after a charter member of the club.

The **Knowlton Lions Club** in **Quebec, Canada**, collected \$25,000 from more than 500 donors. The funds will be used for community project, such as the club's annual Christmas Basket distribution. In 2009, 65 baskets were delivered and 91 poinsettias were given out to the elderly.

San Juan, Texas, Lions responded to a challenge issued by Lion Sue Sexton to raise money for Haiti relief by collecting \$1,014 to be sent to LCIF at the club's next meeting.

The **Jennings Lions Club** in **Louisiana** raised more than \$13,000 for the Louisiana Lions Camp, the Louisiana Eye Foundation, local scholarships and many other civic and children's functions during a two-day auction.

The **Easton Lions Club** in **Pennsylvania** held its 30th annual wrestling classic this year. The Easton Lions have contributed about \$200,000 to the community since the beginning of the wrestling classic and annual attendance ranges from 800 to 1,000 fans.

Lions District 25A took 36 volunteers from the Midwest on its 10th annual eyeglass mission to Mexico. The volunteers partner with local Lions, student nurses and optometrists to fit as many people with eyeglasses as possible.

The **Boston Host Lions Club** sold chocolate bunnies in the lobby of the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. They call the fundraiser Bunnies for Babies and the proceeds benefit the pediatric ward of the hospital.

The **Coon Rapids Lions Club** in **Minnesota** visited 11 elementary schools and provided at least one new book to each student. This program supports literacy, which is the cornerstone to success in school.

Lions District 39W conducted an Opening Eyes clinic in **Cascade, Idaho**. The 26 volunteers provided more than 100 volunteer hours to screen 98 Special Olympics athletes. Several eye doctors and medical personnel assisted. In all, 50 athletes received prescription glasses and 35 received sunglasses.

The **Clarenville Lions Club** in **Newfoundland, Canada**, presented a plaque of appreciation to the Clarenville Area Co-operative Society. The two organizations operate a 50-50 lottery program that has raised about \$258,000 for 106 individual charities since April of 2007.

The village of **South Elgin, Illinois**, declared March 3, 2010, Lions Club Day in honor of the **South Elgin Lions Club**. The group participates in 25 local events each year including distributing 225 Christmas baskets in 2009 and selling rain barrels to the public.

Lion Richard Hobart of the **Redondo Beach Lions Club** in **California** has collected 16,000 pairs of eyeglasses to date. The glasses are processed at a center in Vallejo, California, and distributed worldwide.

The **Durand Lions Club** in **Illinois** planted several trees, including a ginkgo, in honor of then-International President Eberhard J. Wirfs. Members of the club also paid for and built a shelter house in Saelens Park as well as financed a second shelter project.

The **Spokane Central Lions Club** in **Washington** honored local members of the high school debate team as they have for more than 15 years. This year, 35 students from seven schools showed their talents, received awards and received lunch.

The **Brandon-Forrestdale, Middlebury and Vergennes Lions Clubs** in **Vermont** teamed up to organize a Food from the Heart food drive on Valentine's Day. About 7,000 pounds of food and nearly \$2,000 was collected in 2009. In 2010, more than 25,000 pounds and \$10,000 was collected.

The **Largo Lions Club** of **Florida** and **Tosayamada Lions** of **Japan** celebrated 40 years of twinning. This year, 12 high school students, an assistant principal, an English teacher and six dignitaries from Japan traveled to Largo and were hosted by local families. The visitors attended high school classes, watched demonstrations by the fire and police departments, visited a museum, sunbathed and went to Walt Disney World.

Four Lions clubs in **Georgia** hosted a barbecue for about 300 people during the sixth-annual Alstrom Syndrome International Family and Medical Conference. The **Cleveland, Union County, Snellville and Towns County Lions Clubs** served attendees from 40 states and 20 countries.

CLUB BRIEFINGS

ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lions from **District 20N** and Lions Clubs International Foundation presented a check for \$156,000 to the University of Buffalo and the Ira Ross Eye Institute at the Lions State Convention in **Buffalo, New York**. The money will fund equipment and technology improvements for the institute.

The **Bellbrook Lions Club** in **Ohio** teamed up with Goodwill stores to collect used eyeglasses. Lion Jerry Wannemacher made the 24 collection boxes and picked up all the glasses every seven to eight weeks. Since March of 2008, this effort collected almost 10,000

pairs of glasses and other clubs have become involved as well.

The **Nestucca Valley Lions Club** in **Oregon** collected 514 pounds of food and \$300 in donations this March. The event will now be an annual event in Tillamook County.

The **Chester Lions Club** in **New Jersey** donated \$3,380 to the Chester Township Police Department to upgrade its communication system. The money will pay for a digital radio. In the past, the club has donated funds towards bullet-proof vests, computer upgrades and a new vehicle.

The **Knowlton Lions Club** in **Quebec, Canada**, held a car wash this spring. The club washed more than 125 vehicles and raised \$650.

Lions in **District 22C** celebrated Arbor Day by planting a ginkgo tree at Lions Camp Merrick in southern Maryland. Located on the Potomac River, the camp serves blind, deaf and diabetic children from throughout the Washington, D.C., and Maryland area.

We can't think of a single reason why a Strides Walk would not benefit your community.

We can only think of the many reasons it would.

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Download Strides publications on the Web at www.lionsclubs.org



strides
LIONS WALK FOR DIABETES AWARENESS

CLUB BRIEFINGS

ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALENDAR

2010 UPCOMING EVENTS

ANNIVERSARIES SEPTEMBER 2010

85 Years: Arlington Heights and Palatine, Ill.; Garret, Ind.; Mankato, Minn.; Corning and Albany & Troy, N.Y.

80 Years: Okawville, Ill.; Lexington, Mo.; Hope, Ind.; Lewisburg, Ohio; Woodsboro, Texas

75 Years: Pine Bluff Downtown, Ark.; Medina and Twin Cities, N.Y.; Abbeville, Bamberg, Carrollton and Holly Hill, S.C.; Olympia Host, Wash.

50 Years: Malta and Streamwood, Ill.; Poway, Calif.; Belgrade, Minn.; Xenia, Ohio; Chandler, Texas; Sayner Saw Lake, Wis.; Rossburn, Manitoba, CAN.; Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia, CAN.

25 Years: Orange Beach, Ala.; Chauvin, La.; Kerkhoven, Minn.; Belfast, N.Y.; Edgerton, Ohio; Berlin and Nelson, Wis.; Hudson, Ontario, CAN.

HIGHER KEYS ISSUED DURING MAY 2010

Key of Nations (100 Members)

- Lion A. K. M. Shofiullah, Chittagong Progressive Star, Rep. of Bangladesh

Key of State (75 Members)

- Lion Robert Martin, Chesterfield, Mich.

Grand Master Key (50 Members)

- Lion Russell Gorsuch, New Albany, Ohio

Senior Master Key (25 Members)

- Lion Marilyn Hye, Southlake, Texas

- Lion Becky Whitenack, Judson, Texas
- Lion Wesley Smith, Pixley, Calif.
- Lion George Schlangen, Richmond, Minn.
- Lion David Blackstead, Bismarck Capital City, N.D.
- Lion Thomas Weatherd, Tescott, Kan.
- Lion Barclay Prindle, Sharon, Conn.
- Lion John Brust, Valley Park, Miss.
- Lion James McMillon, Charleston Gold Dome, W. Va.
- Lion Donald Uvanitte, Quincy, Mass.
- Lion S. Bagirathan, Dehiwala Metro, Rep. of Sri Lanka
- Lion Satish Narang, Ambala Central, India
- Lion Ram Omar, Kanpur, India
- Lion Nimmi Sandhu, Chandigarh Host, India
- Lion Kamal Jain, Ranchi East, India
- Lion K. S. Kannan, Chennai Padi Heaven City, India
- Lion P. Murugan, Chennai Leo Residency, India
- Lion R. Yogaprakash, Chennai Leo Residency, India
- Lion Mahmoud Al Maghray, Al Rehab, Arab Rep. of Egypt

ON THE WEB

If you're looking for a way to show Lions how they're part of a global organization, look no further than the LCI Web site. Go to www.lionclubs.org and click on the Our Impact tab. You'll see quantitative and qualitative ways Lions are making a difference in the lives of their neighbors and those on the other side of the globe.

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER 23-26

Senior Lions Leadership Institute/Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Islands of the Pacific Ocean
WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

SEPTEMBER 23-25

USA/Canada Lions Forum
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, USA

SEPTEMBER 30

Deadline for the Club and District Team Excellence Awards

INFORMATION

IN MEMORIAM

International Director **Enrico Cesarotti**, of Rome, Italy, who was serving his second year on the International Board of Directors, died in June. A member of the Roma Castelli Romani Lions Club since 1983, Director Cesarotti was in the management and quality consulting industry. A Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow, he was active on many levels of the association, including serving as a Campaign SightFirst I and II district coordinator and as an instructor for Lions Leadership Institutes. The recipient of the Ambassador of Good Will Award as well as many other hon-

ors, Director Cesarotti also served as the Europa Forum international relations chair.

Past International Director **Dr. Barry L. Cohen**, of Claremont, Republic of South Africa, died. A dental surgeon, he was elected to serve a two-year term on the International Board of Directors at the association's 55th international convention in Mexico City, Mexico, in 1972. He was also an editor of the South African edition of LION Magazine and served as president of his state dental association.

FOR THE RECORD

As of June 30, 2010, Lions Clubs International had 1,338,803 members in 46,168 clubs and 743 districts in 206 countries and geographic areas.

CONVENTION COUNTDOWN

2011	Seattle, Washington July 4-8
2012	Busan, Korea June 22-26
2013	Hamburg, Germany July 5-9
2014	Toronto, Ontario, Canada July 4-8
2015	Honolulu, Hawaii June 26-30

23rd Annual Lions International Peace Poster Contest



Encourage the youth in your community to express their feelings of peace, while gaining exposure for your club. Participate in this year's Lions International Peace Poster Contest.

Start now. Purchase a 2010-11 Peace Poster Contest Kit (PPK-1), which contains all the materials needed to sponsor one contest.

Kits are sold through the Club Supplies Sales Department, January 15 - October 1, 2010, at International Headquarters. A kit must be purchased for each contest sponsored. Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery; outside the U.S. may take longer.



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THANK YOU

THE LIONS CHANGED MY LIFE

A Canine Hearing Aid

At the Henderson County Public Library, Kim Compton's dog isn't in her office just for his good looks and constant companionship. Mario, a Lhaso Apso mix rescued from an animal shelter, is on the job with Compton. The longtime library employee was born deaf and Mario is her hearing aid dog, obtained with the assistance of the Hendersonville Lions Club in North Carolina. Her mother had measles during pregnancy, which contributed to Compton's hearing loss.

"At first, I thought everybody was 'normal' like me until perhaps in early school," Compton said. "I realized that I am so different from others."

Trained by International Hearing Dog Inc. in Colorado, Mario is the first hearing aid dog sponsored by Lions in North Carolina, a partnership that's benefitted Compton immensely. He alerts Compton by tapping her leg. He recognizes a bevy of sounds that Compton has never experienced, such as cars coming near her, people entering her office, the doorbell ringing or a faucet left running.

Q&A: Kim Compton

LION Magazine: What made you interested in getting a hearing aid dog?

Kim Compton: Before the death of my previous pet dogs, I depended on the dogs as my best friends. David Sentell, my neighbor who is a member of the Hendersonville Lions Club, mentioned to me about the hearing aid dog and that he was allowed in rented apartments and workplaces where the pet dog would not be allowed. Lions here had done much for the blind but nothing for the deaf. They approached me about the chance that I might get a hearing dog.

LM: What was it like meeting Mario?

KC: I was somewhat nervous and maybe a little apprehensive because I never had a hearing dog nor been around one. Mario's ambition spurs me on greatly. Since Mario arrived, I realize there are so many sounds that I can't hear that Mario alerts me to. For example, when someone is walking in the hallway, Mario alerts me. Amazing how he can alert me to the sound from the bush that birds are hiding there!

LM: How have Lions improved your quality of life?

KC: With their wonderful support and spirit, my quality of life has been improved. The club's awareness of hearing-impaired people has been greatly recognized.



Kim Compton and hearing aid dog, Mario, are thankful to the Hendersonville Lions Club for bringing them together.

Lions: have you heard from a beneficiary or a recipient of your kindness, service or charity? Tell us about the feedback you receive from those whose lives you've changed for the better. E-mail a brief description of your correspondence to lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org. Please include "Thanks and Appreciation" in the subject line.

DONOR PROFILE

Name: William A. Wildhack Jr., club treasurer
Club: Arlington Host Lions Club, Virginia
Years as a Lion: 20
Profession: Attorney, IRS Agent/Special Agent

Why did you become a Lion?

"What attracted me to Lions is the emphasis on sight and what we as Lions can and do for those in need. Without corrective lenses, I am about 20/1000. Eyesight has always been very important to me, probably because mine isn't so good."

Why do you support or participate in LCIF?

"I became a Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow because I know that every minute of every day, someone goes blind and 80 percent of all blindness is preventable. The Melvin Jones Fellowship is important because it recognizes a humanitarian donation from an individual or on behalf of an individual."

How does your club support LCIF?

"Our club got involved from day one. A year or two after I joined the club, the first SightFirst campaign began. It was clear right away that this was something very important that our club had to get involved with it. It feels really good to know that by raising US\$57,000 for SightFirst, our Lions club saved more than 9,500 individuals from blindness. In fact, I still get choked up when I read or hear updates about the individuals reached through our SightFirst program."



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LAST ROAR



Photo by Bo Gray

HIGH-LIGHT OF SUMMER FAIR

The Lexington Lions Club Bluegrass Fair is a tradition in July in Kentucky. Nearly 65,000 crowd the fairgrounds each year and the Wheel of Destiny (above) is a popular attraction. The fair also features the Kentucky Strongarm Classic, a corn hole competition, motorcycle stunts, a petting barnyard, a magic show, a bull riding rodeo, a beauty pageant and, of course, bluegrass music.

Hawaiian Kings Tour

15 Days Travel with other Lions departing February 28, 2011 from **\$1928***

Spend 5 nights in Waikiki Beach on Oahu; 3 nights on the garden isle of Kauai; 2 nights on the valley isle of Maui in Kaanapali Beach; and on the "Big-Island-of-Hawaii" you'll have one night in the orchid capital in Hilo, and on the other side of the island, where the sun shines almost every day, 3 nights in the sleepy fishing village of Kailua-Kona. Escorted sightseeing includes a city tour of Honolulu, Diamond Head, Punchbowl Crater and Pearl Harbor; on Kauai the Wailua River Boat Cruise & Fern Grotto; on Maui, The Old Whaling Capital of Lahaina, and Iao Valley Excursion; in Hilo a city tour including an Orchid Nursery, Rainbow Falls, a Giant Fern Tree Forest and Banyan tree Drive. And on a scenic drive across the island to Kona, you'll visit the Black Sand Beaches, Volcanoes National Park, Kilauea Crater and more! Includes first class resort hotels, interisland flights, transfers, baggage handling, sightseeing on every island, and a Hawaiian escort.

Ancient Egypt

10 Days Travel with other Lions departing March 13, 2011 from **\$1716***

Tour Cairo (city tour); visit the Egyptian Museum; explore Giza; the Pyramids of Giza, Sphinx, the Great Pyramid and Memphis, Sakkara, and more. Take a first class sleeper train to Aswan, plus a 4-day Nile Cruise aboard the *ms Crown Jewel*. Visit temples at Kom Ombo, Isis, Osiris, cross the locks on the Nile in Esna, and sail to Luxor. Visit the West Bank, Thebes, Karnak area, and stay at a Hurghada beach front resort on the Red Sea. Spend your final night in Cairo for a last day of shopping or sightseeing before your flight home from Cairo. 18 meals included.

Save on this Repositioning Cruise – Departs March 6, 2011

Mediterranean Cruise + Italy

23 Days from **\$2248***

MSC Cruise Lines has to get the new "state-of-the-art" MSC Poesia from Ft. Lauderdale, to Italy. Launched in 2008, it weighs in at 92,000 tons, a perfect size for this trans-Atlantic cruise.

Fly to Ft. Lauderdale, have 2 days at sea; first port: San Juan, PR. Escape the last of winter in the warm Caribbean waters. Stop in St. John's, Antigua and Port Castries, St. Lucia before the transatlantic crossing on this elegant ship. On March 18 visit Funchal (Madeira), Portugal. Three Spanish ports include: Malaga, Alicante, and Barcelona. Disembark in Genoa for your six-day tour of Italy including Genoa, Pisa, Montecatini, Florence, Orieto, Rome, and Vatican City. Sightseeing includes Leaning Tower of Pisa, Tuscany region, Ancient Rome, Sistine Chapel and more! Add \$200 for outside & \$500 for balcony cabins

Ireland

12 Days Travel with other Lions departing May 26, 2011 from **\$1558***

Visit the best of Ireland starting in Dublin with your city tour including Trinity College (housing the Book of Kells), Dublin Castle, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Cork, Blarney Castle, Killarney (boat cruise), Kenmare, and Tralee. Drive the "Ring of Kerry", tour the restored Guinness Mansion, and Bunratty Castle, built in 1425. Visit the Cliffs of Moher, Galway, Connemara, Sligo and the Bundoran area, plus Enniskillen, Ulster, Belfast and the Giant's Causeway.

Alaska Cruise

And Pacific Northwest Vacation with Yellowstone National Park!

15 Days Travel with other Lions departing June 18, 2011 from **\$2198***

Includes a 7-day deluxe Alaska Cruise with Holland America Line and a 7-day Pacific Northwest vacation with YMT. Your group will fly into Seattle for a night; then city tour of Seattle before boarding the five-star *ms Oosterdam*. Ports include: Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, spectacular Glacier Bay, and Victoria, B.C. After the cruise take a scenic drive across Washington State and Montana. Spend two days at Yellowstone National Park, visit Grand Teton National Park; Jackson Hole, Wyoming; and in Utah: the Great Salt Lake, Mormon Tabernacle, and more.

* Per person, double occupancy. Airfare is extra, call for details. Lions Clubs International not responsible for any losses incurred.

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