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Lions Clubs International

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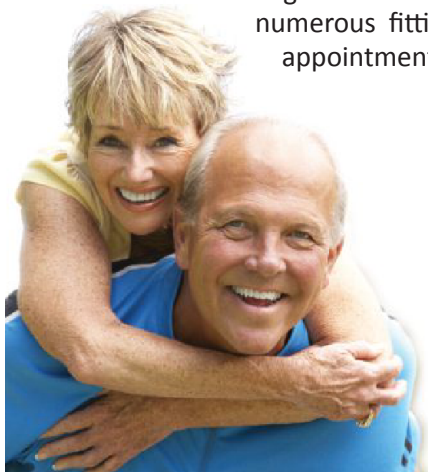
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A Message From Our President



Wayne A. Madden
Lions Clubs
International President

Remember the ‘International’ in Lions Clubs

One of the great privileges of serving as an international officer is the opportunity to travel the world and meet people from many nations and backgrounds. It's been said that people are the same everywhere. I can tell you that's true. People want comfort, security and happiness for their families. It's also true that Lions everywhere are basically cut from the same cloth. Our clubs provide many forms of service, but they serve in the same way—meeting the various needs of their own communities.

I point out our basic similarity as Lions as part of my encouragement to Lions to take pride in being part of Lions Clubs Interna-

tional and to participate in it. Join Lions worldwide in the Global Service Action Campaigns: aid the blind in October, feed the hungry in December/January and improve the environment in April. Take part in this year's literacy campaign. Contribute to LCIF. Use social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter to communicate with other Lions or at least to gain ideas from others.

It's great to focus on our communities. Let's keep doing that. But we also belong to the worldwide community. We are a global village. When I was young, my parents were very welcoming at the dinner table. Maybe my mom's brother's family would show up at dinner time or other relatives materialized. That didn't bother my parents in the least. There would always be enough food. I'm sure that small-town hospitality still exists. But because of the media and technological advances in communication we now know that many people far from our hometown are in need, and we must display a global hospitality. We need to feed the hungry, help the blind see and teach reading skills, which are so important to success in life. We need to serve not only our neighbor but also other places and other people.

Remember the words of Helen Keller, who knew a few things about trust and faith: "When we do the best we can, we never know what miracle is wrought in our life, or in the life of another." In A World of Service, we Lions transform lives, communities and the global village.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wayne A. Madden".

Wayne A. Madden
Lions Clubs International President



A member of the Baggao Lions Club in the Philippines reads to a child as part of the Reading Action Program, President Madden's literacy campaign.

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Photo by Nicole Franco



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WE SERVE

MISSION STATEMENT OF
LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL:

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

CONTACTING THE LION

Have a story idea or photo? Want to comment on a story or make a suggestion for LION editors? Contact the LION at lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org or at 630-468-6909 or 630-468-7023. For change of address, non-receipt of the magazine and other subscription issues, contact 630-468-6982 or stats@lionsclubs.org. For all other inquiries call 630-571-5466.

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Convention Countdown

Hamburg, Germany
July 5-9, 2013



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

LONGTIME DREAM COMESTRUE

Manuel Castro Alonso was a stone craftsman with a dream. A Lion in Spain since 1972, Castro created an impressive 20-foot statue dedicated to Lions and erected it on a mountain. The statue "represents the Lions' integration of people—men, women and children. It's about a social movement," says his son, also named Manuel. Castro wanted to present a replica of the statue to the headquarters of Lions Clubs International in Oak Brook, Illinois. Castro was unable to make the trip, but in April his son did the honors. The 21-inch replica, a testament both to the importance of Lions to their communities and the family bonds among many Lions, decorates the LCI lobby. "I believe he will be very happy," says his son.



Manuel Castro Alonso stands next to a replica of his father's statue at Lions Clubs International headquarters.



LIONS HONORED AS CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

Lions from the United States and around the world will meet with top U.S. officials on October 2 to discuss mutual areas of interest and how Lions can best serve their neighbors. Lions Day at the White House, a daylong briefing co-hosted by LCI and the White House, will provide an opportunity for Lions and government officials to share information and ideas and honor Lions who are Champions of Change. The event will be streamed live at www.whitehouse.gov/live, and LCI will tweet from the event using the hashtag #WHLions.

The morning will include an in-depth briefing session on areas of interest to Lions with key government agency officials from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Education and others. Lions who have been selected to represent the association's 1.35 million members as Champions of Change will be recognized and participate in a panel discussion in the afternoon.

Lions around the world are encouraged to participate online and follow the event on Twitter. More details will be posted at www.lionsclubs.org as they become available.

LIONS, U.N. COLLABORATE

Lions Clubs International is exploring ways to collaborate with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. LCI recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the U.N. office to further support Lions' efforts to assist people in need after disasters. Possible areas of collaboration include introducing innovative technologies such as solar lighting and energy-efficient cooking stoves, providing emergency/transitional shelters and ensuring access to clean water and sanitation. LCI would offer Lions' service and expertise, not financial support, to the U.N. office.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

BY THE NUMBERS

16

Members of the Washington Lions Club in Missouri who drove 250 miles to Joplin to spend 2 ½ days helping rebuild a home destroyed in the May 2011 tornado.

5

Service clubs, including the Taft Lions and the Taft Midway Sunset Lions, that supported a presentation of a county-wide drug task force on the impact of meth in Kern County in California.

56

Seating capacity of the new passenger bus purchased by the Millet & District Lions in Alberta, Canada, to transport sports teams, seniors and schoolchildren.

4

Number of Saturdays it typically takes for the Dell Rapids Lions in Iowa to fill a trailer with paper it collects for recycling, a project begun in 2008.



ident of the San Diego Lions Club. That year Connolly became the first woman to win tennis' grand slam. Ironically, her tennis career ended the next July when a startled Colonel Merryboy slammed against a concrete mixer truck, and Connolly's right leg was crushed.

30

Wheelchairs available for loan to those in need by Milford Lions in Delaware. The club also provides hospital beds, walkers, canes and more.

200

Canoeists and kayakers who dipped their oars in Staffordville Lake during the Stafford Lions Club's Moonlight Paddle in Connecticut.

19

Veterans from the VA Medical Center in Menlo Park, California, who took part in a daylong fishing trip sponsored by Lions Veterans Charities and escorted by Foster City Lions and others.

16

Years that Cupertino Host Lions in California have annually filled a trailer with donated goods to assist needy families in New Mexico's Navajo Nation. The project began after Lions Roger Reimers and David Lee, returning from a hunting trip, aided a Navajo family involved in a deadly car accident and discovered when visiting the victim's family that many households lacked basic items.

59 YEARS AGO IN THE LION

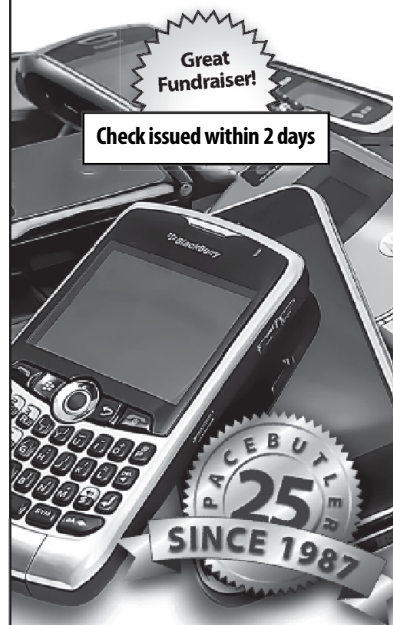
OCTOBER 1953

Tennis great Maureen Connolly, 18, returns home to San Diego after winning Wimbledon and receives a bale of alfalfa for her pet horse, Colonel Merryboy, from William Sample, pres-

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

ONE OF US

What started out as just a part-time job to help her pay for college turned into an experience that would change Malia Ushijima's direction in life. When Ushijima, now 22, began working for an optometrist close to four years ago, she was a business major at the University of Hawaii. After accompanying her boss on Lions' children's vision screenings, Ushijima was deeply affected—so much so that she decided to become an optometrist. She joined the Waiakea Lions, and then led the creation of a club at her university, chartered in August 2011. Since then Ushijima has helped the Mauna Kea Lions Club grow and thrive. She's also already spoken at two USA/Canada Lions Leadership Forums, helped launch a Leo club and received numerous accolades for her Lions' accomplishments.



Malia Ushijima conducts a vision screening training for a fellow Lion.

WHY DID THOSE FIRST VISION SCREENINGS HAVE SUCH A STRONG EFFECT ON YOU? It amazed me that there were kids as old as third grade who couldn't see well. I wondered how they had studied or learned at school for all those years. Some of the kids would come to our office to receive eyeglasses and they were so happy when they could see! I really liked having a direct impact on helping them.

IS THAT WHAT LED YOU TO DECIDE TO BECOME AN OPTOMETRIST? Yes, and also my boss, Cedric Mitsui, who's been my mentor and got me involved with the Lions. Watching him work with patients and volunteer with the Lions has been a big inspiration to me. He taught me what it is to do community service, to think beyond myself to all the people out there who can be helped.

WAS CHARTERING THE MAUNA KEA CLUB A BIG TASK? It was a stressful time. I had only been a Lion for a year and I had to coordinate with school and work. But I really wanted to start a club with more people near my age so we could work on projects that matched our interests and would help us develop as leaders.

WHAT IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP LIKE? Our club is 50 percent college students, and we also have several families as well as some older members. The students have even recruited some of their family members! It's fun having three generations of members.

WHAT'S BEEN YOUR FAVORITE PROJECT? We do a lot of vision screenings at schools. We drive to schools out in the country, even if there are only 10 kids there. Those are the people who really appreciate that we take the time to go to their schools.

DO YOU HAVE TIME FOR ANY OTHER INTERESTS? I love the Food Network and I like to experiment with cooking gourmet food. My favorite thing to cook is Italian food—bruschetta, pasta, risotto—whatever I can come up with.

HOW IS IT LIVING IN ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACES ON EARTH? The ocean is across the street from my house! I love to paddleboard and take my dogs to the beach. I'll go away to optometry school, but I'll come back home to stay after that.

Know a Lion who you think deserves a bit of recognition? Email us a brief description of your Lion and the reason you're nominating him or her at lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org. Please include "One of Us" in the subject line.

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

CLUB OF THE MONTH

MEMPHIS SOUTHERN COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY CAMPUS CLUB, TENNESSEE

YEAR FOUNDED: 2004

MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS: The Memphis Southern College of Optometry (SCO) Lions are a high-energy bunch of 167 future optometrists. At each monthly meeting they select a recipient of Lions-sponsored eye care or eyeglasses. Meetings conclude with a guest speaker from a sight-related organization.

SEEING THE BIG PICTURE: The Lions don't wait until graduation to help the visually impaired. For World Sight Day, SCO Lions partnered with other student organizations to raise more than \$2,000 for the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness.

NOT YOUR TYPICAL SPRING BREAK: It's a natural fit for the Lions to support and participate in the Student Volunteers in Optometric Service to Humanity (SVOSH). Just after each spring semester, SVOSH coordinates service trips to developing countries to provide vision services and eyeglasses (many of which are donated by Lions clubs). Lions clubs across the United States support the group's efforts, and Lions at each destination provide assistance.

FUNDRAISING GOALS THAT SCORE: Each fall the Lions sell tickets to a Mississippi RiverKings minor league ice hockey game to raise funds. Last year the club extended the hockey theme to a Halloween fundraiser, decorating the campus Eye Center and donning hockey uniform costumes.

COMING SOON TO A CLUB NEAR YOU: The SCO Lions chartered with 25 members but the club has become the largest in its district, inducting more than 100 new members last year. By the time their three years in school are completed, students gain a love for Lions' service that they carry with them as professionals to clubs around the country.

WHY SERVE? "Being Lions allows us to use our skills to help those in need. There is no better gift in life than lending a helping hand to others, and as Lions we are encouraged to maximize our potential."

—Lion Ellen Elmore



—Lion Ellen Elmore

SCO Campus Lions get into the hockey spirit for a Halloween fundraiser at the school's Eye Center.

OVERHEARD

"I had no idea and I was really confused on who it was. Then I heard his voice and I'm like now I know who it was. It was the first time that I've seen him in a while."

—Student Leah North on a live video chat with her dad, Robert North, serving in Iraq with the U.S. Air Force. The West Liberty Lions Club in Ohio helped purchase the video equipment for Leah's school. From wtov9.com

"We are basically anything having to do with the prevention of blindness. We are the eye people."

—Donna Talley of the Farmington Evening Lions Club in New Mexico in *The Daily Times*.

"We're going to give it all away."

—Vernon Gordy of the Rincon Lions Club in Georgia on the proceeds of the sale of the clubhouse. From the *Effingham Herald*.

ON THE WEB

There are more than 4,500 photos on LCI's Flickr photostream! Upload photos, see what clubs around the world are up to and view official LCI photos at www.flickr.com/photos/lionsclubsorg. Make a comment on a photo or search by keyword to find just what you're looking for. Flickr photos can also easily be shared on Facebook and Twitter.

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IDEAS THAT ROAR

BIG IMPACT WITH LIONS CLUB SERVICE PROJECTS

THINK AHEAD

Clubs can thrive today even in a tough economy but they need to plan ahead for contingencies and adapt to new ideas to stay relevant. Be flexible.

SERVICE IDEA INVOLVE CHILDREN



Sativa Ogram, 10, shows off the Valentine's Day cards she made for nursing home residents.

Lil' Lions Bring Smiles

When Tiffany Gallegos joined the 33-member Enterprise, California, Lions Club last year, she brought with her more than the usual enthusiasm of a new Lion. She brought a brand-new opportunity for Lions to serve a segment of their community too often overlooked.

"I have worked as a nurse for many years, encountering some patients who never saw children. They didn't even have visitors to come see them. When my own nieces and nephews would come in, they'd get so excited," Gallegos recalls.

She says it wasn't difficult to find children to participate in what is now known as the Lil' Lions project. There are nearly 20 regular little volunteers, who visit nursing homes on regularly scheduled visits. "The kids are never timid," Gallegos points out. "They are so excited and jump right in." The visits usually last an hour-and-a-half, and visitors include babies, toddlers and pre-teens who are usually accompanied by parents and Lions.

The only cost to the club is around \$60 for balloons and arts and crafts supplies for four nursing home visitations, says Lion Tyler Spencer. Four other clubs in his district have already expressed interest in joining the Lil' Lions program.

"The idea is to teach children to offer something bigger than themselves," Gallegos stresses. "As each child embarks on their 12th birthday, we inform them about our Leo club, the Peace Poster contest, student speaker contest, community service, friendship, leadership and the opportunity to make a difference in someone else's life." She also involves the kids in other service projects, such as a recent park cleanup.

Parents whose children participate notice a difference in their children. One father told Gallegos that his young daughter had grown more interactive and confident with her peers since becoming a Lil' Lion. Parents, too, become more interested in community service. Three have already joined the Enterprise Lions Club because of the program.

"It's fun stuff. I like spending time with people. I make friends," Gallegos heard from Alexis Wright, 8. Most of the children—at least those old enough to verbalize—echo the same reaction. "The kids come back to me with a lot of different comments," Gallegos explains. In addition to kids telling her how much fun they had, she hears another common refrain: "I miss the patients. When can we go back?"

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‘Mother River’ Smothered with Lions’ Love

The man-made Horikawa River flows through the heart of Nagoya, Japan’s fourth-largest city. The river glides past Nagoya Castle, built in the early 1600s during the samurai era and famous for its “shachihoko,” the golden dolphins that adorn the roof of its castle tower. The reigning shogun had ordered the waterway to be built to bring lumber to construct his indomitable fortress. Since then, the river has enabled countless ships to transport rice, vegetables, fish and salt to the city. The waterway has been so central to the city’s identity that residents fondly refer to it as the “Mother River.”

Sadly, rapid industrialization in the first part of the 20th century polluted the river. By the 1960s, the Horikawa had degenerated into a foul, stinking flow choked with sludge. The river was a civic embarrassment. The water quality was so fetid that the “people of Nagoya were ashamed and did not want to deal with it,” according to the Japanese LION.

Lions finally stepped in. The first step in the river’s revitalization occurred in 1999 when 30 Lions clubs in Nagoya carried out a signature campaign to divert clean water from the Kiso River to the Horikawa River. Lions collected nearly 200,000 signatures in less than two months.

That was just the beginning. Spearheaded by the Nagoya Horikawa Lions Club, Lions and others reached out to business leaders, universities and other community groups to work with government officials on the river’s renewal. Among the initiatives were a massive cleanup campaign, the planting of 10,000 tulips along the river, a photo contest, a symposium and a large gathering of elementary school students in support of the river. In recent years, the City of Nagoya has dredged up sludge in the river and repaired its embankments.

Nagoya is a city of resilience and rebirth. Much of the city, including most of the castle, was destroyed in 1945 during the World War II air raids, but the tower was rebuilt in 1959 as Nagoya steadily rebuilt. The once dirty and smelly Horikawa now flows with dignity.

The river’s rebirth is symbolized by the annual flower hanging basket project. From Sept. 28 to Oct. 3, hundreds of residents including Lions gather in a square to make hanging flower baskets that then decorate the riverside of Horikawa. At the end of October, the baskets are gratefully returned to the volunteers, who use them to decorate their own balconies and gardens.



Residents hang flower baskets along the Horikawa River.



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According to The New York Times, the bathroom can be the most dangerous room in the home. Hundreds of thousands of falls and accidents happen each year.*

FACT: 1 in 3 adults 65+ fall each year, and falls are the leading cause of injury death as well as the most common cause of nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma.**

*BAKALAR, NICHOLAS. "Watch Your Step While Washing Up." New York Times 16, Aug. 2011, New York Edition ed., Section D sec.: D7. Web **CDC - Center for Disease Control and Prevention



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2 AFRICA SOUTH AFRICA



We Serve Children in South Africa




The needs of children often are at the forefront of service of Lions in South Africa. A child rides high, (top left) well, halfway high, in the saddle of a miniature horse at the Helen Bishop Home, an orthopedic rehabilitation home supported by the Kimberley Lions. A youth gets vertical at a camp for diabetic children (top right) in the Kwazulu-Natal Midlands organized by Hilton Lions; campers are sponsored by many clubs in District 410 C. Children happily learn at Tlameleng School for children with disabilities (bottom left), supported by Kimberley Lions. The arts skills taught at the Embocraft Training Centre (bottom right), a project of the Gillitts-Camperdown and Kloof Lions, enable many parents to make crafts that support their families.

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Thursday is Sight Day

by Jay Copp

Photos by Nicole Franco



It's three hours by car to Mexico City, nearly nine to the Texas border and an even wider gap in lifestyle and culture for the expatriates who relocate to San Miguel de Allenda.



A Lion checks the correctness of a prescription.

Chuck and Jean Yeager retired to San Miguel a decade ago after raising four children in Wisconsin, Texas and Delaware. Besides a moderate cost of living, the historic, hillside city offers quaint, narrow cobblestone streets, gorgeous 16th-century Spanish architecture and warm, sunny weather. It's a good life, and like other members of the San Miguel De Allende Lions Club, many of them also expatriates, Chuck counts his blessings and gives back.

Formerly its director, Yeager volunteers at the Clinic, the Lions club's eyeglass clinic. Every Thursday from about 8:30 a.m. to noon the doors swing open, and children and adults receive eye exams and eyeglasses. Children are not charged, and adults pay 25 or 50 percent

of the cost or pay nothing, too, if they are impoverished. Since 1992, the club has overseen 17,000 eye exams and dispensed 14,000 recycled eyeglasses.

Most of the Clinic's clients get there by bus from a 15-mile radius. They hear about it from word-of-mouth or radio announcements, aired free of charge to the club. Without the clinic, "they'd do without glasses. They don't have any money... You have kids who couldn't see the blackboard," says Yeager, 75, who was an engineer for a food processing company that supplied McDonald's. "I've traveled all over the world. So many people live in sheer misery. I'm so lucky to have been born in the United States. It's just a good feeling when you can help someone."

(More photos on next page. Story continues on page 22.)

Commenting on this photo, Chuck Yeager says, "Yes, that's our [typical] customer." The man is from outside town and probably raises horses. If not destitute, adults pay for a portion of the cost of the glasses. "We ask them to contribute. That helps them respect the glasses and take better care of them," says Lion Skip Palmer, 65.



Lion Monica Brown (far left) checks in a patient at the Clinic, and Lion Carol Walk (back row, left) talks to a patient about her new glasses. The Clinic typically handles 20 to 25 patients every Thursday. The club also tests for diabetes at the Clinic.

Thursday is Sight Day



Optometrist Alberto Carrera tests a patient's vision.



Carrera writes a prescription. Lions say the grateful humility of the Mexicans makes their service at the Clinic particularly gratifying. "I like people who are nice. The kids are so bright and cheery," says Palmer, formerly a musician and owner of an air conditioning company in Hawaii. "There's a payoff every day. I remember one couple. They must have been in their 70s. They both were fitted and they both were happy with their glasses. They looked at each other and got a kick out of it."

The club tries to find a frame a patient likes. "It's no different here. The older people are not so picky. The young people can be picky," says Yeager. Back at his office, at no charge, Carrera will cut a lens to fit a frame that a youth wants.



Walk makes sure a girl is happy with her glasses.

Christine Eyre, clinic director, brings glasses to a boy. Eyre was once an office manager in England, where she organized a fair in the moat of the Tower of London to raise funds for a children's charity. Before coming to San Miguel, she taught math in California and helped build homes for the poor in Tijuana.





The club has 35,000 eyeglasses in its computerized inventory, made possible by the Texas Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center and by the individual collection efforts of Lions and others. The computer is programmed to provide the four closest matches to the prescription. Glasses are stored 40 to a box, and a pair can be found in under a minute. Adults will be given eyeglasses that may not be a perfect match to their prescription. If the club cannot perfectly match the prescription for a child, its Lee Page Memorial Eyeglass Fund pays for the cost of the lenses.



The Lion's clinic is open every Thursday, and people walk in not seeing well and walk out able to do schoolwork or tasks at home or work.

Thursday is Sight Day

Six to eight Lions, including optometrist Alberto Carrera, staff the clinic when it's open. Members leave little to chance. Donations and grants undergird their volunteerism. The Lee Page Memorial Children's Eye-glass Fund takes care of the purchasing of lenses. The Optical, Computer Software and Hardware Fund accounts for the optical refractor and technology equipment. The John Carper Memorial Fund accepts donations for miscellaneous needs.

Then there's the rent for the clinic. That's handled by the Schickel Haen Fund. The Lion that powers that

fund is Jean Schickel, a retired sales representative from the Chicago area. She leads three-day tours of Mexico's cultural, architectural and archeological sights. The fee charged to tourists covers the monthly rent of 5,000 pesos.

Volunteering at the clinic can be routine: the people file in, get examined and go home with their glasses. Then there are the days of tears and joy. "It can get very emotional," says Yeager. "Some people can barely read one line on the eye chart. They're basically blind. When they put the glasses on, their eyes light up."

Yeager uses a hand puppet to entertain children while they wait. When he was still working, while traveling, airline employees often assumed he was the famous test pilot. "They'd say, 'I can't believe it. I can't believe it. It's Chuck Yeager.' ... Once in a while they'd bring me a bottle of wine," he says. Yeager's daughter, Connie, a teacher, once met the test pilot at a teacher's conference. She sent him the photo that was taken with the message: "Look, dad, I'm with the real Chuck Yeager."





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A Lion not exactly straight from central casting, Riley gives motorcycle tours and involves her children when serving as a Lion.



Generation Next

The younger women in clubs today
are not your mother's Lions, bringing youthful energy
and fresh ideas to their clubs.

by Nancy Shepherdson



Twenty-five years ago, something new was added to Lions: women members. The first typical female members were Lions' wives, drawn by the family orientation that Lions Clubs have always encouraged. Increasingly, though, a whole new generation of women is discovering the satisfaction and fun of being Lions and are joining in growing numbers. Nearly a quarter of Lions are now female and almost two-thirds of clubs worldwide report that women are involved in leadership. Female Lions today, particularly those in their 20s, 30s and early 40s, embrace Lions' ideals as never before, bring their clubs a renewed energy and unique service perspective, and often involve their young children in service. For these women, integrating service into a balanced work and family life allows them to become more engaged in creating and sustaining the fabric of their communities.

Finding a New Family

Aro Riley, 41, had never heard of Lions when she saw an article in the local Seal Beach, California, newspaper seeking drivers for St. Patrick's Day. The many Irish pubs in town attract an enthusiastic crowd every year, of which Riley, living just a block away, was well aware. Bagpipers play, revelers dance in the streets and people wait in impossibly long lines for drinks. "That newspaper story resonated with me because I have a rule that I don't drive after two drinks, and they said they would only take people home, not to another bar," she laughs.

Riley, a slim, tanned blonde with a ready laugh, became a Lion shortly after serving as a driver three years ago and has done so every year since. This year the club rented three vans, and Riley worked from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. with a male partner and helped give rides to 150 revelers.

Since then she has also initiated a blood drive simply because she is unable to give blood herself. "The board will OK anything that is beneficial to the community. They gave me a lot of support, too, because our motto is 'No Lion Fails.'"

Almost every weekend, too, brings another project. "We do so much work but we have a lot of fun," she says. Her two oldest children, Alex, 18, who is autistic, and Sarah, 16, often work right by her side as Leos, and her five-year-old, Liam, can't wait to join.

But her Lion life almost didn't happen. A troubled marriage became more strained because her husband believed she should be paid for her volunteer work. They separated soon after she became a Lion but Riley found that she was hardly bereft. "With Lions, I found an amazing new family," she says of the 174 members of the Seal Beach Lions. "During my divorce, they were so helpful. They would even drive me to court when I was having a hard time. And when I needed to move, all my Lions friends just showed up and helped me."

Riley, who gives motorcycle tours to European visitors part-time, aspires to club leadership someday. "I want to teach my children to give instead of receive and I want to inspire them," she explains. And she does not expect any resistance to the idea. "Being a woman and younger isn't something anybody notices in my club."

Stewart:
*“We need to tear down the old ways
and build new ones.”*



The Littlest Lion

Kristina Stewart, 26, is the youngest member of the Upland Host Lions Club in California by a generation. She's single, has no kids, studied education at college, and is part owner of her father's restaurant where she works, Maniac Mike's at the Cable Airport near Upland. The next youngest member of the Upland Host Club is her dad, who was the 2011-12 president and joined a year before she did. Other members of the club, almost all of whom are retired, consider her the “baby of the club,” even though she joined four years ago. She's taken to calling herself “the littlest Lion,” by which she means that she is completely committed to Lionism. “I started helping my dad with fundraisers and I immediately realized that this was what I wanted to do,” she says.

Despite her age, the club has big plans for Stewart. She is now second vice president, a job that was created for her to give her experience and reduce her anxiety as she moves into leadership. In a small club like Upland, though, making changes has been harder than she expected. “When I signed up, everyone was welcoming because everyone thought that a new pair of eyes would be valuable,” she remembers. “But because the club is so old, changes can sound like suicide to some people, so we make gradual changes. I found that there is initially a wall around the old ways. We need to tear down the old ways and build new ones.”

For instance, Stewart noticed that the club's largest annual fundraiser, a fish fry and corn roast, had been experiencing dwindling attendance. She guessed it was because some people just don't like fish. “So we added a five-ounce steak and sold more tickets than ever.” Stewart also recommended that it be made more family-oriented and moved to a park with places for kids to play. Once more, attendance rose. The final suggestion was to partner with the local Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, which didn't pan out, although members of those clubs pledged to volunteer this year. “[Older club members] don't always see my idea or how to implement it,” she says. “I've realized that sometimes I have to do it the old way, but we're building good communications.”

Another idea that has generated universal support is Stewart's drive to start a Leo club. Two female club members, widows of Lions, have agreed to run the Leo club, which will target youths in surrounding communities without a Lions club. “I know I'll lose Leos to college but I'll be creating Lions for other places,” Stewart says. “Ideally, though, this could grow our pool of potential members.” And older members, she says, have become eager to see this new idea come to fruition. “They are already asking ‘When are the Leos going to start?’” she laughs.



Kristina Stewart knows the importance of service, whether it's working at a restaurant or completing a Lions' project.



Lori Short is handy with a camera—the kind that checks a child's vision.



Short:

“The family orientation of Lions was one of the things that motivated me to want to be a Lion.”

A Lions Family

“My profession brought me to Lions,” says Lori Short, 43, a member of the North Liberty Lions Club in Iowa City, Iowa. Many Lions tell a similar story but Short means it literally. She was hired as director of Iowa KidSight in 2002 and two months later became a Lion. The funny thing was, being a Lion was not part of her job description. In fact, she was actively discouraged from becoming a Lion by her management at the time.

But as she settled into her duties of promoting vision screening, she met Lions all over the state. “I immediately felt the responsibility to volunteer by observing Lions in action. I was in my early 30s at the time and felt a real sense of disappointment that I had missed out on more than a decade of being a Lion,” she says. Her daughter was also vision screened around that time and was found to have a cataract, although it turned out not to be a serious condition.

One of Short’s first volunteer projects as a member of the now-dissolved University Hospital Lions was to deliver snacks to the intensive care waiting room of the hospital during the holidays. It confirmed her sense that Lionism was the right choice for her. “People were so grateful that we took the time to chat. We were able to make that horrible experience a little better,” she recalls.

Short, a dynamic leader, went on to become the charter president of the new North Liberty Lions three years ago, joined by her husband, who is also a Lion. Her daughter

now volunteers on many Lion projects, too, including vision screenings. “The family orientation of Lions was one of the things that motivated me to want to be a Lion,” she says. “I wanted to volunteer as a family so I wasn’t spending even more time away from them.”

Short’s most memorable volunteer stint was, as a matter of fact, one in which her whole family became elves for a day along with almost every member of the club. “The North Liberty Community Center asked us to set up a breakfast with Santa,” she explains. “We decided to do it because we didn’t have a visible community activity at the time.” The breakfast was free for community members and the Lions cooked and served wearing elf hats. Even the guy in the Lion suit wore one. “I’m glad I could pass on the importance of volunteering to my daughter [with activities like that],” Short says. She proudly reports that her daughter recently organized a group of friends to do chores around town to raise money for Ronald McDonald House.

Short says that the male/female balance of her new club with 31 members is about 50/50. “Our club is perfectly balanced and we even have five couples with children at home. [The club] has become a way to spend time together as families as well as pass on the ideal of volunteerism to our kids.” As for life balance, Short declares that she’d “rather be busy than bored. The more you volunteer, the fuller you feel.” And that’s a good feeling.



Taking the Lead

Looking back on how she became a Lion, Jennifer Long suspects her husband may have had a hidden agenda. She joined the Carlsbad Downtown Lions in New Mexico 10 years ago at age 20, shortly before her husband became club president. Shortly thereafter, she was named club treasurer. Long, now 30, was certainly qualified to handle the numbers for the club—she does computer simulations for Sandia National Laboratories, also in Carlsbad, predicting what might happen to stored nuclear waste over the next 10,000 years. She decided to throw herself enthusiastically into leadership with her husband.

She has since been vice president, a two-term president, zone chair and district technology chair, as well as bringing the 84-year-old club into the 21st century with its first website, Facebook page and Twitter presence. The club recognized her contributions last year with a Melvin Jones Fellowship. Leadership of the club (and zone), once mostly male, has become more balanced, Long says.

“A club our age has a lot of older Lions, but they really like that we’re younger and have a lot of energy,” she says, talking a mile a minute. “My husband and I have tried to get even more young people involved. We have lots of younger and women members now. Our youngest is just 19 years old.”

Club members support a wide variety of activities, including placing flags nine times a year at 350 local businesses and homes. But Long’s main focus and motivator is the club’s Operation KidSight, in which children three to six years old are evaluated for vision problems using the club’s new digital equipment known as Pediavision. “It’s my fa-

vorite thing we do; it is really why I am a Lion,” says Long. “Since about 15 percent fail the test, I know we’ve helped hundreds of kids see better and we’ve actually saved the sight of a couple of kids.”

One of those kids was a grade schooler who had failed a school sight exam. He also failed the Lions’ evaluation. But his dad was still reluctant to take him to the eye doctor until the school nurse, bolstered by the screening results, persuaded him. It turned out that the boy had neurological problems that were affecting his sight. In another case, the club discovered that a child who had been in a car accident but showed no symptoms of injury actually had a detached retina. Quick medical intervention saved his sight.

Long, a friendly, outgoing person, is grateful to her club for encouraging her to take on challenges that she might not have otherwise. She was unaccustomed to speaking to groups, but her leadership positions meant that she was often promoting Lion events around town. (She was even the dealer in the tension-packed Final Six round at the club’s Texas Hold ‘Em tournament, which raises money for KidSight.) Long’s aim is to “keep members busy. As long as members feel involved, they feel happier.”

Long’s two children also work right alongside Mom and Dad on many projects, when they are not involved in raising and training animals (with her guidance) for 4-H. Of course, that leaves Long with the “challenge of keeping everything straight.” So far, a calendar programmed with an alarm and multiple lists have done the job. Will they continue to? Long doesn’t know. “It’s my own fault if I can’t. I just don’t know how to say ‘no’ to people.”

*Long:
“Keep members busy. As long as members
feel involved, they feel happier.”*



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Jennifer Long, a computer simulation expert and dutiful mother of two, brings her own brand of energy to her club.



Melanie Krutzel says she is a "Lion for life."

*Krutzel:
"We tell women that if
they have a cause they care
about, we can work on it."*

The Rutgers Lady Lions

Creating a majority-female club was not Melanie Krutzel's goal when she was asked to start a Lions club on the campus of Rutgers University. It just happened that way. The Rutgers Visionary Campus Club in New Brunswick, New Jersey, was chartered with 24 members just this past January by the nearby Edison Visionary Club. Leaders at Edison had reached out to the dean of Rutgers' international social work program to find out if any young people were interested in doing volunteer work under the Lions banner. The dean turned to Krutzel, who had already started another campus organization, the Undergrad Social Work Organization, and so she knew how to get it going.

"When I visited them, I was very impressed with Edison Visionary," says Krutzel, 21. "They were really nice and I could see they were doing good things for people." In fact, she was inspired. So in just few short months after being chartered, her club had a blood drive, collected glasses for the Eyeglass Recycling Center and raised money for OrphanAid in Africa by having a bake sale and selling candy bags for Valentine's Day. Assembled at a rollicking group meeting, the bags were sold for \$5 about a week before the big day on campus. "We sold them in class and to

friends and family," says Krutzel, who is quietly amazed that they were able to send \$500 to Africa with only a week's work.

Many of the club's members were seniors in the charter year, including Krutzel, but she is confident that the club will continue and thrive. Krutzel, an intensely driven young woman who wears glasses herself, says that new members are easy to recruit on campus and that club members do so regularly. "We tell women that if they have a cause they care about, we can work on it. People like that it's such an expansive international organization. There are potentially people all over the world who would support what you are doing." No class credit is given for the club, which costs students just \$20 per year to join, although Krutzel admits community service looks good on a student's resume and is a selling point for the club.

Personally, Krutzel believes she has benefited by being able to talk to older Lions about careers and jobs she might pursue as well as gaining insights from people who share her values, especially her deep commitment to help people in her planned vocation as a social worker. "I am a Lion for life," declares Krutzel. And you just know she means it.



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We Serve

Lions sizzle, bake, roast, steam and fry foods that locals crave and devour year after year. Any way you slice it, the food fuels deliciously important causes.

by Jay Copp



Strawberries
Mattituck Lions
New York

How many ways can you serve a strawberry? You can find out at the Mattituck Lions Club Strawberry Festival, held on Father's Day weekend on Long Island in New York. There are strawberry pies, shakes and daiquiris. Strawberries are dipped in chocolate, mixed in with shortcake and eaten just by themselves.

Mattituck Lions have run the festival since 1954. Long Island may conjure images of traffic and congestion, but strawberry growers congregate on the North Fork. The crop reaches its peak in June.

A summer staple in the New York area, the festival is routinely featured in *Newsday* and the *New York Times* in articles titled "50 Things to Do This Summer" or "Best Festivals." The iconic gathering draws the children of the children of the children who attended some of the first festivals.

The festival began after two Lions vacationing in Florida came across a popular strawberry festival there. For years, until the crowds grew, farmers simply donated the berries. Nearly 750,000 strawberries are now sold.

Those berries have to be hulled. The night before the festival and during it, hundreds of volunteers, including dozens of Leos, stand before long wooden tables laden with crates of strawberries and pull out leaves and stems.

As many as 50,000 people attend the festival. They mingle among the more than 100 arts and crafts vendors, hop on one of the midway rides and applaud the new Strawberry Queen. Mostly, they eat strawberries.





We Serve

If you like Oreos, you are not alone. Nearly 500 billion Oreos have been sold since introduced exactly 100 years ago. That makes it the world's best-selling cookie. In India, Kraft, understanding what resonates locally, advertises the cookie as "the world's No. 1 biscuit." In China, the Oreo comes as a wafer and its chocolate is less sweet to better suit the Chinese. China has become the second-largest market for Oreos after the United States.

Oreos sell well for Lions in Louisiana, too, after they adapted it for the local palate. Slidell Noon Lions roll the cookie in the store-bought beignet mix of Café Du Monde, the famous New Orleans coffee shop. Then they deep-fry it in peanut oil and sell the fried Oreos at the Slidell BBQ Challenge, staged by Lions and Rotarians.

"We're in southern Louisiana, so we deep fry everything," says Lion Johnny Crow. Tongue firmly planted in check, Crow, who sells life insurance, hawks the fried Oreos to barbecue participants by shouting out: "They melt in your mouth. Your doctor approves of them." But, seriously, how do they taste? "Yahoo! They're good," Crow exults.



Oreos never tasted so good.



"Gotta make the donuts," and Lion Chris Pallotta does.

We love donuts so much that we ascribe mystical powers to them. "Donuts: is there anything they can't do?" Homer Simpson marveled. No relationship is so strong that it can endure a pilfered donut. "Be sweet and honest always, but for God's sake don't eat my donuts," warned former Spice Girl Emma Bunton.

Since the mid-1970s, the Bolton Lions in Massachusetts have filled their fundraising coffers thanks to the power of the donut. Over six or so weekends each fall they set up a makeshift donut shop at a covered farmstand. "It's an autumn tradition for a lot of people. They get their pumpkins and apples and their donuts," says Lion Bob Nuzzo.

The Lions fry one kind: a cake donut. That's all they need to make. "They're the best. You get a bag full of warm donuts," Nuzzo says.

The club began their donut operation because a member had a donut-making machine. They originally sold them at the Bolton Fair. But when other food vendors were allowed and sales declined, the club opted for the weekend gig.

Making donuts is not rocket science. "The key is the right consistency to the batter. Too thin and they don't rise

properly. They're oily throughout. Too thick and they're oil bombs. Real heavy," says Nuzzo.

Lions are not forbidden to eat as they cook, but maybe the club ought to institute a rule: "You have to run two times around the parking lot if you eat one. No, we figure if you stand out in the cold you are entitled to eat the donuts and drink the coffee," says Nuzzo.

The history of the Lions' donut making reflects our attitudes toward food. Early on, the club used beef fat. Then they used a combination of animal and vegetable oil before settling on vegetable oil. "We've got healthy donuts—as healthy as something made with flour and sugar can be," jokes Bill Keysor.

Bolton is in a rural area 30 miles from Boston, where a Dunkin' Donuts stands on nearly every corner. The nearest Dunkin' Donuts to the Lions' shop is 10 or 15 minutes away. That's far enough for donut lovers to stay put in Bolton. "We were amateurs, but we've become professionals. You have to learn to turn the crank [on the fryer] and you're all set," says Keysor.

Lutefisk

Stanwood Lions, Washington



Lutefisk is not for everyone. But enough folks like it—or at least tolerate it once a year—for the Stanwood Lions to profit from it.

Lutefisk may be the world's most maligned food. In *Lake Wobegon Days*, Garrison Keillor, normally a mild-mannered Midwesterner, savages the Norwegian specialty. Recalling his Minnesota upbringing, he writes, "Every Advent we entered the purgatory of lutefisk, a repulsive gelatinous fishlike dish that tasted of soap and gave off an odor that would gag a goat."

Keillor has company. Jeffrey Steingarten has an extremely high tolerance for exotic food. Yet the author of *The Man who Ate Everything* says this: "I gladly eat worms and insects. But I draw the line on lutefisk." It seems lutefisk is so utterly unappealing that it explains mass migration. A Norwegian-American website claims that "about half of Norwegians who immigrated to America came in order to escape the hated lutefisk."

But don't tell any of this to the Stanwood Lions on rustic Camano Island in Washington. They are known as the "Lutefisk Lions." For 60 years, they've hosted an annual lutefisk dinner. Last October more than 1,000 people, many of them Scandinavians, put away 2,000 pounds of fish. Some patrons came from Montana and Oregon.

Most Scandinavians consume the fish at Christmas or in lieu of a turkey on Thanksgiving. "Once a year is probably enough," Norwegians like to say. So offering the lutefisk in late fall may help explain the popularity of the Lions' dinner. After all, Lions know of just a few other lutefisk dinners in the entire state.

The authenticity of the dinner also may account for its success. Jim Lund, 77, is the reigning expert of lutefisk in the region. When the Sons of Norway gather or a restaurant wants to serve it, he dons his chef's hat and does the

honors. He's been in charge of the Lions' dinner since 1959, the year after he became a Stanwood Lion.

Lund is modest about his expertise. "I'm still learning," he shrugs. Another Lion could probably handle it, he adds. "The trouble you get with these projects is that no one else wants to do it," he explains.

For the Lions, Lund purchases cod that was soaked in lye water for weeks. He puts small chunks of the fish in cheesecloth (a kind of netting). "That holds it together. Otherwise, it's a heck of a mess. It would come out like cream of wheat," says Lund, a third-generation Norwegian who farms rye grass, spinach, barley, wheat and potatoes.

The fish is boiled in stainless steel pots for three to six minutes. "Some of the guys eat a whole plate of it," says Lion Dick Loutzenhiser.

For the non-lutefisk eaters, the Lions serve Swedish meatballs. That's what Loutzenhiser, who is German, eats. "I don't like lutefisk," he frankly says. In fact, Loutzenhiser, a scout and machine gunner in World War II who fought under Patton, compares the fish unfavorably to most anything he has even eaten. "The GI dry boxes were better," he insists. Lund counters that lutefisk is really no different than any other food. Some like it; some don't. "It's like anything else—it's like pizza," he says.

Lions hold the dinner at a high school. Athletes wait tables, and Boy Scouts clean up. The fish has an extremely strong, pungent odor. But the high school students shouldn't really mind that their school stinks a bit. "The odor goes away after three or four days," says Loutzenhiser with a knowing grin.



The ancient Romans made biscuits—but not well. Their hard, unleavened food tasted like hard tack. The biscuit found its glory in the Old South and can be savored today at roadside restaurants and in grandmas' kitchens throughout the South. These biscuits rise in the oven like a "cloud of delicate white deliciousness under a honey-gold crust," raves Southern writer Joquita Burka.

The traditional Southern biscuit is one of the attractions of the North Carolina state fair in October. Biscuit lovers make a beeline to the booth of the Apex Lions Club. For 10 days, Frances Lawrence and Monnie Jenkins, not Lions but grandmothers who live on farms, churn out 9,000 or so Big Buttermilk Biscuits. They may clog your heart but they melt in your mouth. "They cut the flour and Crisco together. They add the buttermilk and squeegee it up. They pat it out, roll it out and bake it," says Lion Horace Johnson, who works the booth.

"We have a few secrets. I can't share them because we don't want the competition to catch up," he adds.

You can order the biscuits plain or try them with jelly, ham, cheese and, of course, sausage gravy. "We try to keep everybody's arteries a little plugged," jokes Johnson. A single biscuit is enough to satiate a fairgoer for hours. "We warn people—just eat one," adds Johnson.

Johnson wolfs down a biscuit with hot chocolate early in the morning to ready himself for a full day. He's the "pie man," known for his humorous, carnival-like pitches for the store-bought but gourmet pies Lions also sell at the booth. "Try some piiiiiie. We have all kinds of piiiiiie," he screeches into a microphone in his authentic Cajun accent. "We have pee-can piiiiiie or pay-can piiiiiie. We have lemm-on piiiiiie." When he tires of talking, he plays a CD with his prerecorded pitch. Johnson has been featured more than once on a local CBS TV show on the carnival, and regular fairgoers know who he is. "Can I try some of your piiiiiie?" they ask him.

Johnson, who is retired, puts in a full day's work. He lives in a mobile home with his wife on the fairgrounds during the fair rather than commuting 20 minutes home. He's up at 5 a.m. to get the kitchen going. Many exhibitors and fairground staff head over the Lions' booth for a biscuit before putting in a long day. They just eat one—or maybe two or three.



Frankie Johnson, Horace's wife, arrives at 6 a.m. to open the concession stand and make sure the biscuits get to the oven.



World-class seafood draws patrons to the Lions' festival in St. Augustine.

Tony's clam chowder was a three-time world champ from 2009-11, and Bob from Florida could not agree more. "If God serves clam chowder in heaven, we are quite sure he uses the recipe from Tony's," he says on the website of the Florida restaurant.

Speaking of award-winning sea food, Peerce's crab cake is a four-time champ, voted the best in St. Augustine, Florida, from 2007-2010. Hah, staff at Laughing Crab in Havre de Grace, Maryland, probably scoff. Their crab cakes are 16-time winners in various competitions.

Well, devotees of seafood can taste and compare each year at the Lions Seafood Festival in St. Augustine. For 31 years, the small Lions club in St. Augustine has run the mammoth three-day festival. More than 20,000 seafood

lovers attend. The festival started as a Lions' fish fry, evolved into fare cooked by local restaurants and now brings in 10 renowned seafood purveyors.

The oldest city in the United States, St. Augustine is a coastal city. People know and love their seafood. Not that the Lion orchestrating the whole shebang is a fisherman or restaurateur. "I sell carpets. When you're a Lion, well, you know how it is," says Dominic Mercurio. "I don't even have time to eat. My wife is always telling me, 'You got to eat.'"

But this festival has the kind of authenticity no other Lions festival does. You can look it up—on the Web at www.lionsfestival.com. Mercurio applied for that address just five years ago. "I couldn't believe it was available," he says.

Hogs Berlin Lions, Maryland

Berlin Lions in Maryland go whole hog in selling food. They buy 25 hogs, each weighing more than 260 pounds. Ten butchers, four Lions among them, cut up many of the hogs the night before their February sale.

Customers say the meat is fresher and cheaper than what stores sell. It's also coarser—which is actually an upgrade over store meat.

"You don't get this kind of sausage. It's very rare," a pleased customer told the local newspaper. "Usually sausage is made from leavings. But this is whole-pork

sausage where they put everything into it like the hams and other parts."

Lions package the hogs as sausage, scrapple, tenderloin, ribs and pigs feet. Patrons waiting for orders consume 300 or so sausage/egg/cheese sandwiches. The club also sells nearly eight gallons of Bloody Marys.

The whole hog sale is a 40-year tradition. Years ago it took the club three days to sell eight hogs. This past year the meat was gone before noon.

More Lions' foods will be featured in November.



Whole hogs in Berlin, Maryland, attract a whole lot of people.

Survey Shows Membership Growth Potential

by Jay Copp

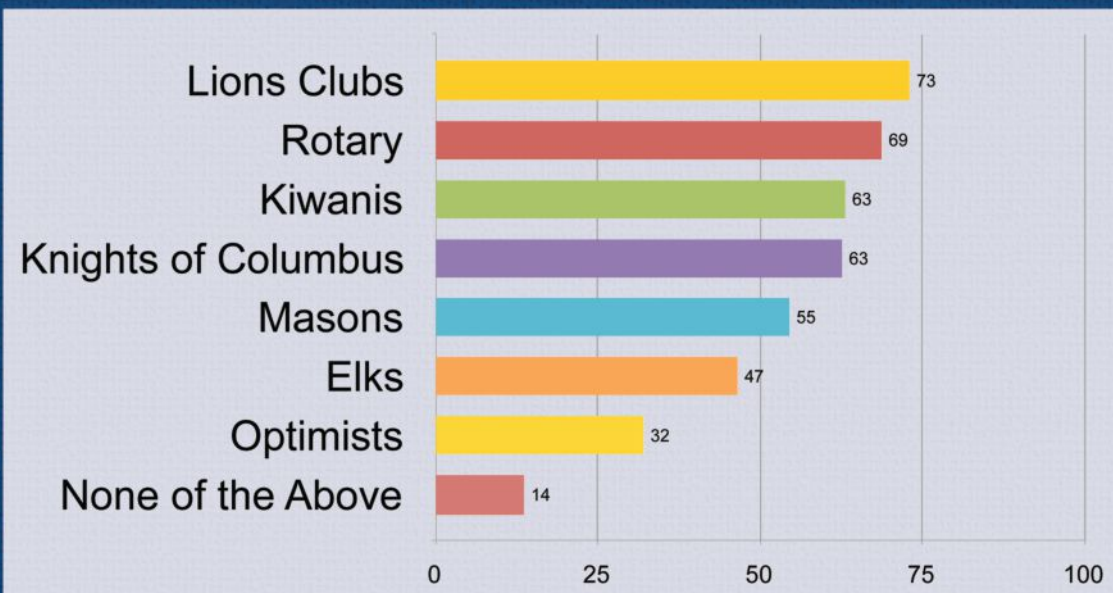
A survey of non-Lions shows a positive perception of Lions, interest in volunteering and potential for membership growth for Lions clubs.

Those interested in volunteering say they want to directly help others, help their local community and value initiatives with opportunities for men and women—three characteristics that dovetail with a typical Lions club. However, those interested in volunteering also generally dislike meetings, customs and rituals, which also often typify many clubs.

The survey of 2,100 non-Lions in the United States and Canada was part of Project Refresh, a comprehensive global membership study by Lions Clubs International. Project Refresh also included a survey of thousands of Lions, as well as former Lions, in the United States, Canada and 131 other nations. Those results, including reasons why Lions are satisfied or dissatisfied and the reasons why Lions stopped being members, will be detailed in subsequent issues of the LION.

In the non-Lions survey, 73 percent of those surveyed were aware of Lions clubs, compared to a 69 percent awareness of Rotary and a 63 percent awareness of Kiwanis. Most respondents see Lions as helping others: 61 percent say that “services that directly help others” describes Lions clubs and 59 percent say clubs “help the local community.”

Lions Clubs Has Highest Awareness



Source: Project Refresh Phase 5 Survey of Non Lions (Total Contact Sample)

Not many people have negative opinions of Lions: 27 percent say Lions clubs seem “very hierarchical or formal” while 27 percent say clubs “expect their members to join ‘for life’” and 18 percent say clubs “would have many cliques.”

Sixty-two percent of respondents say they have low interest in volunteering. The rest prefer particular volunteer experiences. Nine percent want a volunteer experience with networking opportunities to help them with their career or business. Eight percent say they want to involve their family when volunteering. Another 8 percent want to help people beyond their local community and want an organization with a strong support network.

These three groups of potential volunteers—the networking group, the family group and the “beyond local” group—are highly compatible with current Lions clubs. “What some of these non-Lions want matches the types of clubs Lions have,” says Shad Thomas, president of Glass Box Research Company in Chicago, which undertook the survey.

Adds Sue Haney, manager of the Extension and Membership Division at LCI, “We’ve made being a Lion as part of a family unit easier than any

other service organization because of our family dues structure.”

Five percent of respondents want to volunteer for a smaller community group and eight percent want a casual volunteer experience without membership requirements, customs/rituals or a hierarchy. The community and casual groups offer some potential as Lions, says Thomas.

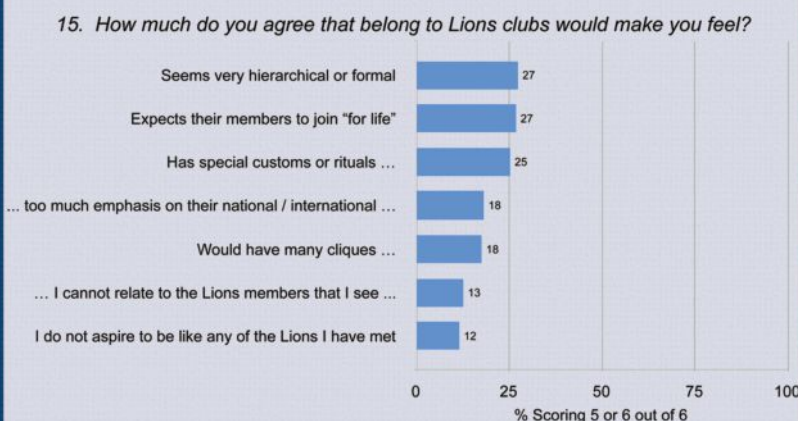
Other survey findings:

- A large majority agreed that “they admire people who try to help those less fortunate” (86 percent), are “very happy to be able to do things

for others” (84 percent) and “my family is the single most important thing to me” (80 percent).

- The networking and family groups are highly social. Eighty-four percent in the family group and 79 percent in the networking group say they want to incorporate fun into service, compared to 67 percent of all respondents. Similarly, 60 percent in the network group and 58 percent in the family group say they want regular meetings to plan initiatives, compared to 39 percent of all respondents.

Not Many People Have Negative Opinions of Lions



Source: Project Refresh Phase 5 Survey of Non Lions (Total Willing to Volunteer)

Several Things Are Universally Important

Providing services that directly help others, helping the local community, and offering opportunities for both men and women to participate

8. When it comes to volunteer activities, how important to you are each of the following statements? (% scoring 5 or 6 out of 6)	Total	Networking	Family	Beyond Local	Only Local	Casual
Providing valuable services that directly help others	82	75	92	88	74	80
Ensuring that the activity helps the local community	76	74	82	68	70	73
Offering opportunities for both men and women to participate	74	70	85	82	69	74

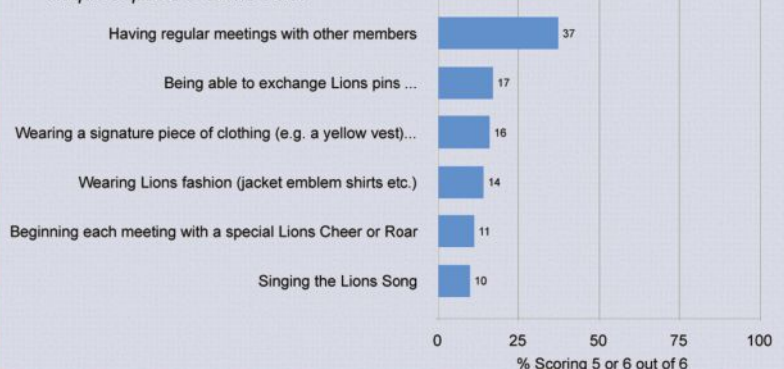
Legend: 10 points Higher Lower than total

Source: Project Refresh Phase 5 Survey of Non Lions

Very Little Appreciation for Lions Practices

Even meetings rather low with just over a third of Non Lions saying that they would appreciate them. Only 1 in 10 would appreciate Cheer/Roar/Song.

16. How much do you think that you would appreciate each of the following unique aspects of Lions club?



Source: Project Refresh Phase 5 Survey of Non Lions (Total Willing to Volunteer)

- The networking and family groups, again showing a compatibility with Lions clubs, rated Lions clubs higher than those in the other groups. Sixty percent of those in the networking group and 59 percent in the family group say clubs “would have members who could become good friends,” compared to 49 percent of all respondents. Fifty-seven percent of those in the networking group and 43 percent in the family group say clubs offer “opportunities for members to receive awards/recognition for a job well done,” compared to 37 percent of all respondents. Sixty-three percent of those in the networking group and 33 percent in the family group say clubs “would embrace technology,” compared to 36 percent overall.

Not surprisingly, the networking group showed the greatest preference for meetings. Thirty-one percent want to meet a few times a month, compared to 28 percent of the family group, 19 percent of the community group, 17 percent of the casual group and 11 percent of the beyond local group. How about meeting less than

once a month? Both the beyond local and casual groups checked in at 41 percent, followed by community at 30 percent, networking at 21 percent and family at 15 percent.

Female non-Lions showed a higher compatibility with Lions than men. Eighty-nine percent of women and 78 percent of men say it “makes me happy to be able to do things for others.” Sixty-four percent of women and 48 percent of men said they admire people who belong to a service club. Sixty-two percent of women and 51 percent of men say they are “always trying to make the world a better place.”

The survey disclosed low regard for traditional Lions’ practices. Regular meetings? Just 37 percent say they would appreciate that. Exchanging Lions pins? Seventeen percent went for that. Wearing a signature piece of clothing such as a yellow vest? Just 16 percent. Begin each meeting with a special Lions’ cheer or roar? Eleven percent.

The networking group showed the most appreciation for these practices. Half say they want regular meetings. Thirty-two percent would appreciate

wearing signature clothes and 24 percent would sing a Lions song.

“What we learned from the survey is finding out what prospective members and new Lions want from your club. Find out their expectations,” says Haney. “A Lions club is all about the experience. They need to have a good experience.”

The respondents who indicated a low interest in volunteering presumably would present a challenge to induct and motivate. Only 15 percent say it is “very likely” they would consider volunteering for a charitable service group in the next five years. Just 31 percent say they would like to be active in their community.

The survey suggests various ways for clubs to increase membership, says Ken G Kabira, group manager for Membership, Programs and Communications at LCI. More than one in three adults are interested in volunteering. “That means more than 90 million Americans and nearly 10 million Canadians are potential Lions,” he says. “We should be able to grow membership if we invite them and we provide a satisfying experience.”

Women in particular also are potential Lions because 60 percent of those interested in volunteering are women. Currently, about one in four Lions in North America are women.

Clubs also should consider what kind of potential volunteer to whom they can appeal. “Are they a right fit for the family group? The networking group? Clubs can emphasize their traits that people find appealing,” says Kabira. Clubs also need to make sure prospective members and new members experience the essence of Lions. “Our rituals and traditions such as the vest do not necessarily attract members. We need to ensure they experience the joy of serving others before being introduced to other elements of being a Lion,” says Kabira.

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9 Days *Join other Lions departing March 5, 2013* from **\$2598***

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Join YMT on this unique cultural and educational program to legendary Cuba. From Miami, you'll fly to Havana to begin your exploration of the rich heritage of this island nation. Highlights include five nights in **Havana**, two nights in **Cayo Santa Maria, Old Havana, Revolucion Plaza, the Che Guevara Museum, Ernest Hemingway's farm**, and visits to the scenic towns of **Remedios and Cienfuegos**. Witness Cuba's picturesque rural life and agriculture in **Vinales** and go to a **tobacco farm** to see the growing, drying and cigar rolling process of Cuba's most famous export. Learn about authentic daily Cuban life and the island's history and culture through meaningful interactions with the local people throughout the itinerary. Musical and artistic performances along with interactive painting and dance lessons will give you unique insight into the colorful island culture. This fully-escorted program includes eight nights hotel accommodations, round-trip airfare from Miami to Cuba, a full-time schedule of activities per the itinerary, a professionally-trained Cuban guide and 15 meals. US law requires that all participants of this program adhere to the full time schedule of people-to-people activities. *Airfare to/from Miami is extra. \$20 airline (one suitcase) baggage fee for up to 44 lbs. for roundtrip flight from Miami to Cuba.

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****Price per person, based on double occupancy. Airfare is extra.
Lions Clubs International not responsible for losses incurred.***



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A Heart-to-Heart on Blindness

The grand prize winner of the 2011-12 Lions International Essay Contest, Mikaela Smith, 13, of Indiana, first met Carl Augusto, president and CEO of the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), while in New York to be recognized for her winning essay at Lions Day with the United Nations. The two found they had a lot in common and, at the request of the LION, they later spoke on the phone about the challenges of blindness, Lions and attitudes about the blind. Following is an edited transcript of their conversation.

Mikaela: So, what is one your favorite Helen Keller stories or items from your archives?

Augusto: One of my favorite Helen Keller quotes, which is hanging right behind my desk, says: “When they were saying among themselves it couldn’t be done, it was done.” That was a quote from the early 1900s, and basically, all the medical doctors, the neurologists, the psychologists—all these Ph.D.s and M.D.s were saying [that] people who were deaf-blind can’t be educated, they can’t contribute to society, they can’t go to college. While they were saying that among themselves, it couldn’t be done, Helen Keller was doing all of that. She was going to college, she was being educated, she was contributing to the literature, she was also traveling the world and beginning to influence and change attitudes.

So whenever people say, “Oh, that’s too hard, we can’t do it,” I often point to that sign.

I think [during your visit] I said something like, “You know, Mikaela, you can be a Helen Keller someday.” The things I was really impressed by with you that reminded me of Helen Keller are: you are smart, you have a great presence and personality. The other thing is, I see you advocating not only for yourself but for all people with visual impairments. So I think you are going to be removing a lot of barriers in your life and changing a lot of stereotypes. That’s the warrior image in you that I saw connected to Helen Keller.

Mikaela: How is this opportunity through the Lions Essay Contest significant?

Augusto: Well, first of all, I think it is significant because it was Helen Keller who went to a Lions clubs convention in 1925 and asked Lions to become the knights of the blind, and they said yes. And so for the last 87 years they connected to people like us, Mikaela, the blind and visually impaired.

I think it is terrific that the Lions said, let’s have an essay contest just for visually impaired kids. The other thing—and I think your essay proved this—the subject matter is really important. Asking blind kids to talk about peace I thought was a very good idea from the Lions.

Mikaela: And are there many similar opportunities for visually impaired people to be able to do this?

Augusto: I don’t think so, and that’s the beauty of it. That’s why we tip our hats to the Lions for initiating this.

Mikaela: Yes, I have to agree. I liked it. How can Lions further connect to visually impaired youth in their community to sponsor the [essay] contest?

Augusto: Well, first of all, we hope that the Lions will continue to have this contest. We think that whole concept of literacy for blind people is so very important. In the United States, Mikaela, most blind people like you and I know Braille. But in many parts of the world, few blind people even know that there is Braille. They are not even educated at all. So if we could launch this literacy campaign throughout the world, maybe we could touch the lives of thousands and thousands of blind and visually impaired kids, who before this campaign didn’t even know that Braille existed, didn’t even know that they could be educated. So we are very excited about what we are doing with the Lions on this campaign.



Mikaela Smith and Carl Augusto first meet in New York earlier this year.

Mikaela: What can Lions clubs do for the blind that they may not already be doing?

Augusto: Well, I think there are many things that they can do: meeting blind people, talking about giving blind people jobs, helping to pass legislation that would be favorable to blind people, just a lot of public awareness in their communities. And we are putting on our [AFB] website new information that lists all of the many opportunities that the Lions clubs of the world can undertake in order to help people with vision loss.

Mikaela: What types of resources for visually impaired students are available to support the Lions reading and literacy campaign?

Augusto: I think part of this issue is to let people know, let government know and maybe the developing countries that blind and visually impaired people can and do learn just as easily, just as well, are just as smart as their sighted peers. It is going to be hard in developing countries where many blind kids don't even know that Braille exists, and where blind kids are not allowed to go to educational programs because their educational programs and their teachers wouldn't know how to teach blind kids like they do in the United States.

Mikaela: They need to learn!

Augusto: That's right, they need to learn. That's why we are hoping that the Lions' campaign, such a powerful international organization, can help to support governments around the world and educate other Lions throughout the world that blind kids can learn and can be educated and can contribute to society.

Mikaela: And they can!

Augusto: Yes.

Take Action

Today Lions are reaching out to support education and literacy through many service activities. Working with the AFB and others on the Lions Reading Action Program, Lions are exploring new opportunities for service. One way clubs are connecting with visually impaired students is through the Lions Essay Contest, providing the opportunity for these young people to share their written interpretations of peace. The theme of the 2012-13 Lions Essay Contest is "Imagine Peace." The theme, shared with the Lions International Peace Poster Contest, draws upon the creativity of young people ages 11-13 throughout the world.

The contest must be sponsored by a Lions club. The deadline for participating clubs to submit their entry to the district governor for the 2012-13 competition is Nov. 15. Essay Contest details and the entry form are online and also included in the Lions International Peace Poster Kit, available through Club Supplies.

For information, visit www.lionsclubs.org (search: Essay Contest), call 630-571-5466 or email pr@lionsclubs.org.

Additional resources are available from the American Foundation for the Blind at www.afb.org.

Mikaela: OK, next question: Why is it important for young people to continue to learn Braille?

Augusto: That's a very good question. And I am often asked when I am traveling around the country and talking to people throughout the world about Braille. I say, Braille is as important to me as print is as important to you. And when the day comes where print is no longer important to sighted people, Braille will be no longer important to blind people. I talk to a lot of people and say, how do you learn to spell if you don't learn how to read and how to write? And if you don't know how to spell, how can you communicate what you want to communicate in writing? You just can't do it! So, learning the printed words is very important to you, and learning Braille of those printed words is equally important to blind people. Braille is going to be important for us, Mikaela, for many, many decades—and maybe forever—as print is important for sighted people.

Mikaela: Yes. OK. How has technology impacted learning and what are the latest resources or tools?

Augusto: I think the biggest breakthrough is going to happen in the future when mainstream products right off the shelf will be able to help us read and learn. Probably the most revolutionary mainstream product that is totally accessible for blind people in recent years is the iPhone. And many blind people are learning to use the iPhone, and it is something [for which] you don't have to know Braille, you can just buy it off the shelf and you can function as a sighted person can function.

Mikaela: I have to agree with that, because now that I've used one the iPad seems to be my new birthday wish! ... How do you find navigating the world without sight?

Augusto: Well, you know, I find traveling, for example, a challenge, but it is also an adventure. When I go out into the world and travel to new places I am a lot more cautious about taking public transportation. So I've got to plan ahead. I know that's very, very important, and always make sure I know where I am and not be afraid to ask people questions. It can be done, and it is done, and it is something all people with visual loss should try to do.

Mikaela: Do you ever wish you could see?

Augusto: When I think about my hopes and my dreams, I am always thinking about something else. Something about my family, something about my future,

so not being able to see is really not important to me. I function pretty well. So, no, I don't think about it very much.

Mikaela: I don't either. But there are a couple of times where I am like, I wish that I could see right now. But I don't usually think about it.

Augusto: That's a good point. We don't think about it, because we function just fine not being able to see.

Mikaela: What would you say to people on how to interact or approach someone who is blind?

Augusto: I can often sense that somebody is uncomfortable with me because they haven't had very much experience with blind people. So what I try to do is smile to break the ice, maybe crack a joke. I almost see it as a challenge to make them more comfortable with me.

Mikaela: Do have any pet peeves?

Augusto: Yeah, the thing that happens a lot if I'm ordering a meal is they look at the person that I'm having dinner with, and he or she will say, "What does he want?" instead of looking at me and asking me what I want. I usually say, "Well, why don't you ask him!" meaning "Why don't you ask me." And that breaks the ice a little bit. That's probably the only thing I feel uncomfortable about. Another is when I drop something on the floor, and I can't find it. But I think that happens to a lot of us who can't see, right, Mikaela?





Mikaela: Ahh, I had that happen before! What do you think is the greatest misconception about the blind?

Augusto: I think the greatest misconception is that we are different. Sighted people see us and say, “Gee, what do I do, this is a different experience. I am talking to a different kind of person.” I think it’s our job, Mikaela, to constantly educate the public that we are just like anyone else. We may use different tools to function. But we are doing the same things that sighted people do. We are just like everyone else, but a lot of sighted people don’t realize it.

Mikaela: What changes in society have you experienced as someone with a visual impairment?

Augusto: Since I was your age, I do see attitudes being changed. Maybe not as fast as you want it to be—or I want it to be—but I think more people are saying, “Hey, maybe they are not as different as I thought. Maybe they can do just as well as I can do.” I think we are changing these attitudes probably because they changed the laws, and now the laws require certain things and ban discrimination, and I think that’s helping to change attitudes.

Mikaela: Yes, and about the employers—something I have noticed, and my mom told me about this a little bit, people will sometimes not employ blind people or visually impaired people because they are visually impaired. That’s not exactly cool, and it’s not good.

Augusto: Fortunately, we have laws that ban discrimination against hiring blind people. But I think what hap-

pens when a sighted person meets a blind person, they can’t possibly perceive how they could function as a blind person. Here I am an employer and I have a company, and I have a blind applicant, and he comes in for a sales position. And I think, how is he going to keep phone numbers, how is he going to keep records of his phone calls and his visits? How is he going to visit anyone? And many of these people, who have never met blind people, are going to say, well, I couldn’t possibly do that if I were blind. I couldn’t do that, so how is this job candidate going to be able to function?

Mikaela: Yes, and the employer probably thinks that he wouldn’t be able to do it if he was blind because he isn’t blind and he doesn’t know the kinds of things visually impaired people have! Last question: do you have any advice for me?

Augusto: I have a couple of things for you. First of all, I want you not to change your perspective on life. I want you to pursue your dreams and make them come true, and I want you to continue your course on education. I want you to do great things in your life. I think you’ve got that capability. So continue the path you are going on, kid. You are doing some wonderful things in life, and I want to be around when I read about you. I’ll meet you in another 10 to 15 years to congratulate you on all the things you’ve accomplished.

Mikaela: I hope it’s before then. I really do. All right, I just want to thank you for this opportunity and I am glad that I got to interview you.

Celebrating 10 Years of Sight for Kids

by Allie Stryker

Alyanna Quimlat of the Philippines knows the benefits of healthy eyes and the Sight for Kids program. A Sight for Kids vision screening and eyeglasses helped her rise from among the lower performing students to become salutatorian of her middle school's graduating class.

"During third grade, a free eye consultation was held by the Peninsula Lions Club through the leadership of Ms. Gila Garcia. I was one of the fortunate students who were given the free eyeglasses," said Alyanna in her salutatorian speech. "Before, I thought my

eyesight was normal, even though I could not clearly see what was written on the board. What a big help these eyeglasses were to me. Because of your support, I was able to reach where I am right now."

At just 14 years old, Alyanna recognizes that her eye sight is precious. Access to an eye exam and eyeglasses brought her world into focus—and brought academic success within her reach. Today, Sight for Kids in the Philippines is one of eight such programs in Asia providing much-needed vision screenings and follow-up care.

An estimated 19 million children are visually impaired around the world, according to the World Health Organization. More than half of these children have refractive errors (nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism) that can be diagnosed through eye exams and easily corrected with eyeglasses. Left untreated, severe visual impairment and blindness can eventually occur. In Asia, a lack of access to visual impairment treatment has resulted in an estimated 1 million blind children.

To reduce childhood visual impairment and blindness in Asia, Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) and Johnson & Johnson Vision Care created the Sight for Kids program in 2002. Led by Lions and local partners, the program recruits eye care professionals who train local teachers to conduct school-based vision screenings and eye health education in underserved communities. When needed, students are referred to a local eye care professional and receive an eye exam, eyeglasses and further care at no cost.

"When this program began, I was very happy because we could better serve the people of our community," says Dr. Letty Anzures, an optometrist, a Sight for Kids volunteer and a Paolo City Emerald Lions Club member. "With the partnership with Johnson & Johnson, we were recently able to provide 200 more pairs of eyeglasses to local kids."

As World Sight Day is observed in October, the Sight for Kids program and its partners will celebrate its 10th anniversary. A decade after launching, eight Sight for Kids programs are thriving in the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Nepal and India.



Vuthi Boonnikornvoravith, founder of Sight for Kids Thailand, helps give children in Thailand free glasses through Sight for Kids.

“Gaining access to an eye screening early in life is critical since many vision-related issues can be addressed through preventative care,” says Thibaut Mongon, the Asia Pacific regional president of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care. “We believe everyone is entitled to healthy vision, and our partnership with Sight for Kids gets us closer to this goal.”

To date, more than 17 million children have had their vision screened through Sight for Kids. Of these, more than 500,000 children have received professional eye exams and 200,000 have received free eyeglasses.

“Sight for Kids shows what’s possible when committed partners believe in addressing childhood health and sight issues,” says Wing-Kun Tam, LCIF chairperson. “Lions are leaders in blindness prevention and Johnson & Johnson is a leader in vision care. Together, this partnership allows us to save sight in areas of great need.”

The accomplishments of the program have a special meaning for members of Sight for Kids in Thailand, one of the original countries involved. “When you are able to talk to [the children] before and after surgery, you can feel that deep inside you have just helped a young kid,” says Vuthi Boonnikornvoravith, founder of Sight for Kids Thailand and a past director of Lions Clubs International. “They always remember the Lions who have been helping them and, we hope someday, they will be able to help other less fortunate students.”

Thammasak Chuthong is one of the recipients of Sight for Kids’ care in Thailand. As an infant, he had cataract surgery in his left eye. Nine years later, a Sight for Kids examination revealed continuing vision problems in that eye. Because his vision problem was caught early through the screening, Thammasak received eye surgery at a local Lions hospital. His sight was restored and permanent damage was prevented.

“Our goal is to make it possible for an ever-growing number of children to be served by this excellent program,” says Boonnikornvoravith. “Sight for Kids in Thailand has real impact because it creates an awareness of eye health among schoolteachers, children and their parents, not to mention the public.”

During this anniversary year, Sight for Kids partners are celebrating accomplishments and also focusing on the program’s potential and a new decade of efforts and success. Johnson &

Johnson Vision Care has committed \$2 million to continue funding Sight for Kids in areas of need.

“If the next 10 years continues the momentum of the first decade, we will be delighted to have screened truly unprecedented numbers of children for uncorrected refractive errors and been able to provide appropriate treatment to those unable to afford it,” says Mongon.

On World Sight Day and throughout October, visit www.LCIF.org to follow Sight for Kids celebrations and events.



A child has her vision screened in the Philippines thanks to the Sight for Kids, LCIF's partnership program with Johnson & Johnson Vision Care.



Generate Buzz without Spending a Buck

Free Publicity Can Help Attract New Members

When the Woodbury Lions' annual car show is coming up, it's hard to find anyone in the vicinity who isn't aware of it. For weeks prior to the event, area residents watch ads on television, see posters in store windows, read articles in the newspaper and notice yard signs along the town's busiest street. This may sound like a lot of work—and maybe more importantly, a lot of money—but these Connecticut Lions receive great exposure with a next-to-nothing advertising budget. Instead, they take advantage of many free publicity options available.

"A lot of people don't understand the difference between advertising and publicity. The main difference is publicity doesn't cost you anything. As publicity chair I try to find ways that I can get information out about the club and generate buzz for our events out without having to pay for it," says Woodbury Lion Frank Longo. The Woodbury Lions are doing more than generating buzz—they're also making the job of finding new members a lot easier.

Channels of Communication

Prior to each event, the Woodbury Lions produce promotional radio and TV public service announcements (PSAs) with some complimentary help from friends with expertise (but Longo points out that it's fairly easy to create video and audio segments on just about

any home computer). A few weeks before an event, Longo sends 15-, 30- and 60-second PSAs on CDs to radio and TV stations in the area. "Smaller stations and college stations are most likely to run them. The local public access channel runs everything we send," Longo says.

RSVP, Please

Chartered in 2009, the Lawton Patriots Lions in Oklahoma were in need of media coverage to help spread the word about their young club. John Williams used Facebook to invite a TV reporter to do a story on an upcoming 5K run. This simple invitation resulted in a great story and has led to coverage for more events. "I found out that the media is always looking for good stories and that if you can get reporters to participate in events, the better the story," Williams points out.

Cast a Wider Net

Ultimately, it's all about making connections. "By networking with other organizations and including each other in your events, you can help each other advertise at no cost," explains Joanne Dye of the Selkirk Lions in Ontario, Canada. For each of their events, the Woodbury Lions do tie-ins with business sponsors, such as a car dealership for the car show, resulting in cross promotion that benefits all.

Increase Online Savvy

The usual suspects for online promotion are obvious (club website, Facebook, Twitter) but there's more than meets the eye. Consider community calendars, special interest forums or local news websites such as Patch.com. By hunting down the right sources, the payoff in exposure could be priceless. Plus, Longo says, "Our ad budget is decreasing each year as we become more media aware."

Brainstorm some new ideas for free publicity that might work well for your club. Those potential new members out there will know the Lions a whole lot better. Williams says, "We're sparking the interest of people to wonder what Lions do and who they are."

—Jennifer Gilbert Gebhardt

Find great tips for placing
PSAs and download
LCI PSAs at
www.lionsclubs.org
(search for "PSA").



Got New Members?

Invite new members of your club to learn about the responsibilities and joys of being a Lion by participating in the Lions Mentoring Program. New members are partnered with an experienced Lion to increase their knowledge, level of commitment and leadership skills. Upon completion of the Basic Mentoring Program, both the new member and the mentor will be recognized with a certificate of achievement.

Visit www.lionsclubs.org to download the Lions Basic Mentoring Program Guide (MTR-11).



Membership and New Club Programs Department • memberprog@lionsclubs.org • 630.203.3846



LEO TO LION PROGRAM: A New Way to Grow Membership

October is Membership Growth Month. Now is the time to boost membership. Start simple by inviting former Leos to join your club.

By recruiting graduating Leos as new members, you gain fresh, youthful ideas for activities and increase hands to do more service projects. Former Leos are already dedicated to making a difference in their local, national and international community. Encourage Leos to become Lions and bring new energy and diverse skills into your club.

Help renew Leos' lifetime commitment to service by inviting them to become Lions.

Visit www.lionsclubs.org and search "Leo to Lion" for more information.

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Preschool Screening Right on the Spot

Preschoolers aren't generally praised for their patience, but Lions in Texas certainly should be. Three clubs, Highland Village, Lewisville and Flower Mound, joined forces last year to screen children as young as 9 months old to catch small vision problems before they turn into large, possibly sight-robbing disabilities.

"Kids don't know they can't see well—they have nothing to relate to," explains Highland Village Lion Dianne Ashmore, project chairperson. She routinely contacts local day care facilities and preschools to offer free vision screening. If a child's family is determined to be in financial need when a vision problem is detected, Lions provide assistance. Both Ashmore's husband

and daughter are Highland Village Lions who are also involved in the screening process.

Vision problems are the most prevalent, disabling conditions children face today, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Since last year, Lions have focused their attention almost exclusively on preschoolers, a segment of the population not usually checked for such early vision problems.

Lions originally borrowed a pediatric vision screener from the Colleyville Lions Club to check preschoolers. "Jim Cook of the Colleyville Lions has been exemplary in assisting us by bringing the equipment, helping us screen, sharing his knowledge—just overall a tremendous support to our new, growing program," says Ashmore. The Highland Village Lions Club recently purchased a "Spot" screener by PediaVision, becoming the first club in North Texas and only the second in the state to start using this piece of innovative technology.

The Spot, purchased at a discounted price of \$8,500, takes only a

second to get a reading—usually all the time screeners get before the small kids start squirming in their seats. It also photographs eyes in color instead of black-and-white, which enables a much more accurate reading for Hispanic and Asian children with dark pupils and irises. Money was raised from an annual hot air balloon festival Lions sponsor and the club is hoping to purchase a second unit.

"The attention span of preschoolers is measured in seconds," Ashmore points out. "Statistics from the American Optometric Association and CDC say that 80 percent of all childhood learning is visual. Our goal is to help discover potential vision—and soon, hearing—issues sooner rather than later." She says that Lions intend to offer comprehensive screening to the area's preschoolers since 16 members were recently certified to conduct hearing tests.

More stories on Lions' projects are in the digital LION at www.lionmagazine.org.



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Flower Mound Lion Tawny Laney screens a preschooler.

Photo by Ord Boening

INFORMATION

ANNIVERSARIES OCTOBER 2012

95 YEARS: Shreveport Downtown, La.

90 YEARS: Albany, Ga.; Anaheim, Calif.; Beaver Falls, Pa.; Bellingham Central, Wash.; Bethlehem, Pa.; Charlotte Central, N.C.; Clarendon, Texas; Flushing, N.Y.; Mobile, Ala.; Staten Island, N.Y.; Stephenville, Texas; Tonkawa, Okla.; West Frankfort, Ill.; Woodland Host, Calif.

85 YEARS: Carpinteria, Calif.; Champaign, Ill.; Hayti, Mo.; Honea Path, S.C.; Medford, Okla.; Valley Park, Mo.; Waseca, Minn.

80 YEARS: Carson City Host, Nev.; Grand Junction, Iowa; Pearisburg, Va.; Petrolia, ON, CAN; Saugerties, N.Y.; Shippensburg, Pa.

75 YEARS: Apex, N.C.; Black River Falls, Wis.; Burrton, Kan.; Corrigan, Texas; Park Falls, Wis.; Peshtigo, Wis.; San Augustine, Texas; Selmer, Tenn.; Twentynine Palms, Calif.; Versailles, Mo.; West Milwaukee, Wis.

50 YEARS: Antigonish, NS, CAN; Bethel, Alaska; College Place, Wash.; Dilworth, Minn.; Green Bay West, Wis.; Kaleva, Mich.; Maniwaki, QC, CAN; Minneapolis Riverview, Minn.; San Juan, Wash.; Saskatoon Nutana, SK, CAN; Sudlersville, Md.

25 YEARS: Banks, Ore.; Copperopolis Lake Tulloch, Calif.; Coudersport & Area, Pa.; Denver Five Points, Colo.; East Dublin, Ga.; Home Place Area, Ind.; Honolulu Hibiscus, Hawaii; Millington, Md.; Winnipeg Beach Dunnottar Lakeside, MB, CAN

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

HIGHER KEYS ISSUED DURING JUNE 2012

Emissary Key (350 Members)

- Lion S. Palanivelu, Salem Melvin Metro, India

Ambassador Key (150 Members)

- Lion Robert Garrity, Arlington, Massachusetts

Key Of Nations (100 Members)

- Lion A. Shanmugasundaram, Madurai Vaigai, India

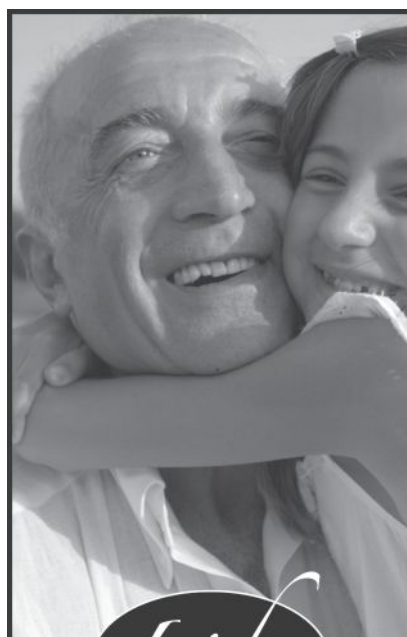
Grand Master Key (50 Members)

- Lion James Maynard, Dorr Township, Michigan
- Lion Adarsha Barua, Chittagong Progressive West, Rep. of Bangladesh
- Lion Suresh Mohapatra, Rourkela Mid Town, India

Senior Master Key (25 Members)

- Lion Samuel Reitzell, Colfax, Louisiana
- Lion Thomas Koch, Rosendale, Wisconsin
- Lion M. A. Rashid Mian, Dhaka Antora, Rep. of Bangladesh
- Lion Vishwanath Tari, Alem De Margao, India
- Lion C. G. Sreekumar, Eroor, India
- Lion S. P. Goel, Delhi Pitampura South, India
- Lion Ashok Kapoor, Hathras, India
- Lion S. Sekar, Chennai Global Metro West, India

Because of early publication deadlines, LION Magazine does not include the most current list of Higher Keys. To view the most current list, search for Membership Key Award Program at www.lionsclubs.org.



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Facing Down the Floods

When Duluth, Minnesota, was deluged in late June with a torrential down-pour that dumped eight inches of rainwater, it caused the worst flooding the city had seen in nearly 40 years. Streets flooded and some even caved in; animals, including a polar bear named Berlin, escaped from their enclosures in the Lake Superior Zoo and some drowned. Basements and low-lying homes were flooded. Especially hard hit was the Fond du Lac area of the city near the overflowing St. Louis River.

The 75-member Duluth Lions Club received an immediate \$10,000 Disaster grant from LCIF and started helping their northeastern Minnesota community by setting up operations in a church amid the hard-hit Fond du Lac neighborhood. “The grant was used to purchase and serve hot meals to displaced families, buy bottled water, toiletries and free ice to give to anyone in need,” says Brian Thompson, whose own office was flooded.

Before the flood, Duluth Lions were already well known in their city of 86,000 for another project related to food service. The club’s annual Pancake Day (featured in the April 2011 LION Magazine) has been held for 55 years and raised \$70,000 last year.



Displaced residents found a free, hot meal provided by Lions at a local church serving as an emergency center.

New Home Offers More than Shelter

A Habitat for Humanity house built by volunteers and Lions in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, is now home to a family of five, one of whom is a wheelchair-bound son with muscular dystrophy. Lions raised more than \$50,000 through donations and a matching LCIF grant to help construct the three-bedroom, handicap-accessible house in Harrisburg.

Some of those volunteers were construction class students from the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Academy who helped assemble the house inside a climate-controlled construction lab last school year. It was then moved to a lot in Harrisburg for completion. Sioux Falls Downtown Lion Joel Hathaway, development director for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sioux Falls, says, “Eighty high school students learned ‘green’ building techniques by constructing an Energy Star-rated home.” There were at least 25 adult volunteers, including 12 Lions from area clubs, who worked onsite alongside students.

Young people from 10 surrounding school districts attend the academy to become proficient in a variety of career skills, but those working on the house learned more than the craft of home building. “This unique service-learning partnership brought Lions, students and a family in desperate need of accessible and affordable housing together to serve as a model for our community,” Hathaway points out.

The collaboration was a first for the new CTE Academy, which seeks partners for its programs from local businesses and industry to help students learn. They were rewarded with more than passing grades, Hathaway adds. “Lions participated in a special program at the school to recognize their student involvement.”

Susan and Bill Morey completed 400 hours of “sweat equity” before taking ownership of their new home, which cost \$112,000. The non-profit Habitat for Humanity mortgage will be repaid over a 30-year period, Hathaway explains.

“Our new home is awesome,” says Bill Morey, who adds that his family had regularly donated their old eyeglasses to Lions for recycling before the home building project. “It’s excellent now that we can all be together in the same space at the same time. With my son, Logan, in a wheelchair, that was something we couldn’t easily do before. The kids are just ecstatic. We all are.”



(From left) Preparing to lay sod at the Morey home are Lions Keith Lewis, Tom Weidenbach, Todd Smith and Les Feiock.

INFORMATION

IN MEMORIAM

Edwin H. "Ed" Flood of Amarillo, Texas, who served as an International Director from 1976 to 1978, has died. A Lion for 55 years, Past International Director Flood served on the board of the Texas Lions Camp in Kerrville, was instrumental in establishing the Texas Lions Foundation and served his community and Lions Clubs International in a number of leadership positions.

Past International Director **Shoichi Sakaguchi**, a member of the Yamato-Takeda Lions Club in Japan, has died. He was elected to serve a two-year term on the International Board of Directors in 1980 and was a Lion for 50 years.

FOR THE RECORD

As of July 31, Lions Clubs International had 1,340,600 members in 46,272 clubs and 753 districts in 207 countries and geographic areas.

CALENDAR

2012 UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER

SHARING THE VISION GLOBAL SERVICE ACTION CAMPAIGN

OCT. 1:

Deadline to purchase Peace Poster Contest kits from Club Supplies Sales

OCT. 5-8:

Advanced (Senior) Lions Leadership Institute – Constitutional Area VI: India, South Asia, Africa, the Middle East (Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, India)

OCT. 11:

Lions World Sight Day

OCT. 12-15:

Advanced (Senior) Lions Leadership Institute – Constitutional Area III: South America, Central America, Mexico and Islands of the Caribbean Sea (Lima, Peru)

OCT. 15:

International White Cane Safety Day

OCT. 20:

Deadline to report members for the October Membership Growth Award

OCT. 23:

SightFirst grant application deadline for review at the January 2013 SAC

CLUB BRIEFINGS

The **Wheaton Lions Club** in **Illinois** received the 2012 Partner with Vision Award from the Spectrios Institute.

District 24 F Lions in **Virginia** joined community partners and were among 200 volunteers to observe the 1st anniversary of damaging tornadoes by planting 700 trees.

In honor of Arbor Day, the **Wilmington Lions Club** in **Ohio** donated evergreen tree seedlings to 138 fourth-graders to take home.

Jekyll Island Lions constructed and donated four picnic tables for the Lions Camp for the Blind in Waycross, **Georgia**. Each year the camp holds two work weekends during which Lions from around the state gather to work on improvement projects.

The **St. Petersburg Lions Club** in **Florida** donated and planted 87 trees in commemoration of its 87th anniversary at the new Clam Bayou Nature Preserve.

The **Venice Lions Club** in **Florida** held its Grant Night during which club members met grant recipients and learned more about how their donations to charities are being used. This year the club awarded grants totaling \$15,000 to 12 organizations.

The **Dick Dowling Lions Club** teamed up with partners and volunteers to plant 1,000 trees in **Sabine Pass, Texas**. The area lost 70 percent of its trees after Hurricane Rita in 2005 and Hurricane Ike in 2008.

CLUB BRIEFINGS

ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

In **Puerto Rico**, the **Hato Rey Lions Club** and the **University Eye Bank Lions Campus Club** participated in the annual Conservation and Restoration Fair. The Lions learned about gardening, composting and gardening and took home 20 native trees to plant.

The **Morris Lions Club** in **Illinois** sold and delivered nearly 400 dozen roses as a Mother's Day fundraiser.

The **Waunakee-Westport Lions Club** in **Wisconsin** held its sixth annual Community Health, Activity and Energy Fair, attracting more than 200 visitors who participated in health screenings, a blood drive and wellness exhibits.

The **Elgin Lions Club** in **Ontario, Canada**, made a donation to enable a health center to purchase automatic door openers.

The **Lansing Lions** in **Illinois** assisted the junior women's club with its annual veteran's appreciation dinner with a donation and volunteer help.

In **Kansas**, the **Wyandotte Lions Club** donated \$5,000 to two elementary schools for their lunch programs and planted a tree in honor of a deceased teacher.

The **Jacksonville Beach Noon Lions** in **Florida** observed Earth Day by cleaning veterans' grave markers that had suffered from neglect.

The **Lisbon Lions Club** in **New York** presented first-grade students with tree seedlings and sold trees to the public as a fundraiser.

Read more club briefs, as well as the October LCI calendar and other information, in the digital LION at www.lionmagazine.org.

LION

STAFF

Editor-in-Chief: Peter Lynch
Managing Editor: Dane La Joye
Senior Editor: Jay Copp
Associate Editor: Pamela Mohr
Assistant Editor: Jennifer Gilbert Gebhardt
Graphics Manager: Connie Schuler
Graphic Designer: Christina Jacobs
Graphic Designer: Lisa Smith
Production Manager: Mary Kay Rietz
Circulation Manager: Troy R. Jewell

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ADVERTISING SALES

Chicago
Mary Kay Rietz, Adv. Mgr.
LION, 300 W. 22nd St.
Oak Brook, IL 60523-8842
(630) 468-6880
Fax: (630) 706-9234
marykay.rietz@lionsclubs.org

East Coast

Robert Bernbach
Robert Bernbach Advertising
Representatives, Inc.
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Central US

Tom Rickert
Rickert Media, Inc.
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Pat Rickert
Rickert Media, Inc.
6710 Garfield Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55423
612-861-1991
pat.rickert@rickertmedia.com

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President Wayne A. Madden, Auburn, Indiana, United States; Immediate Past President Wing-Kun Tam, Hong Kong, China; First Vice President Barry J. Palmer, Berowra, Australia; Second Vice President Joseph Preston, Arizona, United States. Contact the officers at Lions Clubs International, 300 W. 22nd St., Oak Brook, Illinois, 60523-8842, USA.

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THANK YOU

THE LIONS CHANGED MY LIFE

A New Best Friend

When Ohioan Sami Stoner was in eighth grade, she began running cross-country and fell in love with the sport. Around that same time, she began having trouble with her vision. As Stoner's eyesight rapidly deteriorated, she and her parents went from doctor to doctor in search of the cause. Eventually she was diagnosed with Stargardt disease, a hereditary, untreatable form of juvenile macular degeneration. By the end of eighth grade, Stoner's vision was 20/300 (legal blindness is 20/200). While Stoner and her family began navigating life with vision loss, she continued to run with a friend's help for fun and stress relief. In summer 2011 a new running buddy came into her life—an energetic, smart and lovable Golden Retriever named Chloe. Unbeknownst to Stoner, Chloe had been donated to Pilot Dogs in Columbus, Ohio, by the Savannah Lions Club.

Q&A: Sami Stoner

LION Magazine: What was it like meeting Chloe for the first time?

Sami Stoner: I absolutely fell in love with her right away. I think it took her a couple of days to get used to me because she was used to her trainers. It took awhile for me to get used to putting all of my trust in a dog, but I've learned that 99 percent of the time she's right!



Sami Stoner runs at a cross-country meet, safely guided by her beloved Chloe.

LM: Did Chloe need special training to be able to run with you?

SS: Yes, for safety reasons they normally don't train dogs to run. But her trainer helped us get started to see if it would work. At first Chloe didn't know what was going on, but she loves it now. It helps her burn off some of her energy!

LM: Initially you weren't allowed to run with Chloe at cross-country meets?

SS: I didn't think it would be a problem, but it was a difficult process to get permission since across the board animals aren't allowed in sports. My athletic director worked really hard, and once we came up with a list of safety rules, they approved it.

LM: And you became the first blind athlete to compete with a guide dog in an Ohio high school sports event.

SS: When we got to run, it was the greatest. I couldn't have asked Chloe to do a better job. I hope my experience will help others like me.

LM: How did you find out the Lions had donated Chloe to Pilot Dogs?

SS: There was a newspaper article about Chloe and me, and the Lions club president got in touch with my dad. We went to a meeting and thanked them. Now we go to all of their pancake breakfasts and whatever else we can go to. If it wasn't for them we wouldn't have Chloe.

LM: Have you shared your story with many people?

SS: I've spoken to a lot of elementary schools, Scout troops and Lions clubs. I love to talk about getting Chloe and how Pilot Dogs works. It's a great chance to thank them.

LM: You'll be graduating high school soon—what's next?

SS: Chloe and I will probably end up studying psychology at Otterbein University. We love it there!

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. Email a brief description of your correspondence to lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org. Please include "Thanks and Appreciation" in the subject line.

LAST ROAR



FOOT BALL

The competitors on the soccer field displayed a herd-like mentality, often bunching up near the ball, and rumbled down the field with their heads down. But nobody complained about the subpar play, and when all was said and done the ivory-clad, four-footed squad sponsored by Multiple District 325 Lions in Nepal won the elephant soccer tournament over Kist Bank by a score of 2-1. Four teams including one sponsored by Rotary competed. The Ministry of Tourism also held an elephant race and elephant beauty pageant to promote the Sauraha area.

Photo courtesy of Past Council Chair Sanjay Khetan

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