

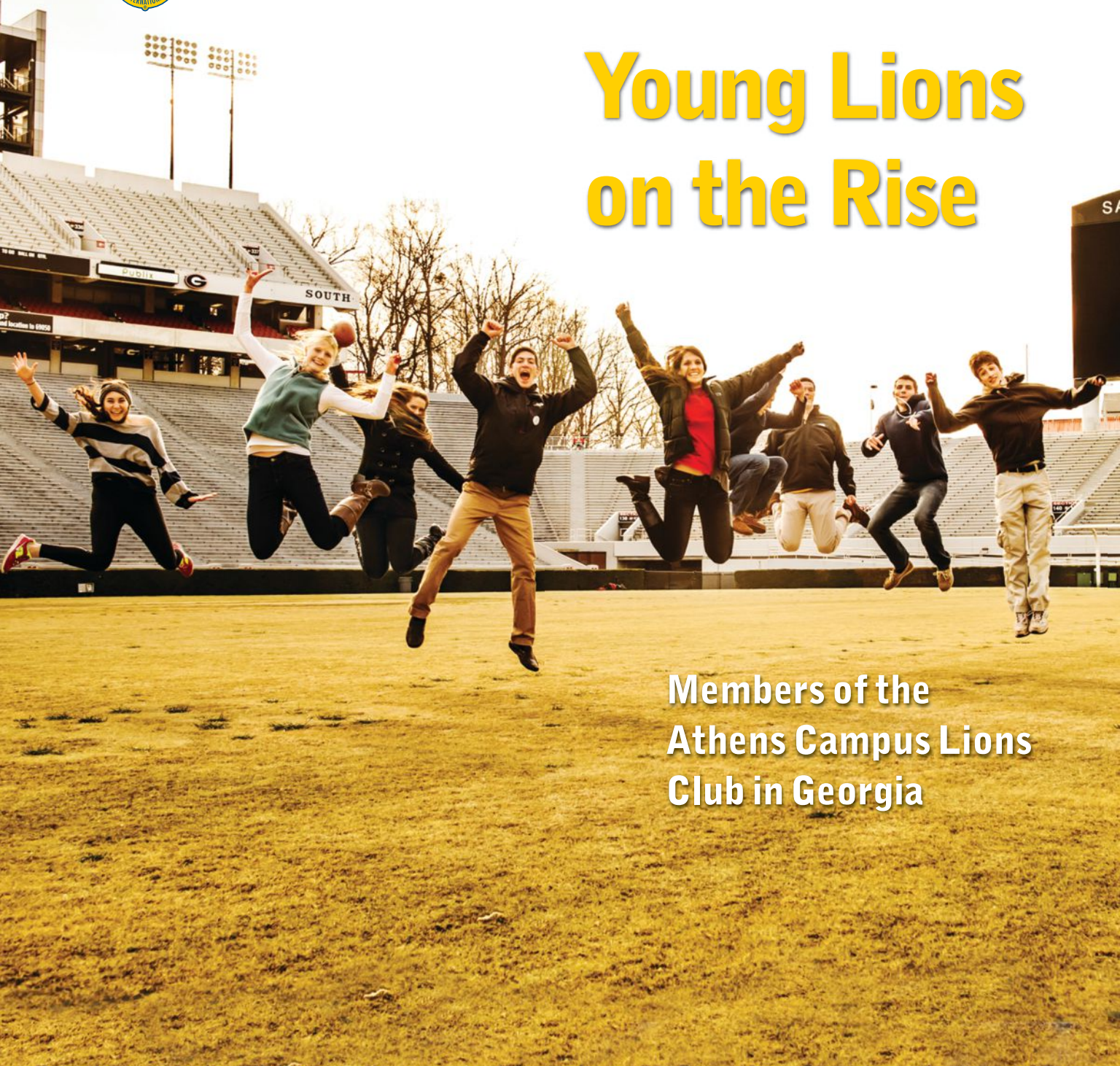
# LION



Lions Clubs International

WWW.LIONMAGAZINE.ORG SEPTEMBER 2013

## Young Lions on the Rise



Members of the  
Athens Campus Lions  
Club in Georgia

# Chicago Doctor Invents Affordable Hearing Aid

## Outperforms Many Expensive Hearing Aids

Reported by J. Page

**CHICAGO:** A local board-certified Ear, Nose, Throat (ENT) physician, Dr. S. Cherukuri, has just shaken up the hearing aid industry with the invention of a medical-grade, affordable hearing aid. **This revolutionary hearing aid is designed to help millions of people with hearing loss who cannot afford—or do not wish to pay—the much higher cost of traditional hearing aids.**

### DOCTORS AND PATIENTS AGREE: "BEST QUALITY SOUND" "LOWEST AFFORDABLE PRICE"

*"I have been wearing hearing aids for over 25 years and these are the best behind-the-ear aids I have tried. Their sound quality rivals that of my \$3,000 custom pair of Phonak Xtra digital ITE."*—Gerald Levy

*"Perhaps the best quality-to-price ratio in the hearing aid industry."*

—Dr. S. Babu Board-Certified ENT Physician, National Authority on Hearing Loss

*"I have a \$2,000 Resound Live hearing aid in my left ear and the MDHearingAid in the right ear. I am not able to notice a significant difference in sound quality between the two hearing aids."*

—Dr. May, ENT Physician

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**"Perhaps the best quality-to-price ratio in the hearing aid industry" —Dr. Babu, M.D. Board-Certified ENT Physician**

Dr. Cherukuri knew that untreated hearing loss could lead to depression, social isolation, anxiety, and symptoms consistent with Alzheimer's dementia. **He could not understand why the cost for hearing aids was so high when the prices on so many consumer electronics like TVs, DVD players, cell phones and digital cameras had fallen.**

Since Medicare and most private insurance do not cover the costs of hearing aids, which traditionally run between \$2,000-\$6,000 for a pair, many of the doctor's patients could not afford the expense. Dr. Cherukuri's goal was to find a reasonable solution that would help with the most common types of hearing loss at an affordable price, not unlike the "one-size-fits-most" reading glasses available at drug stores.

He evaluated numerous hearing devices and sound amplifiers, including those seen on television. Without fail, almost all of these were found to amplify bass/low frequencies (below 1000 Hz) and not useful in amplifying the frequencies related to the human voice.

### Inspiration From a Surprising Source

The doctor's inspiration to defeat the powers-that-be that kept inexpensive hearing aids out of the hands of the public actually came from a new cell phone he had just purchased. **"I felt that if someone could devise an affordable device like an iPhone® for about \$200 that could do all sorts of things, I could create a hearing aid at a similar price."**

### Affordable Hearing Aid With Superb Performance

The high cost of hearing aids is a result of layers of middlemen and expensive unnecessary features. Dr. Cherukuri concluded that it would be possible to develop a medical grade hearing aid without sacrificing the quality of components. The result is the MDHearingAid PRO®, starting well under \$200. **It has been declared to be the best low-cost hearing aid that amplifies the range of sounds associated with the human voice without overly amplifying background noise.**

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# A Message From Our President



**Barry J. Palmer**  
Lions Clubs  
International President

## Usher in A New Era for Lions

It's easy to be awed by athletes and entertainers, but the most impressive people I know are the women who have been part of my life. My dear mum, now 97, was loving and caring and a great role model as well, volunteering at church and school and for Scouts. As a Realtor, I hired and counted on women. I quickly learned they were particularly determined to grow their skills and be successful. As a Lion, I've been amazed by the generosity and gifts of women. As just one example, Australian Lion Pauline Henebery has run the remarkable Education Builds Bridges, enabling Lions to help disadvantaged children in Indonesia.

*Perhaps the greatest move ever made by*

*Lions Clubs International was to admit women.* Probably the second-best initiative would be to swell our ranks with them. We're lagging behind in this regard. Fifty-two percent of the world population is female, yet only 24.5 percent of Lions are women. **My dream is to increase female membership by 5.5 percent this Lions year to bring us up to 30 percent and then to achieve a 50/50 ratio by our centennial year in 2017.**

We don't want more women so we can puff out our chests and boast of membership equality. **We need the gifts and talents of women.** They bring a different perspective, a different skill set and a new bundle of can-do energy and enthusiasm. *They set goals, take on tasks and accomplish objectives in a way that men can't, don't or won't.* I don't want to stir up trouble by saying women are our better half, but they certainly are half of humanity and carry the same talents and capabilities.

Be sure to make your club welcoming to women. **Seek them out and invite them in.**



Barry J. Palmer  
Your Lions Clubs International President



Britta Huemer (right), charter president of the all-women Traunsee Allegria Lions Club in Austria, hands over the presidency to Monika Krista in a festive ceremony. The 24-member club raises funds from flea markets, traditional Christmas celebrations and an evening of cabaret for needy families and children in the Traunsee region.

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Cover and inset photo by Cassie Wright

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Adding women as members has made all the difference for a club in Wisconsin.

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Air Cadets in Canada help youths soar.



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#### WE SERVE

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LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL:

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

#### CONTACTING THE LION

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## Convention Countdown

Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
July 4-8, 2014



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

## SOUTH SUDAN JOINS THE DEN

South Sudan has become Lions' 208th country or geographic area. Members of the Juba Host Lions Club were honored during the festive flag ceremony July 7 at the 96th International Convention in Hamburg, Germany. The nation of 10 million people in east-central Africa declared its independence from Sudan in 2011 following a referendum.

## LAS VEGAS PICKED FOR CONVENTION

It's a safe bet Lions will enjoy the venue for the 2018 International Convention: Las Vegas, Nevada. The board of directors made the choice in the spring. Las Vegas also hosted the 54th International Convention in 1971. Next year Lions meet in Toronto, followed by Honolulu in 2015, Fukuoka, Japan, in 2016 and Chicago in 2017, the centennial for Lions Clubs.

## LION SAFE THANKS TO COLORADO LIONS

An African lion faced an uncertain future after authorities shut down a zoo in Nebraska after animal abuse and safety violations. Now Arthur regally roams The Wild Animal Sanctuary in Keensburg, Colorado, thanks to the Sterling Lions Club. Members agreed to feed and care for the lion for a year and possibly longer.

## JAPANESE DOCTOR ELECTED 2ND VP

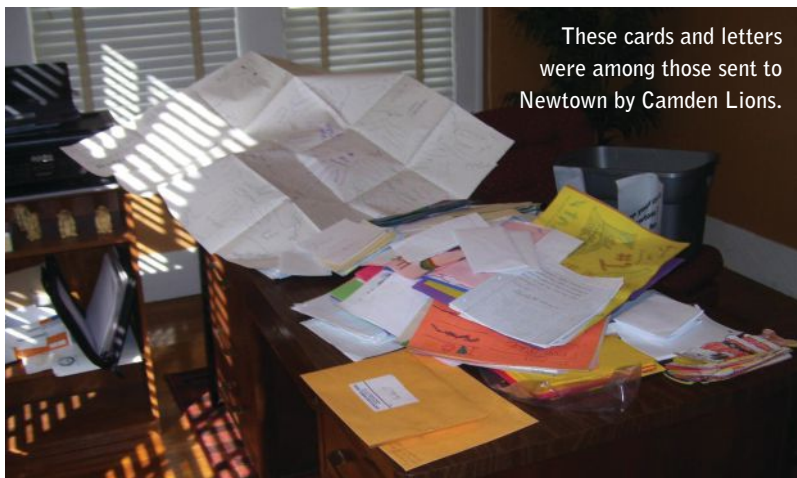
A Japanese neurosurgeon will serve as international president in 2015-16. Past International Director Dr. Jitsuhiro Yamada of Minokamo-shi, Gifu-ken, was elected international second vice president July 9 at the 96th International Convention in Hamburg, Germany. (Full coverage of the convention will be in the October LION.) The director of a hospital, Yamada, 69, joined the Minokamo Lions Club in 1985 and served as an international director from 2005-07. His wife, Toshiko, also is a doctor. Yamada will follow current President Barry J. Palmer of Australia and First International Vice President Joe Preston of Arizona, who will be president in 2014-15.



Dr. Jitsuhiro Yamada of Japan

## ARKANSAS CLUB HELPS NEWTOWN

How to respond after the tragic elementary school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut? Camden Lions in Arkansas poured out their sympathies by coordinating the delivery of more than 700 cards and letters to Newtown. Lions set up five drop-off locations in their city of 12,000 and shipped the cards within weeks of the shooting. Many of the heartfelt letters were written by Camden schoolchildren.



These cards and letters were among those sent to Newtown by Camden Lions.

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All my friends have new cell phones. They carry them around with them all day, like mini computers, with little tiny keyboards and hundreds of programs which are supposed to make their life easier. Trouble is... my friends can't use them. The keypads are too small, the displays are hard to see and the phones are so complicated that my friends end up borrowing my Jitterbug when they need to make a call. I don't mind... I just got a new phone too... **the new Jitterbug Plus. Now I have all the things I loved about my Jitterbug phone along with some great new features that make it even better!**

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# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

ONE OF US

## GWENYTH "WENDY" WILSON

Diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at age 2, Gwentyth "Wendy" Wilson lost her eyesight in her early 30s because of diabetic retinopathy. She's weathered many hardships, including the death of her husband, financial troubles and illness. Through it all, she's retained an unflappable, positive outlook, an infectious sense of humor and a dedication to serving. Wilson logs more than 100 hours monthly volunteering for causes close to her heart—an accomplishment that merited an award from the Points of Light Foundation. Wilson credits her DeLand Lions family in Florida as a great source of support and inspiration, but they have also learned from her how to better serve the visually impaired.



Wilson holds her macaw, Casey, who says "hello" every time the phone rings.

### **Why do you love volunteering so much?**

I do it because I love people. And I know how grateful I was when I was in need and someone helped me. Regarding helping visually impaired people, I've been there, done that, so I'm happy to help them find the resources.

### **What are some ways you assist visually impaired people?**

I help out with the National Federation of the Blind Newsline. People can call in and listen to close to 400 different newspapers over the phone. At the Impaired Vision Resource Foundation, we help connect people to resources. I also assist in teaching a class for health care students and professionals called Assisting Persons with Limited Vision.

### **What do students learn in the class?**

They learn how to properly approach and guide a visually impaired person, arrange things so a blind person can find them, etc. My friend Ray Siracusa teaches the class, and I'm there to answer questions. I try to make the students comfortable so they can ask me anything.

### **What's the most popular question?**

They always want to know how I put my makeup on. I tell them I stand in front of the bathroom mirror. Even though I can't see it, that's where I've always put my makeup on!

### **Why did you help develop this class?**

People don't always know how to interact with visually impaired people. When I was in the hospital, they would leave my meals without telling me and I spilled a meal tray. They wouldn't identify what they were doing or would walk away without telling me. People will speak very loudly and slowly. The point is, we're human—just because we lost our eyesight doesn't mean we've lost our intelligence or hearing. I often laugh about it, but I also want to help people understand these things.

### **You also have a passion for animals.**

I'm a sucker for animals. I have a full house—two dogs, three cats, a parrot, two doves and a disabled macaw. Once a month I volunteer for HELP Animals, Inc., when they hold low-cost vaccination clinics. I get to play with the animals and hold them. It's like therapy.

Find out more about the NFB Newsline at  
<https://nfb.org/audio-newspaper-service>.

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Do you 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](mailto:lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org). Please include "One of Us" in the subject line.

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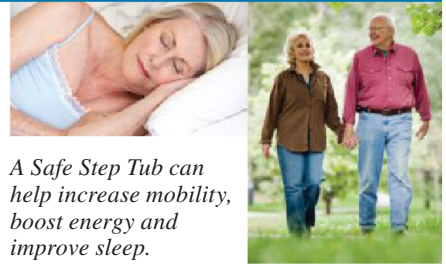
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# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

## CLUB OF THE MONTH

TOWNSEND, MASSACHUSETTS

### YEAR FOUNDED: 1966

**MEETINGS AND MEMBERS:** The Townsend Lions gather twice monthly for meetings. A board meeting is held the first Tuesday of the month, and the Lions enjoy a dinner meeting on the third Tuesday. Members range in age from 45 to 80 and include a real estate agent, chef, bank manager and contractor.

**RUGGED RACE:** For the past 30 years, one of the Lions' annual highlights is their Squannacook River 2 Man Canoe & Kayak Race. Approximately 100 participants navigate their canoes and kayaks down the six-mile route. Because the area is environmentally protected, debris is not removed, so racers have the added challenge of carrying their boats over or around several natural obstacles on the course. The Lions work for months to prepare for the event, and on race day they do everything from registering racers to cooking breakfast to presenting awards to the top finishers.

**AN EVERGREEN TRADITION:** Lions can't be found shopping the day after Thanksgiving—they're busy with their first day of Christmas tree sales. For more than 40 years the club has sold locally grown trees on the Townsend common, ordering between 300 and 350 trees and staffing the sale until the last tree is tied. The Lions' trees are an important part of many residents' annual Christmas traditions.

**MOVING FORWARD:** To build on their successful long-standing projects, the Lions have recently tried out some new ideas. They held their second annual benefit concert last spring featuring a Beatles cover band, Rubber Soul, and have held an electronics recycling event each fall for the past couple of years. Both projects have proved promising, helping the Lions achieve and expand their service goals.

**WHY BE A LION?** "Community service is its own reward. The Townsend Lions Club is focused solely on service, with no ulterior motivations."—Lion Laura Harrington



A strong team paddles in the Lions' Squannacook River 2 Man Canoe & Kayak Race.

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# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS



## 29 YEARS AGO IN THE LION SEPT. 1984

Lions Clubs International teams up with Quest, which develops programs for youths, and entertainer Bill Cosby to curb drug abuse among youths. Cosby writes an essay for the textbook for the project's Skills for Adolescence program for grades 6 to 8. "I'm a parent of five children and, believe me, there have certainly been occasions when I wished I had the benefit of Quest's programs," Cosby tells the LION. LCI's partnership with Quest later evolved into Lions Quest, LCI's school-based, life-skills program for youths.

## OVERHEARD

**"It's hard to hate someone you know."**

—Past Council Chair Melvin Murphree on the Pelham Lions Club Multicultural Festival in Alabama. From the Birmingham News.

**"When I was there, I didn't feel like I was 'the only one' like me."**

—Emily Clark, 10, who has battled cancer, on her time at the Louisiana Lions Camp program for children with special needs. From NOLA.com.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### 20

Eyeglasses collected by Greenfield Lions in Indiana at performances of "The Miracle Worker" at the H. J. Ricks Theatre.

### 80

Bottles of wine available for patrons at the Wine & Epicurean Delights Extravaganza of the Coon Rapids Lions in Minnesota.

### 4

Bulletproof vests provided to the Haddonfield police auxiliary by Haddonfield Lions in New Jersey.

### 23

Pans of hot lasagna fed to 250 people at a food pantry at a dinner held by Elverson Morgantown Lions in Pennsylvania.

### 80

Hours of labor spent by Sunshine Coast Lions in British Columbia, Canada, to build a wrap-around deck at a new community center.

### 64

Graduates in 2012 of the Muskingum Valley Safetytown in Ohio where children learn about fires, poisons, dogs and other threats. Beverly Lions sponsor the nine-day camp.

### 300

Young students in Hawaii whose eyesight was tested in a joint project of Lions and soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team's 1st Battalion 27th Infantry Regiment.

### 3

Digital recording cameras installed on police car dashboards in New Holland, Pennsylvania, thanks to donations of New Holland Lions and two businesses.

**"We started volunteering for the community theater as ushers. People like to see the Lions and their yellow vests."**

—Past International Director Art Marson on the involvement of the La Crosse Lions in Wisconsin. From WKBT News8000.

## ON THE WEB

Follow LCI on Google+, the second largest social networking site in the world. Join other members in tracking and sharing Lions' news from around the world. Make comments, share photos and chat with social circles. See a post you like? Click on the "+1" button to provide instant feedback. Find LCI at <https://plus.google.com/+lionsclubs> and click on the "follow" button to get connected.

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*WOW! The perfect name for this amazing computer. I have been using it for about a month and thoroughly enjoy the speed and ease in which I am able to download pictures from my camera and share them with family and friends via email. Everything is so easy to use at the touch of my fingertips. To be able to chat with and see my grandchildren is as though they are here with me. I haven't begun to explore all the benefits of this computer. It has opened up a whole new world for me. I love it, love it, love it!*

*– Carol K., Benbrook, TX*



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## History Lessons in Colorado Educate and Inspire Students

Author Teresa Funke of Fort Collins, Colorado, set out to make a difference when she feared that school budget cuts were shortchanging history lessons. She says her own love of history had led her to write historical fiction for young readers so they could learn about the contributions of the men, women and children of the World War II era. During school assemblies and inside classrooms, Funke's presentations keep the compelling stories of another generation alive through her "Home-Front Heroes" series of books.

Some of her biggest supporters are members of the Fort Collins Lions Club, who have embraced the Do Your Part School Kit Program created by Funke ([www.teresafunke.com](http://www.teresafunke.com)). They've donated more than 500 books to schools in the last two years and sponsored her presentations to more than 1,000 students. In turn, Funke has supported Lions by collecting used eyeglasses for them during some of her appearances.

"The Do Your Part School Kit Program enabled us to donate books and teaching materials to needy schools in our area," says Lion Irene Toliver. "We believe our young people need to know the history of our country. As a former teacher, I am concerned that a lot of kids today aren't really learning about World War II, history and geography."

Funke uses her tales to connect young readers to their country's past. Toliver, who accompanies Funke on her school presentations, says the author motivates youngsters to try their hand at creative writing by setting up scenarios for them to elaborate on and continue in their own words. "I want to help older kids understand how writing will directly affect their life goals," says Funke. "I do an exercise where they tell me what they want to be when they grow up, and I tell them ways writing will affect their success in those specific jobs. With kids, it's key to make it real to them."

"These kids are in awe of her," says Toliver. "They sit there with their eyes wide open. When Teresa is talking, no one moves." Toliver estimates that Lions have spent \$2,000 to bring Funke's presentations to hundreds of schoolchildren in four years.



**Teresa Funke hands out copies of her books to students during a presentation.**

"I tell students how children made a huge difference during the World War II era—how they literally helped us win that war. I show all the things children did to help the war effort, and you can hear a pin drop in a gymnasium full of children when that slide show runs," Funke says. "Most of these kids have never heard of Adolph Hitler or Pearl Harbor or anything about World War II, which is the reason I wrote the books. In fact, 26 percent of high school graduates don't know who Adolph Hitler was. If that's not scary, I don't know what is."

Lions raise approximately \$50,000 a year by operating twice-weekly bingo games. Much of that money is recycled back into the community and its schools, where Lions plan to continue sponsoring Funke's presentations. "Many kids have parents away serving in the military," says Toliver. "They feel such a strong connection to Teresa's stories. It helps them to know what their sacrifice means to our country."

—Pamela Mohr

#### PROMOTE YOUR CLUB

Publicize your projects to let people know who the Lions are in your community—and where to find them.

#### CAPTURE THE MOMENT

Designate a Lion who has camera skills to record your service projects and let LION Magazine see the results for possible inclusion.

#### INCLUDE ALL MEMBERS

Plan occasional service and social activities to include Lions with young families so every member can attend.

## Celebrating New Families

When children are adopted into their “forever” families in the District Courts of Lubbock County, Texas, they find they have another happy surprise for them—a stuffed toy that comes complete with an official adoption certificate signed by the judge—just like their own. The Adopted Bears project was the idea of the District Clerk’s Office, Lubbock Legal Professionals and the office of the Child Protective Services Judge, says Lubbock Raider Ranch Lion Jeri Saffle, a former certified legal assistant. The bears are all donated.

“Bears were brought to my office for several months and then donated at the first National Adoption Day event held in Lubbock County. Not all activities that occur at the courthouse are happy occasions,” points out District Clerk Barbara Sucsy. “So when an event like National Adoption Day is held, the community participates and shares the joys of families who are blessed with the addition of a child or several children on that day.”

Lions have donated more than 100 stuffed bears and other soft animals since the project began in 2010, the same year the Raider Ranch Lions Club was chartered. Lions personally donated bears since the club hadn’t sponsored any fundraising activities yet, Saffle says. The plush toys are given only to children who are adopted through the court system and not private agencies.

Before Lions stepped in to donate, local law offices, court employees and individuals contributed bears for adoption. “The number of adoptions has so increased, they were not keeping up with the need,” she adds. Lions delivered a new shipment of plush toys before the supply was depleted.

During the moving courthouse ceremony Saffle witnessed on National Adoption Day in November, she says the judge advised children to take care of their new stuffed toys “just as your new parents will take care of you.”

The club is composed mostly of retirees. They are currently selling recycling inkjet cartridges to raise money and have provided lumber for a blind Lion to build planters for residents of an assisted living facility to use for gardening.



Teddy bears donated by Lions complete a happy day for children on National Adoption Day in Lubbock, Texas.

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# LIONS ON LOCATION

YOUR GUIDE TO THE GREAT WORK WE'RE DOING AROUND THE WORLD



THE BEIRUT GATE LIONS IN LEBANON HELD THEIR ANNUAL GALA DINNER IN HONOR OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS GOLD MEDALIST GHASSAN ABLDENOUR.

1 OCEANIA NEW ZEALAND



Campers learn the kapa haka.

## Fun Is Indigenous for Campers

When in New Zealand, do as the Maori do. The 41 participants at a recent International Youth Camp in New Zealand swam, jet skied, climbed rocks, bowled, mini-golfed and enjoyed other youthful activities. But they also slept on a marae, prepared food for the hangi and mastered the kapa haka—all part of the culture of the Maori, the indigenous people of New Zealand.

“We had an action-packed itinerary, and come rain or shine, managed to fit everything in,” says Stu Gray, camp director. “They were an amazing group of young adults and great ambassadors for their countries.” The youths came from Australia, Austria, Brazil, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico and New Zealand.

The eight Lions clubs that hosted the camp made sure the youths interacted and bonded. An opening ceremony included an ice breaker event. The Whakatane Sunshine Coast Lions then hosted a tea that introduced the campers to Maori culture and protocol. New Year’s Day included card games and movies. The youths shared their own culture through a Country of Origin concert.

In between the outdoor fun and impromptu socializing the youths learned about the Maori. They spent a night on a marae, an area of cleared, rectangular land bordered with stones or wooden posts. They used a hangi, or earth oven, to cook dinner. And forget about the hokey pokey—they did the kapa haka, a mesmerizing Maori dance.

2 CENTRAL AMERICA COSTA RICA



## Christmas Comes Early in Costa Rica

Living in a remote wooded spot in ramshackle homes and struggling to feed and clothe their children, several families in Costa Rica were visited by Lions and Leos bearing gifts. Santo Domingo Lions and Santo Domingo de Heredia Leos delivered food and toys to the families, who gratefully received the gifts and warmly thanked their benefactors.



**THE ANTIGUA LIONS CLUB IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA HAS CONDUCTED VISION SCREENINGS FOR MORE THAN 2,000 STUDENTS AT 44 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OVER THE PAST YEAR.**



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**THE FORT BEAUFORT LIONS COMPLETED 186 LAPS ON A 400 METER TRACK IN THE RELAY FOR LIFE TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE CANCER ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA.**

# The Art of Making a Living

Lions in Dieppe, a French coastal city founded in the Middle Ages, have discovered that the past is a key to the securing of the future of working-class youths. The Dieppe Doyen Lions Club holds an all-day forum in which stone cutters, sculptors, glass workers, specialized roofers and other artisans involved in restoring and maintaining historic buildings showcase their talents.

The artists demonstrate that the durable beauty of the ancient castles, churches and other structures of Europe is no accident. Last year at the forum a mosaic artist created a likeness of the Duchesse of Berry (a legendary figure who invented sea bathing), a glass expert restored a church's stained glass window and a thatcher explained the intricacies involved in repairing a thatched roof. The artisans answer questions about their livelihood, and the Lions, who partner with tourist officials and other regional authorities on the forum, produce a colorful, 30-page brochure on opportunities as an artisan.

Besides the artisans, students from technical high schools display their abilities with woodworking, ironwork and cabinetry. Attending the forum are students from area middle and high schools as well as local residents interested in preservation and restoration. The Art Heritage Career Forum has drawn more than 2,500 attendees in its nine-year history.

A member of the Dieppe Doyen Lions Club who is the CEO of a company that restores historic buildings provides guidance for the project. "Our club pursues a simple ideal: encourage manual labor and show that local artisans are successful while supporting our heritage," says Claude Landais, project coordinator.



Aspiring sculptors learn the craft at the Art Heritage Career Forum.

4 EUROPE ITALY



A team races toward the finish line.

## Barrels of Fun in Italian Town

Roll out the barrel. Ring out the name of Lions.

That's the idea behind the zany barrel race held by the Garda Valtenesi Lions Club in Italy. Five-person teams run and roll a barrel, emblazoned with the Lions logo, along a 1.5-mile course through the city streets. The fun competition is about bragging rights: the winning team receives a colorful banner, proudly displayed either in the city hall of the first-place team or at the offices of the sponsoring sports company.

"The aim of this project is to involve youth, sports companies, wine manufacturers and the community in general and to make Lions better known in their communities," according to the Italian edition of LION Magazine.

Lions in China show their fun side.



THE BIRATNAGAR LIONS AND LEOS IN NEPAL PROVIDED RELIEF PACKAGES AND HELPED REBUILD HOMES FOR VICTIMS OF A FIRE THAT DEVASTATED A VILLAGE.

## Plants Bloom in South Africa, Membership Grows

Lions in Still Bay (Stilbaai in Afrikaans), a seaside village on the Western Cape of the Republic of South Africa, belong to a community prized as a popular tourist destination. Its population of around 6,000 swells during summer holiday season to nearly 40,000. The sunny seashore is hardly the only attraction—visitors flock to a rare “fynbos” park comprised of vegetation native to the area. Famed for its biodiversity, South Africa is the only place fynbos are found. The park has 173 different species of native plants (11 on the endangered list) on 3.5 acres. The plants are extraordinary in that they only grow in the alkaline soil found in the region. These plants are believed to have helped early humankind survive during the planet’s ice age that killed off early species and vegetation 180,000 years ago.

Lions wanted all visitors to share in the beauty of this unique botanical wonder. They volunteered 120 hours of their labor and donated more than ZAR\$35,000 (US\$4,210) to create a wheelchair-accessible Braille trail, complete with a sensory garden and a small waterfall to provide the exhilarating sound of falling waters. The club spent another several hundred dollars purchasing benches and plants.

Working with their hands to create something beautiful and useful during the two-month construction phase created plenty of attention in the community. “Our media coverage and the way Lions represent themselves in public also make a positive contribution,” says Lion Bettie Kastner. “We are seen serving.”

A rope railing on the trail guides blind visitors, who are alerted to stop at one of the 20 items of interest by wooden knobs fitted on the rope. A short concrete pillar at each stopping point bears a small plaque that details each plant in both Braille and print. Plantings by Lions are both exceptionally fragrant and hardy enough to withstand touching by the blind as they feel different textures.

The surge of publicity and good will for Still Bay Lions has continued after the trail’s official unveiling. “We were on the verge of closing down,” says Kastner. “The project ‘resurrected’ us. Since then we have nearly doubled our membership.”



Lions plant a fragrant shrub, to be described in Braille and written words on the concrete pillar.

Watch a funny video about Lionism in Malaysia.

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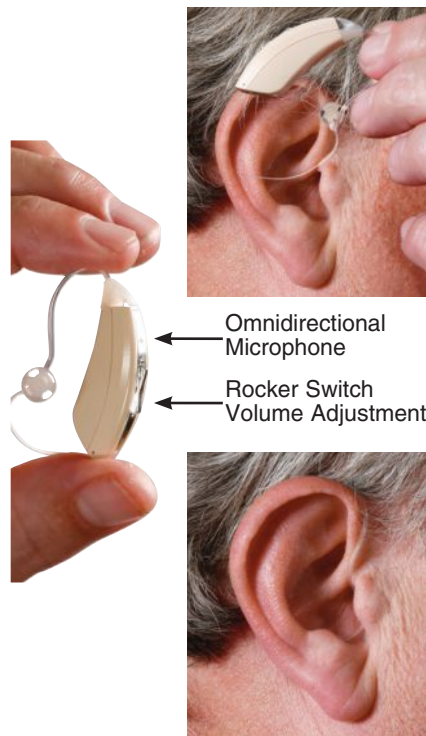
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# MAKING THE GRADE

Think college students are all about studying and having fun? A thriving campus club in Georgia shows that service also is a powerful draw.

by Lori Johnston

On an unexpectedly frigid day, several members of the Athens Campus Lions Club gather outside the student center at the University of Georgia (UGA) to sell neon tank tops to pre-spring breakers. Bundled up in fleece jackets, except for one brave coat-less male student modeling a bright green tank top, students hawk the shirts to raise money to counter blindness.

The \$10 tank tops didn't mention Lions clubs or the cause. Instead, the message on the hot pink, orange, green and yellow tank tops was chosen to appeal to student buyers. The shirts bore the image of an iconic plastic cup, often used at parties, and the phrase "Hydrate Responsibly."

"When you have something to sell like this, college kids are all over it," says Jaclyn Gaffey, a founding member who hand-drew the shirt's design.

Hawking the shirts, the students collected \$1,500 for VisionWalk, an event in Atlanta for the Foundation Fighting Blindness supported by other Lions clubs. Sales took off via the campus club's website and Facebook page before the students even set up the table on campus. The club swiped credit cards using an iPad app and PayPal account, and even collected a few additional donations.

The effort didn't just serve as a fundraiser but also promoted the Lions to students passing through the Tate Student Center, just across the street from Sanford Stadium, home of the beloved football team.

"Most people didn't know a campus could have a Lions club," says Kimberly Cramer, wearing skinny jeans and boots, the standard seasonal attire among UGA females. "They didn't know Lions reached out to the younger generation."

The Athens Campus Lions Club is among 467 campus

clubs in 54 nations. It's one of the newer ones. Begun three years ago thanks to one energetic student's vision, it has grown to more than 60 members. In between classes and jobs, the student—Lions plant trees on campus, mentor younger students off campus, raise thousands for blindness and spend countless hours volunteering and fundraising.

Charter president Erik Krumins fully realized the impact of Lions around the world when he attended his first Lions Clubs Annual International Convention three years ago in Sydney, Australia. Accompanying him was his grandfather, Joseph Wroblewski, the 1985-86 international president of Lions.

"When I got to UGA, this made me search for a Lions club," said Krumins, an economics major from Connecticut. "When I found out they didn't have one, that's when I took the opportunity to start one."

The fact that Krumins arrived on campus as a freshman, knowing no other student, didn't hinder his vision for the Lions to have a presence at UGA, which has 30,000 students. He asked his professors for permission to briefly speak to his 300-student lecture classes, encouraging the freshmen and sophomores to give Lions a try.

"When I told them Lions is the largest service organization in the world and how many members they had worldwide, I think that is what really drew people in," Krumins says.

Classmates, as well as fraternity friends and sorority members, joined as charter members. Some members' grandparents had been involved in Lions. Boosting their resume with volunteer work also appealed to some students, but Krumins believes students genuinely want to give back to their community.

---

Adam Goren stands on his hands to draw customers for the tanks tops hawked by Erik Krumins and Haley Ojeda.

Photos by Cassie Wright





Club members pal around with one another on campus at the University of Georgia.

“A lot of students who are really active in our club want the hands-on experience that Lions can offer them,” he says. “It’s gone beyond my expectations, which is amazing.”

Wing-Kun Tam, 2011-12 international president, attended the November 2011 charter ceremony. His presence demonstrated to members the Lions’ excitement about their new campus chapter. The Athens Campus Lions Club members now include students ranging from freshman to seniors and represent a variety of majors, including business, pre-med and communications.

From planting 62 trees on campus (contributing to the Lions’ goal to plant 1 million trees internationally) to playing dodgeball and tutoring elementary school students, the club seeks to make an impact and leave a legacy at the college.

“A lot of people think it’s cool when we tell them about it. It’s a student-run, member-oriented club,” says Gaffey, who plans to attend medical school after graduation. “We do fundraising, but we go out and plant the trees and actually volunteer.”

Paulina Bounds, a lecturer in the English department at UGA who served as one of the club’s Guiding Lions, has been impressed with the club’s ability to get so many members from the onset, then to retain members and grow. The club is professionally run and includes students of many interests and backgrounds, she adds.

“People are continuing to be in the club, which I think shows they’re doing a good job,” Bounds says. “I really like that they’re utilizing what they have, which is their youth. They’re not just focused on campus itself, but they’re also going out to the community and contributing locally, which I think is rewarding for them and very exciting and positive.”

As the students work together, they form bonds that last beyond a specific fundraiser or volunteer effort. The club’s most active members have become a tight-knit group, often grabbing dinner together. They hang out in their dorms and apartments and bring dates to club social events, such as a sushi and karaoke night. Boyfriends and girlfriends are members of the club, and even exes remain involved.



## LEADING BY SERVING

Adam Goren, the student who wore the green shirt without a jacket during the tank top sales, walks into the club's weekly meeting on campus. He stretches out on a row of desks, saying, "It's been a long day of Lions. I'm exhausted."

A finance major, Goren has become so involved that even his fraternity brothers have nicknamed him "Simba," after the iconic character in "The Lion King."

"I think of myself as a Lion. It's definitely part of my identity," says Goren, recruitment chairperson, wearing a plastic wristband that says "We Serve" with the club's website. He passes them out to students to promote the club.

Goren, a fraternity member, joined Lions because of the opportunity to be a leader in establishing a campus organization. "Those are things they don't teach you in classes," he says.

## LIONS CLUBS TARGET YOUNGER PEOPLE

The Athens Campus Lions Club is one of 86 campus Lions clubs in the United States and one of 467 worldwide. The clubs count 10,710 members. The campus clubs are a sign of hope that Lions Clubs International can attract younger people and stay vital for decades to come.

International President Barry Palmer is urging clubs to recruit women and younger adults. "I love older people. I'm not a teenager myself," he told attendees of the international convention in Hamburg in July. "But we need a mix of younger and older if we want to keep attracting new members."

A recent survey by Lions Clubs International of former Lions revealed that a low number of younger members was a primary cause of dissatisfaction with their club. The average age of a U.S. Lion is 61 and it's 60 for Canadian Lions.

President Palmer is encouraging clubs to hold a Family Week in April to attract a more diverse membership. Clubs are asked to invite family members to plant trees, work a pancake breakfast or help with another family-friendly project.

The large numbers of Leos also is another sign of hope that service draws in younger people. The United States and affiliates have 1,593 Leo clubs and Canada has 101. (Actual numbers of Leos are not known.)

Numerous studies show that younger people volunteer in large numbers. More than half of American teenagers and young adults volunteered during the course of a year, according to a study by DoSomething.org, a group working to get young people involved in social change.

As the meeting begins, there's no official call to order, or singing of the national anthem or funny songs. Krumins, wearing jeans and a blue hoodie instead of a Lions vest that leaders of other clubs sometimes wear, provides updates about fundraisers and upcoming activities including their biggest event yet. The upcoming Rumble in the Jungle 5K will benefit the American Cancer Society.

The Athens Campus Lions Club embraces the idea of doing service across the board. Not limiting itself to a single cause allows the club to partner with other campus and community organizations, including other Lions clubs. Members can suggest any idea, such as serving meals at a homeless shelter, recycling in student apartments or composting dining hall scraps. They'll attract other students gung-ho about a cause. During the meetings, students work in teams to create plans and put them into action.

"Anything you want to do, it [our club] gives you a place to get it organized and make it happen," Gaffey says. "They can bring their own cause to life."

At a point in life when students feel pressed for time and money, the club also allows students to pick and choose how they want to be involved in events and fundraisers. Gaffey says the club doesn't require members to attend every activity.

"They have a bunch of different opportunities, and you can work with other organizations," adds Cramer, an applied biotechnology major and French minor. "I'm kind of a shy person when voicing opinions and ideas. The Athens Campus Lions Club helped me do that more and to speak out."

The freedom in the club works to its benefit. Now that the Athens Campus Lions Club has a reputation for hard work, Krumins often received invitations to be involved with other campus organizations and local Lions clubs.

"We have created a club that I, 100 percent, believe will be around after we graduate," Goren says.

## CREATING A LEGACY

The thud of bowling balls and the clattering of pins drowns out the conversation at an Athens bowling alley, but Athens Campus Lion Club members keep chattering while raising money for a local nonprofit that serves individuals with disabilities. The Athens Heritage Club is hosting the bowl-a-thon, just one of the opportunities the students have to partner with older Lions.

"They've invited us out to events like these," Krumins says, wearing a yellow and blue Lions Club T-shirt and jeans. Other club members, dressed in khakis and ties, have taken a break from a daylong fraternity event to bowl for a good cause.

The Athens Lions also do direct, hands-on service. After members showed interest in mentoring children, the club partnered with a local Boys & Girls Club and a community center that hosts an after-school program. Wearing their yellow and blue Lions Club T-shirts, the college students help the children with their homework and play sports, even organizing a kickball tournament last fall. "I can't think of better people to be mentoring these kids than our club members who are at a university with so

many opportunities. We are able to support these kids and share with them the opportunities they can have in the future," Krumins says. "We can let them know the importance of getting a good education."

The club also has served at a pancake breakfast fundraiser hosted by the Athens Classic City Lions Club.

Dhruv Bhavsar, vice president of the campus club, says he had heard about Lions from his grandfather. But he also saw Lions as a way to build his professional network through relationships with students and older Lions. As a charter member, Bhavsar put his tech skills to use and increased his management skills while making new friends.

"I have met people inside the club that I wouldn't have met at UGA," Bhavsar, a management of information systems major and a fraternity member. "I'm definitely going to stay involved with Lions once I graduate."

Students connect with older Lions weekly by visiting their meetings and volunteering. The students' enthusiasm for volunteering is something Bounds thinks can result in a lifetime of volunteering as a Lion. She believes that when students graduate, they will be more likely to seek out Lions and can bring their ideas and energetic attitude to clubs.

A few members have thanked Krumins for starting the campus club because they desire to remain involved, creating a new generation of Lions. Krumins says, "They can always reach out in their community or hopefully start a club where there's not one."



Leos shake and shimmy to the latest dance craze.

*“I have met people inside the club that I wouldn’t have met at UGA. I’m definitely going to stay involved with Lions once I graduate.”*



Club members have followed the lead of charter president Erik Krumins (center). The Lions are (from left) Jaclyn Gaffey, Wilson Blanchard, Mackenzie Bourne, Pierce Gonzalez, Haley Ojeda, Krumins, Hayley Blizzard, Adam Goren, Alyson Radetsky, Joseph Goldstein and Kimberly Cramer.

# Multiplication by Addition

President Palmer is urging clubs to add more women. A club in a small town in Wisconsin has long known that welcoming and empowering women as members pays multiple dividends.

by Elizabeth Blackwell

*Wisconsin's First City* boasts the sign that leads into Abbotsford, population 2,100. Technically speaking, it's true—if by “first” you mean alphabetically, not historically. That little inside joke offers a telling example of how the people of Abbotsford regard their hometown. They may face the same economic and demographic shifts that have challenged other small towns around the country, yet they have maintained a strong sense of civic pride, with the Lions in town playing a key role.

“The Lions have a big impact,” says Jenny Jakel, executive vice president at the community-owned AbbyBank. “They do a lot of city improvements and support our students in the local schools. We frequently see them out at events, and people here are very supportive of them.”

The brochure that the Lions in Abbotsford hand out to prospective members lists 25 different projects and charitable causes that they support, an impressive commitment for a 38-member club. Its work spans all aspects of Abbotsford life. Lions provide scholarships and recognition awards to high achievers at the local schools; they also sponsor family-friendly activities such as an annual Easter egg hunt and the local Boy Scout and Cub Scout troops. They have donated garbage cans and planted trees as part of an ongoing town-wide beautification project.

The Abbotsford Lions also look beyond their own borders. They are active with the Eye Bank of Wisconsin, taking on shifts to drive donations across the state. They volunteer at the Wisconsin Lions Camp, which hosts children with visual and hearing impairments, cognitive dis-

abilities and diabetes. As part of the Wisconsin Lions Foundation, they also have volunteered on screening missions to Mexico, Honduras and Nicaragua.

Lions in Abbotsford don't hesitate to explain why their club has been so successful: they enjoy service. They enjoy one another's company. And they use the considerable talents of a segment of the population once absent from the club: women. Without women, the club may have withered and, and if not disbanded, certainly shrunk in influence and impact. With women, empowered within the club and often in charge, the Abbotsford Club has been able to maintain and even increase its service footprint.

Many of the club members are married couples, who volunteer together and support each other when they take on leadership roles. The club is split evenly between male and female members. Over the past decade, about three out of four of the key officers have been women.

When the Abbotsford Lions Club was founded in 1968, “it was mainly businessmen who played poker and drank beer after the meetings,” says Jim Schiferl, 75, a real-estate broker and longtime club member. At the time, Abbotsford's economy was dominated by dairy farming, and Highway 29, one of central Wisconsin's main east-west routes, ran through the middle of town, bringing traffic to the local hardware store, clothing shop and other businesses along Main Street.

But over the decades, modernization took its toll. The highway was expanded and rebuilt to bypass Abbotsford. One by one, stores along Main Street shut down. Large



The Abbotsford Lions Club is a harmonious mix of men and women including (front row from left) Dr. Andy Baldus, Pauline Schiferl, Jim Weix; (middle) Jim Schiferl, Bonnie Weix, Bob Morrow, MaryAnn Morrow; (back) and Angela Faber, Logan Weix and Paula Ruesch.

agricultural corporations bought out the family farms, and Abbyland Foods, a meat-processing company, became one of the largest employers in town, attracting a sizeable immigrant, Latino workforce.

The town evolved and changed, and Lions decided that staying the same was tantamount to surrender and failure. Women were quickly admitted in 1987 when Lions Clubs International changed its policy to accept them, and the club was reborn.

"I battled for women to join from the very beginning," recalls Schiferl, who had worked alongside his wife, Pauline, in the Jaycees. "The very first time I met an international director, I brought it up. The ladies had a very positive influence on our club. They communicate better than we guys do, and they know how to get people involved."

Pauline Schiferl, 73, a retired nurse, joined the club as soon as women were accepted. She was voted president soon after. "Before that, I had worked with my husband on projects, but it was nice to finally be able to share my own ideas," she says. The Schiferls, who soon realized how helpful it was to have another Lion around the house, began to focus on recruiting more couples. The once male bastion became a more family-oriented gathering, more in tune with the times and with what people in town wanted.

But club leaders soon came up against a common complaint: families didn't want to take on the financial burden of double dues. So the club got the jump on Lions Clubs International and made a significant policy change. "We never charged much for our local club dues, but we decided to charge spouses half," says Pauline. "When we need to cover expenses, we'd just ask people to put money in an administrative fund." The club's spouse discount was a key factor in its ability to attract both men and women, and the Abbotsford Lions strongly believed it should become general policy. "Whenever we went to an International Convention, we would bug the directors about it," says Pauline. "When it finally passed [effective in 2007], we were elated."

Lessening the financial burden on families was just one way the club adapted its policies to attract new members. Five years ago, it was decided that in order to accommodate busy schedules dinner would no longer be part of regular meetings. "We've always had to work for members," says Pauline. "They don't fall into your lap. You can't get complacent, and we've always been active on the state and district level, so we can find out what other clubs are doing."

Paula Reusch, the office coordinator for the Abbotsford-Colby Area Chamber of Commerce, joined four years

ago, when she was 58. "I knew just about everybody in the club, and I was looking for a way to be more involved in community events," she says. Reusch, who was president last year, admits that it is hard to recruit women members until—like her—their children are grown and out of the house. "We're a very active club, and we have a lot going on. Some members don't necessarily come to meetings, but we get a good turnout for events. When we really need them, we can count on them to come."

This being Wisconsin, the Abbotsford Club members can cook up a mean bratwurst, and the club's brat fries, which are held two or three times a year, net up to \$20,000 over three days. "When we get a turnout of less than 400 people, we ask ourselves, 'What did we do wrong?'" laughs Reusch. The club is also known for its spring and fall brunches, which go well beyond the standard pancake breakfasts, serving up custom omelets and crepes. "We get a lot of people coming from other Lions clubs, and they tell us we've got one of the best breakfasts in the area," says Reusch.

Kathy Schraufnagel, 65, the club's current secretary and a retired nurse, has lived in Abbotsford for 30 years. She finally decided to join the club five years ago, after a visit to the Wisconsin Lions Camp. "My dad was a Lion, and I remember him talking about how great it was," she says. "When I visited, I was amazed—everything was so impressive." She believes that personal experiences like hers are what ultimately draw in new members: "You have to go out there and show them what we do for the community."

Bonita Weix, 56, a nurse and the club's current president, also joined because of a firsthand experience with the Lions' work. When her son joined the Cub Scouts—which is sponsored by the Lions—she became a liaison between the two groups. "It just made sense for me to join," she says. "The values of both organizations are very similar. Both the Boy Scouts and the Lions are about serving your community and country. They both had the qualities I was looking for." Weix's husband, Jim, is also a Lion, and their son, who grew up helping out at brat fries and brunches, joined when he turned 18.

"The majority of our members are husbands and wives," says Weix. "We're quite social, but we get our business done. When it comes to organization, our women are good at the details." Such expertise comes in handy when it comes time for the Easter egg hunt, which Weix spearheads. The festive spring event attracts up to 250 children and involves filling 6,000 plastic eggs with candy. "My husband will do the bull work, but he doesn't like that kind of organizing," laughs Weix. When he takes over from her



The men and women of the Abbotsford Lions Club work together on projects large and small. (Photos clockwise from top left) Paula Ruesch (from left), her grandson Logan, Pauline Schiferl and Larry and Paula Mader plant trees. Schiferl, the Peace Poster chairperson, poses proudly with Jennifer Lopez, the local and a district winner. Serving up chow at the clubs' biannual breakfast brunch are Schiferl, Chris Brooks, Connie Braun and MaryAnn Morrow. Jim Schiferl does an eye screening at a Special Olympics event.

as president next year, she jokes, "It's going to help him a lot to have me around!"

Jim Schiferl says that drawing in more women like Weix—along with their families—is the key to the long-term success of the Abbotsford Lions. "Most clubs have projects involving children, so why wouldn't we want their mothers as members?" he asks. "I'd like to see that happen. Women with families say they're busy, but busy people are the ones who get things done."

For inspiration, Schiferl can look to Abbotsford itself, a place that could have gradually faded away, as so many rural towns have done. Instead, the past decade has been a time of revival and renewal. Thanks in part to a \$12 million school district referendum, the town was able to build a new elementary school, remodel its existing middle and

high school and construct a new city hall, public library, community center and emergency services building. "It's something to see for a small town," says Schraufnagel.

Reed Welch, the district administrator for the local school district, has worked in the Abbotsford school system for three decades, long enough to see the town transform. "We don't have a lot of farm kids anymore," he says. "About 70 percent of our students qualify for free or reduced lunches. But our kids do well, because the community is very supportive of education." The Lions, he says, epitomize the can-do spirit of Abbotsford as a whole. "They're very active, and they turn their proceeds back into the community," he says. "They can be very proud of what they've done."

# Service Pioneers



Pediatric ophthalmologist Alina Zakaryan administers eye drops to an infant at the Yerevan State University hospital complex in Armenia.

# In Armenia, the concept of service clubs is so novel that Lions personally fund club projects. The newfound impulse to serve has saved premature babies from needless blindness.

by Katya Cengel

Maria's tiny face is wrinkled and sunken like a prune. When she was born two months ago in Armenia, 12 weeks premature, she weighed two pounds. She is almost double that now, but still frail, managing only a weak cry when pediatric ophthalmologist Alina Zakaryan examines her eyes using a retinal camera.

Maria has the first stage retinopathy of prematurity, an eye condition that can lead to blindness if left untreated. A few years ago Zakaryan probably wouldn't have seen an infant like Maria until she was a toddler and it was too late for the most successful types of intervention. Now she follows premature babies like Maria from birth, monitoring their cases and recommending them for laser treatment or injections when needed, thereby saving them from a possible life of darkness, slowed development and missed opportunities.

"I see the difference in the retina after treatment and I feel like I am the hand of God," says Zakaryan.

In the United States the risks of retinopathy of prematurity have been known for decades. In Armenia—a country the size of Maryland sandwiched between Iran, Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia—widespread knowledge has come only recently. Much of the awareness came thanks to the Armenia EyeCare Project, which brought experts to Armenia to lecture on the topic in 2010. In the past, preemies like Maria were often subjected to high levels of oxygen saturation at birth, increasing the risk of damage to the retina and the possible need for surgery. Now oxygen levels are more closely monitored, says Hrant Kalengeryan, a Yerevan neonatologist.

"In the first six months [after the training] we did five times more laser surgeries than we had in the last six months," says Kalengeryan. "That means a lot of retinopathy of prematurity. And now it has decreased by five times."

Retinopathy of prematurity is the newest focus of the Armenia EyeCare Project, a California-based nonprofit founded by Armenian-American ophthalmologist Roger Ohanesian. The project's original mission was to provide eye care for those wounded in the Nagorno-Karabakh War that Armenians fought with Azerbaijan from 1988 to 1994.

After the war Ohanesian redirected the project toward conducting specialized trainings for Armenian ophthalmologists and providing eye screenings and eye surgery for isolated and vulnerable members of the population. He added retinopathy of prematurity to the mix after learning that better neonatal care was increasing the survival chances for Armenian preemies, but lack of proper eye screenings meant many were ending up blind. In 2010 he helped bring Dr. Thomas Lee, director of the Vision Center at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, to Yerevan to teach ophthalmologists how to look for and treat retinopathy of prematurity.

"Approximately one in 10 premature patients develops severe retinopathy of prematurity," says Lee. "Half of these babies will go blind without the appropriate treatment."

The project also provided retinal cameras for screenings so the doctors in Yerevan can continue to consult with Lee and other U.S. experts thanks to the images the cameras record. Lee has returned to Armenia twice since his initial trip. Ohanesian has been here more than 40 times. But in Armenia it isn't the ophthalmologists who are in charge, but Nune Yeghiazaryan, the Armenia EyeCare Project's country director.

"I found no one who has been able to understand the program as much as Nune," said Ohanesian.

In addition to overseeing the EyeCare Project's work on the ground in Armenia, Yeghiazaryan is also president of the Yerevan Erebuni Lions Club, chartered in 2009. The capital, Yerevan is Armenia's largest city with 1.1 million people. The Yerevan Erebuni Lions Club is not the first Lions club in Armenia; it is not even the first one in Yerevan. But it may be one of the first to gain the trust of a larger populace unfamiliar with the idea of giving without receiving. That has a lot to do with its members, beginning with Yeghiazaryan.

Like in many post-Soviet societies, Armenians are unfamiliar with service organizations like Lions, says Yeghiazaryan. The group lost several members after it became clear to them that membership in the club would not in any



Nune Yeghiazaryan, president of the Yerevan Erebuni Lions Club, oversees the EyeCare project in Armenia.

way help them secure equipment for the hospitals where they worked, says Varvara Kalashyan, the club's treasurer and operations manager of the Eye-Care Project. Even the younger generation of Leos struggle to convey the message to their peers. Arus Khachatryan, a 20-year-old linguistics student with long curly hair and a soft voice, is president of Armenia's first Leo club. When she tries to recruit friends she is met with skepticism.

"They want to know 'what's the profit?'" she says. "Not only for them, but for us in general, because it's hard to understand that we work without profit."

Mambre Ghazaryan has been trying to spread the message of Lions Clubs since the first Armenian Lions club, Yerevan Ararat, was founded in 2001. As director of an international tourism firm, he is familiar with service organizations and quickly understood the role Lions clubs could play in the development of his country's social welfare system. He helped establish some of the seven clubs that now exist.

But with membership in decline at the original Yerevan club, Ghazaryan decided to try something different when he formed the Yerevan Erebuni Lions Club. ("Erebuni" is a former name for Yerevan.) Instead of attracting new members with the Lions' message, he impressed them with the caliber of those who had already joined. He handpicked each of the group's 22 original members, sending as many as 10 letters to one potential recruit. In this way he convinced a war hero, an opera singer, a history professor, a magician and a ship's captain to join.

"I didn't want to join Lions for three years, and he kept begging me to come," says Mkolich Mkolchyan, a hero of the Nagorno-Karabakh War.

It was only after Ghazaryan told him about the other people in the group that Mkolchyan and his wife, Lilit Matinyan, decided to join.

"The people in the club are very good, very respected," said Mkolchyan.

The various talents and backgrounds of members attract different segments of the population, adds his wife. As a history professor, Matinyan is able to reach out to students, while her husband is trusted among veterans. "So each member has his or her own circle," says Matinyan.

While not all of the club's 15 remaining members are familiar with service organizations, all of them have been involved in humanitarian work.

A doctor and nurse with the Armenian EyeCare Project consult with patients at Prkutyun ("Salvation") Center, a facility for people with disabilities in Yerevan.



Garen Balayan, a 56-year-old ship captain, has taught disabled children sports since the devastating 1988 Northern Armenian earthquake that left at least 25,000 dead and as many 31,000 injured. As a surgeon, Souren Iloyan is also familiar with helping others. He joined the club because he wanted to continue to do so, and because he liked and respected the other members.

"It doesn't matter what the club is, I like to do good things for people," says Matinyan.

Even though every project is funded out of their pockets, the Lions have been able to do quite a lot of good in their club's short history. They have distributed donated French books to a Francophile community, held concerts to raise money for a charity that teaches disabled children sports and held eye screenings in various communities. They plan to partner with the Armenian EyeCare Project in the future and already make use of the project's office space and expertise in vision screenings. With Yeghiazaryan and Kalashyan playing pivotal roles in both organizations, it seems only a matter of time before the partnership expands.

Spreading the word wider may take longer. It isn't that Armenians are selfish, Lions explain. It's just that they have suffered so much and still lack so many things that they are more used to receiving help than giving it. Memories of the "cold and dark years" of the early 1990s when there were severe electricity and food shortages are still fresh in the minds of most adults. During those years homes were heated by wood fires and "showers" were taken in segments; one day you washed your hair, the next your feet.

"We didn't take a shower—we took a mug," says Kalashyan.

The shortages lasted not weeks or months, but years. It was during these difficult years that Yeghiazaryan began working with non-governmental organizations. A commanding woman of 56, with short dark hair and a direct manner, Yeghiazaryan has an impressive pedigree. Her brother is a former minister of economics and her husband is a former chief of staff to the Armenian president. Although she studied at Harvard and her two grown daughters now live abroad, Yeghiazaryan never thought of working anywhere but Armenia.



A patient's vision is checked by a nurse with the Armenian EyeCare Project.

A nurse with the Armenian EyeCare Project examines a patient at Prkutyun Center.

"I think people who are able to study abroad owe something to this country," she says.

Armenia has lost so much she would hate to see it lose anything more. Even the lovely food Matinyan prepares, including for the club's yearly dinner, has bitterness to it, especially the meat salad Van.

"Just like you long for spring, this salad is named Van after a city that no longer belongs to Armenia, but we long for and remember it through the food," says Matinyan.

Van is located across the border in Turkey, lost to Armenia in 1915. The borders with Turkey and Azerbaijan have both been closed since the Nagorno-Karabakh War during which Matinyan's husband was wounded. The couple had to sell their house to pay for his medical treatment and struggle to support their two teenage children, but never shrink from hosting fellow Lions.

"Do you know what the kindness of a person is?" asks Matinyan. "It doesn't matter how much he needs help, he will help others." She sees this quality in her fellow Lions, and in their leader, Yeghiazaryan. "We know what kind of good deeds she does," says Matinyan.

Yeghiazaryan doesn't always have time to visit the hospitals. But ever since Lee's 2010 visit, Zakaryan has been screening babies in the neonatal intensive care unit every week. The mothers wait in the hall, dressed in fashionable fur coats and heels, their tiny infants wrapped in layer upon layer of pastel blankets. Zakaryan escorts them to the camera one by one, spending as little as five minutes on each infant. In most cases she advises the worried parents to follow up in two weeks.

Before Lee's 2010 visit she had never screened infants for retinopathy of prematurity. Instead she saw what happened when it wasn't treated: children who were already blind. She sent one girl to Russia seven times for surgery. The family had to sell their house to pay for the girl's treatment. Zakaryan didn't say whether the girl recovered any of her eyesight. Instead she looked at the preemie laid out on the examining table in front of her, one eye held open with a prong so she could examine it with the camera.

"You can't imagine what a blessing I feel when I see improvement thanks to our efforts," she says.





The Armenia EyeCare mobile unit visits the village of Yeghvard.



A patient gets checked in the mobile eye unit.



A patient waits in the mobile unit after eye surgery.



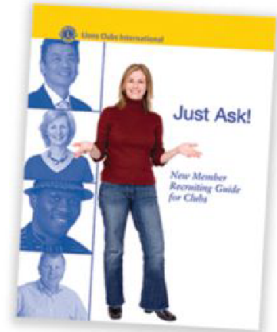
Doctors operate in the mobile unit.



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# *LEARNING TO FLY SOLO*



Air Cadets in Canada help youths soar

by Leif Gregersen



**Air Cadets stand proudly before a military transport plane.**

Photo by Captain Neil Wolthers/Regional Cadet Support Unit (Atlantic) Public Affairs

Three years ago, ending a vacation in Toronto, I arrived at the terminal for my flight home. From a distance I saw a person's back—fit build, neatly combed short hair, close to six feet tall. Could it possibly be Gord Gregg? Since our last names were alphabetically close, we had adjoining lockers in high school. We were always in friendly competition with each other, whether it was for the push-up record or the highest grades.

The man turned toward me. "Leif!" he cried, extending his arm.

Gord and I shared something else besides school: we were in the Air Cadets together. Air Cadets is sort of the junior wing of the military. We got to soar through the sky at thrilling speed. That was somewhat ironic. The whole point of Air Cadets was to keep us grounded, to learn discipline, dedication and teamwork.

I knew many of my fellow cadets had done well. My best friend in cadets was the mayor of a town in Alberta. Another was a decorated war veteran. A third friend be-

came such a distinguished pilot for the Air Force that NASA courted him to join the space program.

Gord had done well for himself, too. He was not only flying to Edmonton with me—he was the pilot. He showed me the cockpit and joked that it was his responsibility to get this pressurized metal tube 35,000 feet in the air at 500 mph all the way back to Edmonton.

Air Cadets. I was with them from the age of 12 to 15. It left a lasting impression on me. I quit too early. Young and headstrong, I wanted a job, a car and a little money of my own. But cadets made me who I am.

Air Cadets was fun—and intense. The Canadian military provided us with uniforms and paid for our summer camps. Cadet officers kept us in line. We were full of energy and mischief, and they stood like a wall between us and our own destruction.

My typical week included shooting at the rifle range, a sports night of floor hockey and volleyball and an elaborate parade night. I attended classes on the principles of

**(Opposite) A cadet goes solo in a glider.**

Photo by Captain Remy Levesque/ Regional Cadet Support Unit (Atlantic) Public Affairs

## *Cadets can fly because Lions prop up their wings.*

flight, photography and public speaking. We smartly wore our dress uniforms on Thursdays. We played in a marching band and took part in a formal flag ritual.

It's probably true that a person's most formative years are the ages of 14 to 15. Back then I loved to play sports, loved flying and would do anything to add a badge or rank insignia to my uniform. I wore short, neatly combed hair, often came to school in shirt and tie and tried mightily to be a good student who was well-behaved.

I think I tried so hard because of a pain I felt in my life. My relationship with my dad was extremely strained. I knew he was under stress. He owned a sign shop and the business was faltering. Somehow he always managed to pay the mortgage and keep food on the table. I just wished we could talk and enjoy being around each other.

I did see my dad at the Air Cadets: his club, the St. Albert Host Lions, sponsored my squadron, the 533 St. Albert Air Cadets. My dad was very involved with the cadets, serving as the treasurer of the sponsoring committee.

The Lions have been the gas that fuels the squadron. For 55 years they've been a sponsor. They've provided facilities

for our training. They've joined with parents of cadets to raise funds through wood cutting and delivery of phone books. Cadets can fly because Lions prop up their wings.

A short time ago I decided to visit my old squadron, out of curiosity and also to make peace with the past. I was nervous like a school boy on his first date when I approached Community Hall, which the cadets use for parade night. A boy about 14 with the rank of corporal on his sleeve jumped up to open the door for me and addressed me as "Sir." My nervousness disappeared. I remembered doing the same thing when I was on duty at the main door.

I signed in as a guest and took a couple of photos of a drill class. I can also remember taking new cadets through basic drill. Twenty-five years later, one of my students has become one of my closest friends. I didn't disturb any of the classes but took a few snapshots and headed to the administration office.

Melanie Franko greeted me warmly. She wore three hats: office volunteer, parent of a cadet and president of the St. Albert Host Lions. We made small talk and she invited me to the Lions meeting in the Hall on Tuesday.



Andrew Lejeune (left), commanding officer of the 533 St. Albert Air Cadets, stands with Claude Carignan, chairperson of the Lions' sponsoring committee.

Next I met Mike Clulow, an office volunteer when I was in cadets. A former cadet himself, he had earned his pilot's license. Mike earned something else: a medal from the Air Cadet League for 25 years of service to the squadron. Mike had my dad's old job as treasurer. He had instantly recognized me despite the passage of time. The circle of time seemed to come back around. Things had changed and yet they hadn't.

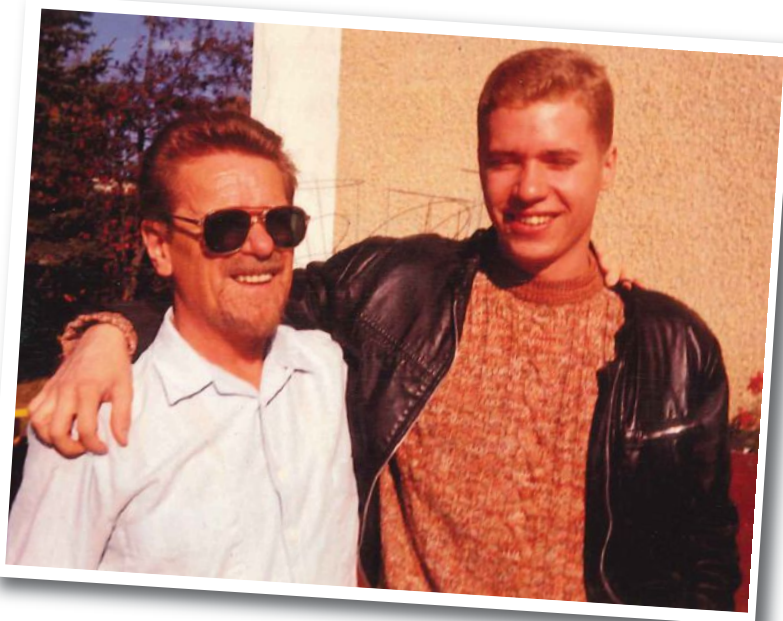
That following Tuesday I had the honor of attending my first Lions club meeting. There was no drinking and no smoking in the meeting, and everyone was friendly. Melanie Franko and her husband were there. So, too, was Claude Carrigan, the chairman of the sponsoring committee who had been my dad's friend. Funny he even knew me because I was now a lot taller and a little wider than when we had last spoke. He had a relaxed attitude about the meeting though he held a briefcase full of documents and a large list of meeting topics to discuss. It was all business except for the occasional interruption when a joke was cracked.

St. Albert Host Lions have their finger in just about every charitable event or fundraising effort in the city. They sponsor a youth volleyball tournament. They support Habitat For Humanity with funds and labor. They provide permanent housing for impoverished families so they can stay in their community and own their home rather than have to seek lower rents in sketchy neighborhoods. I was surprised that with just the help of a few Lions who drove them around, the cadets had raised over \$3,000 in one day in their bottle drive.

Two days later I headed back to St. Albert, a half hour drive from my home, and met with Andrew Lejeune, the commanding officer of 533. He was a young man, always ready with a joke but he really seemed to know his job. He told me that when cadets first start out they try to get them involved with all the fun stuff as soon as possible. Get a bush camp going, take them flying or gliding, introduce them around and organize dances.

I remembered my first night of cadets. My dad had to force me to go, but after just one meeting I was hooked. Andrew spoke fondly of the Lions and his own cadet days and told me about how he had done most of his thesis for his master's on the cadets. His graduate degree was in educational psychology, and he seemed like a great choice for CO.

My friends kid me that all my stories start with "when I was in Air Cadets." Yes, those days stay with me. But I know I did not take full advantage of the cadets. Now that



Leif Gregersen and his father, also named Leif

I am 40 years old, I find there are a lot of gaps in my life. I never nailed down a career I was happy with until I made the decision to write magazine stories and books. I never married, and never travelled much outside of Canada. On the other hand, I know the friends I made in cadets and the training I received made a huge difference in my life.

It really felt good to visit with the cadets. I have no doubt that by becoming cadets, as happened for me, youths become stronger, smarter, more disciplined and harder workers. The St. Albert Host Lions Club deserves a lot of credit for making this possible. I think that one day soon I might move back to St. Albert and join up with the Lions and hopefully do as much good as those that have gone before me.

I realize if I become a Lion I would walk in the footsteps of my dad. He is someone I have grown to love and respect. Maybe time and aging softens us up. Maybe relationships have their own life cycle.

My dad has always been an incredibly philanthropic person. He did all he could for his community and was honored once as Lion of the Year. That was the year he was in charge of the Canada Day Celebration in the Lions park. He planned it down to the second—from the free pancake breakfast to a paratrooper display and fireworks at the end of the night.

The most amazing part of the day was when we gathered to sing "O, Canada." Somehow he arranged to have a camouflage C-130 Hercules Transport with four turbo prop engines buzz the park at a very low altitude. It blew the hats off half the people in the park. It was unforgettable, just like my dad.

Cindy Perseo entertains guests with "I'll Fly Away" on Lions Appreciation Day. Actually, she keeps flying back: she has been coming to Beacon Lodge Camp since 1972. Her husband, John, now comes with her.





A camper since 2009, Ernie College sings a funny song about Henry the VIII.



Marvin Wright, a camper since 1994, belts out a song.

# Singing is Saying Thanks Twice

He answers to Bob. But he likes it even better when you call him “Piano Man.” Bob Waker has been coming to the Pennsylvania Lions Beacon Lodge Camp since 1958, just a decade after Lions founded the camp in the central part of the state. The camp hosts stays for people with blindness, deafness and other disabilities. Waker, who is blind, tickled the ivories at the most recent Lions Appreciation Day.

“He’s fantastic,” says Past Council Chair Jim Day, one of more than 400 Lions from Pennsylvania who attended the annual event. Lions support the camp, situated on 583 gorgeous acres, with donations and elbow grease. The work weekends keep the camp in good shape. The camp is a touchstone for Lions of Pennsylvania. “There are a couple of things you want to do in your life as a Lion here: go to Beacon Lodge and to Leader Dogs [in Michigan],” says Day.

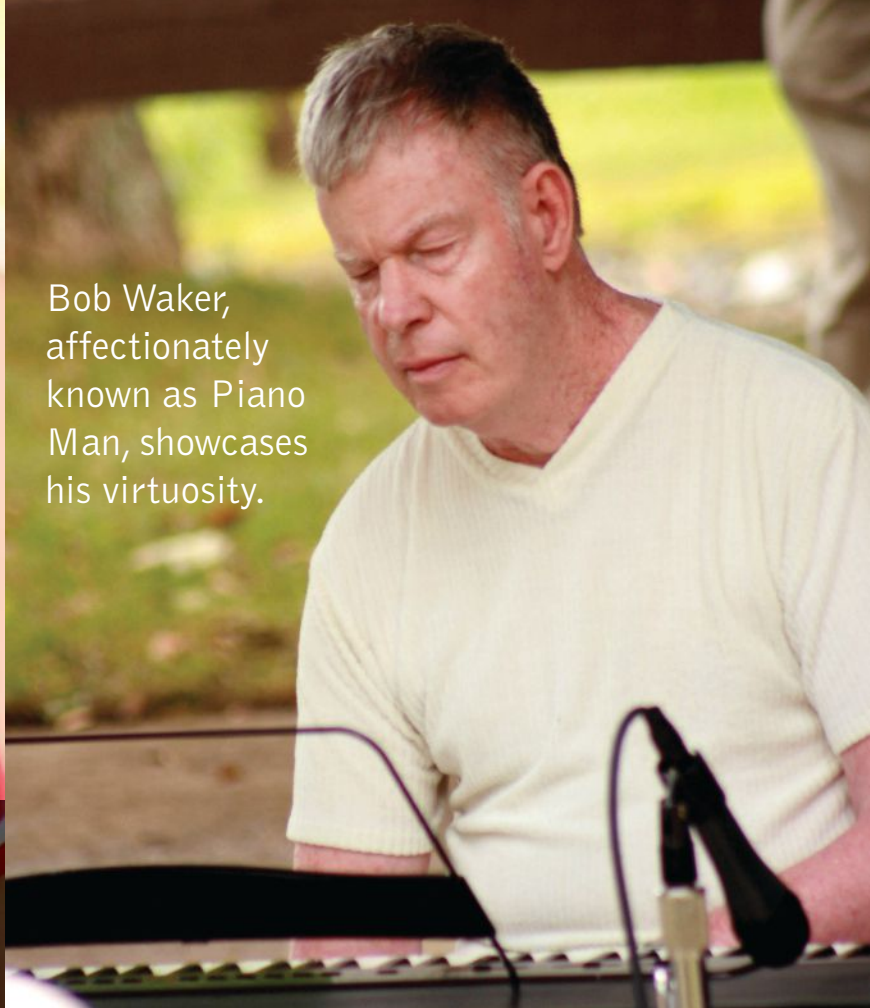
Camps are high-spirited days filled with friendships and fun; many campers, like Waker, eagerly return year after year. The talent show is a way for campers to say thanks, not in an awkward, forced, prearranged encounter but in a full-throated, public forum.

“I really appreciate it,” says Day. “It takes a lot of courage. I couldn’t do it.” Adds Amanda Corbin, camp coordinator, “The talent of our campers is amazing.”

Lions being Lions, even the appreciation day is a time of service with a basket raffle, a duck race and a dunk tank. But what lingers in memory are the campers’ performances, a nice twist. Recipients of kindness bestow gifts that waft through the summer air and burrow into the heart. Music bridges gaps, cements bonds and blurs distinctions. Week after week Lions embrace the camp, and then on a special day campers embrace them with songs and smiles.



Vivian Williams, who attends the camp with a sister who also is visually impaired, sings "One Moment in Time," a hit for Whitney Houston. "Vivian makes everyone cry. She has the voice of an angel," says Amanda Corbin, camp coordinator.



Bob Waker, affectionately known as Piano Man, showcases his virtuosity.



Lions applaud a performance.

# Give Your Club a Checkup

## Improve Club Health with a Retreat

Are Lions clubs just like people? When it comes to staying healthy, Millard Lion David Wentworth of Omaha, Nebraska, thinks so. “You take your children to the doctor for regular checkups, and the same should go for young clubs so they can get off on the right foot,” says Wentworth, District 38-N Global Leadership Team coordinator. “As we age, it’s vital that we get checkups regularly, and older clubs need to do that too. Just because things seem to be running smoothly, there might still be underlying issues that could cause a club to die off.”

Clubs can avoid a health scare by holding retreats, advises Wentworth, who has presented on the topic at the USA/Canada Lions Leadership Forum. Retreats provide dedicated time away from regular meetings to set goals, discuss new ideas and strengthen club bonds. Importantly, retreats give members a sometimes rare opportunity to provide input and voice concerns that, if left unaddressed, could mean leaving the Lions. “Too often we never ask our members how we are doing as a club and so we never find out that some are not happy,” says Wentworth.

### Plan for Success

Before a great retreat can happen, thoughtful planning is required. Key logistics include setting goals, sending invitations, identifying a meeting site and arranging meals. Appoint a retreat coordinator to be responsible for expediting these arrangements and ensure a smooth experience. First on the to-do list is to encourage all members to attend. “You really need to get those Lions who are not attending meetings to come to the retreat. Their input may be most beneficial to the club,” explains Wentworth.

### Find a Facilitator

To maximize productiveness and positive outcomes, invite a non-club member facilitator to lead the retreat. “A facilitator should be a good communicator and well-respected, and needs to keep the group on topic and encourage everyone to participate,” says Wentworth. An ideal facilitator will be unbiased, diplomatic and skilled at synthesizing ideas and maintaining a constructive atmosphere.

### Set the Agenda

A well-organized, robust agenda will help make the most of the participant’s valuable time. A typical retreat might include a team building activity, in-depth large and small group discussion of both what is and is not working well, prioritizing goals and creating an action plan. It also might prove rewarding to allow for some less structured time, as the Manassas Lioness Lions in Virginia do at their annual retreats. “We have an agenda, but we don’t follow the protocol of a regular meeting. So we have much more freedom to just discuss ideas. We also allow time for questions on specifics of our service projects, which has been helpful for our newer members,” says Anna Marie Robinson.

### Reap the Rewards

After a fruitful retreat, Lions will bring with them feelings of pride, growth and unity, along with practical next steps to make their club the best it can be. “We gain new ideas and a better understanding of what it takes to be a Lion and a leader,” says Robinson. But for a retreat to truly be successful, all must participate honestly and openly, Wentworth stresses. “A retreat is a safe place to voice your concerns and share new ideas that you might have been afraid to bring up at a club meeting. Don’t fear the process.”

*—Jennifer Gilbert Gebhardt*



# The Race is On

Jason Huette says his La Grange Evening, Texas, Lions Club was searching for a project that would involve younger members and also showcase the community's natural resources. A river does indeed run through it—the Colorado River, and Lions hoped to not only raise money for their club's service activities, but to also “have a secondary economic effect on our community.” Lions organized what they now plan to make an annual event—the La Grange Kanoe Klasika.

“La Grange is the stopping point at the halfway mark between Houston and Austin for a large bike race that takes place every year, and it was this that helped us move in the direction of an event that involved activity and a little sweat to achieve,” Huette says. “We are privileged to have a beautiful river and rolling hills that make up the landscape of Fayette County. We knew somehow that we had to get more people out here to enjoy it. Since biking, running and canoeing have become more popular over the last decade and La Grange is so close to Austin, Houston and San Antonio, we believed an adventure race would be a great fundraiser.”

Lions soon changed their minds when they realized how many volunteers it would take for their 24-member club to

accomplish an adventure race. “After months of consideration, we decided to do a canoe race,” he explains.

Lions admitted they didn't know much about running a canoe race, so they contacted the operator of the Colorado River 100, a race from Bastrop to Columbus, Texas. “Not only was he willing to help, but he also provided us with a turnkey operation,” says Huette. “We set the course up as an 18-mile course and started the leg work.”

They became slightly discouraged when they discovered that the river's water levels were “really low and going lower,” he reports. “We ended up with 90 participants. We plan on adding a shorter race next year in addition to the 18-mile race to get more first-time, local and leisure paddlers out on the river.” Participants' ages ranged from 10 on up, and included teams of kayakers and canoeists.

A local band entertained without pay; a cooking team volunteered to grill donated food. Other businesses contributed or discounted their services. Lions made a profit of between \$2,000 and \$3,000, which Huette says will go toward scholarships for graduating seniors.



Too young to paddle alone, children help decorate a kayak prior to the competition.

# Iowa Lions Toast Oktoberfest Spirit

It may be approximately 4,500 miles from Burlington, Iowa, to Hamburg, Germany, but Lions have been hosting Oktoberfest for the past 13 years like true Hamburgers. There are some obvious differences—Hamburg is home to 1.8 million people; Burlington has a population of around 25,500. Both cities, however, share a love of good “bier” and food. The Oktoberfest in Burlington is so popular that Lions have netted more than \$119,000 from the one-day event since they began sponsoring it. All profits have been recycled back into the community, says Lion Jean Ballinger.

“The club had been seeking an alternative to the long hours members had for many years worked staffing the concession stands for the Burlington Bees’ minor league baseball team—70 home games each summer,” she explains. When Mike Schwenker proposed the Oktoberfest, Ballinger says, “Lions jumped in enthusiastically. The concessions had been steady income. But burnout was setting in and we needed to try something new.”

Planning begins each March, although Ballinger says bands are booked a year in advance. The 30-member club also receives assistance from Burlington Leos, who serve food and decorate the Mississippi riverfront Port of Burlington building where the fest is held. “The riverfront location’s liquor license is held by Burlington Steamboat Days, another nonprofit group. Lions have simply turned over all alcohol responsibilities and related profits to this group,” points out Ballinger. “It’s a win-win for everyone.

“The early years began with a few major sponsors, but those can be tough to find and hard to keep. We can only sell just so many tickets and so much food in one day. A few years ago Lion John Wagner came up with a blockbuster idea—stein sponsors. For \$100, a small business or an individual receives a ceramic beer stein, a couple of free tickets, advertising and other small perks.”

Wagner’s idea was a moneymaker. “Last year, 81 sponsors jumped on the ‘bierwagon’ and said yes to the club,” Ballinger says. “It was a banner year for profits.”

Lions cook authentic German food such as cabbage rolls, bratwurst, sauerkraut and pork chops with family recipes straight from their own kitchens. Free polka lessons for children, horse-drawn wagon rides and Lions dressed in traditional lederhosen or dirndl skirts and vests add more German flavor to what Burlington Lions affectionately call “O-Fest.”



Lion Dr. Rod Kellogg polkas with Oktoberfest co-chair Patty Moad.

# Soccer Pros Kick-Start Lions Quest

by Christopher Bunch

Sports teams have a way of bringing communities together, and Sandnes, Norway, is no different. The Sandnes Ulf professional soccer team dominates the local news, enthralles locals and inspires young fans. Sandnes Lions realized that soccer could be more than just a community pastime—it could be a way to get Lions Quest Norway, a positive youth development program, into local schools. Through an innovative partnership, Lions and Sandnes Ulf are bringing Lions Quest, and soccer, into classrooms.

Success on the playing field is often the result of being in the right place at the right time—and a little luck—and that's just how it happened in Sandnes. Lions Quest trainer Trond Rekstad's son was playing for the Sandnes Ulf junior team. Seeing an opportunity, Rekstad contacted the local Lions clubs about pitching a Lions Quest partnership to Sandnes Ulf.

Sandnes Lions and Rekstad met with the marketing director of Sandnes Ulf and asked if the team would be interested in becoming Lions Quest ambassadors in community schools. As it turned out, the team had been looking

for a way to give something back to the community, especially to children, so the team agreed and the partnership began in January 2012.

## Players Coaching Kids

When Lions asked Sandnes Ulf players to be ambassadors, they were asking for something more: they wanted them to be role models, heroes, and—most importantly—teachers. Players were asked to teach a 60-minute session to fifth graders about bullying, decision-making, saying no to drugs and working to achieve goals.

“Sandnes is a big oil community, and one of the richest in Norway, but kids have the same problems as everywhere,” says Rekstad.

The program is based on *Det er Mitt Valg*, the official Norwegian version of Lions Quest, an LCIF program that has helped 12 million students in 82 countries learn essential life skills that support social and emotional learning, service learning and prevention of substance abuse and violence.



Sandnes Ulf player Edier Frejd helps students build life skills through Lions Quest Norway.

Photos courtesy of © Trond Rekstad

To prepare players for the classroom, Rekstad conducted a workshop to get players comfortable with the program. Players teach a structured lesson, but Rekstad wanted them to make those 60 minutes their own by sharing their experiences with students.

“You’ve made a lot of choices to be elite soccer players,” Rekstad told the players. “You guys are heroes to the young. They look up to you, so we want you to help convey these positive attitudes to fifth-graders.”

The players’ stories are varied, and so are the challenges they have faced. Some dropped out of school. Some are from other countries and have had to adapt to a new culture and make new friends in Norway. All made sacrifices and tough decisions to achieve success on the field. When students hear these stories and positive messages from their heroes, they listen.

## A Lifetime Effect

“It means so much to the students when we visit their school,” says player Bjørnar Holmvik. “It’s great that we have such a good curriculum for them.”

Students come to class wearing sky blue, the team color of Sandnes Ulf, and for one memorable hour, fifth-graders get to meet their heroes and talk about issues that matter to their lives. Students also receive tickets to a match, and at the end of each session players sign autographs, another reminder of a magical hour that will last a lifetime. Sandnes Lions hope the Lions Quest lessons will too.

“It’s important that all people dare to have opinions, that they dare to make choices without being embarrassed about it. If [we] can make life easier for some of them, then I’m very happy,” says player Tommy Høiland.

When Sandnes Ulf players talk to students about overcoming adversity and achieving goals, it’s more than a cliché. For decades, the team had been relegated to playing in the lower tier of the professional system. But in 2012, 100 years after the club’s formation, the Sandnes Ulf team earned promotion to the Norwegian Premier League, the top tier of the sport.

The Sandnes Ulf team has achieved success to the field, and it’s taken Lions Quest along with it. Players wear a Lions Quest Norway logo on the back of their jerseys. A Lions Quest billboard is on display at the field, a short Lions Quest video is played on the big screen during a match break, and there’s even a radio spot for those who can’t make it to the stadium.

The Sandnes Ulf players have visited 10 schools, and they have plans to visit 10 more by the end of 2013. Students are getting the positive reinforcement they need, and teachers are taking notice. Four of the visited schools have hosted a Lions Quest teacher training workshop, and two more workshops are planned for the fall. If Lions in Norway had their way, every school would benefit from Lions Quest.



Students participate in Lions Quest activities that transform their classroom for an hour.

## A Model Quest Program

*It’s better to build children than to repair adults*—that’s the slogan of Lions Quest Norway. In addition to “building” healthy young people, Lions have built a model program in Norway.

Lions host an annual tulip sales program that raised more than US\$2 million in 2012, and nearly US\$300,000 went to fund Lions Quest Norway programs. Lions have also established a fleet of more than 50 Lions “pilots” to introduce the program to local schools and Lions around the country. It’s working. Last year, Lions hosted nearly 200 Lions Quest workshops, and nearly 400 of Norway’s 447 Lions clubs have organized a workshop since 2008.

“The program facilitates cooperation between home, school and the community. The only volunteer organization in Norway that can offer this is Lions,” says Ivar Tollefsrud, country director of Lions Quest Norway. “Through Lions Quest, Lions can achieve visibility, respect and growth, and show that we want to take responsibility for the next generation.”

Through the efforts of Lions in Norway, and with the help of community partners like Sandnes Ulf, the next generation appears to be in good hands.

For information about Lions Quest, visit [www.lions-quest.org](http://www.lions-quest.org).



**Lions Clubs International  
FOUNDATION**

# Taking Charge of Your Leadership Development

With his father, Jim, being a Lion “for as long as I can remember,” A.J. Westlund, a zone chairperson for District 13-F, has made serving as a Lion a family affair. Upon settling in Columbus, Ohio, he joined the Westerville Lions Club and asked his wife to join him in 2012. “So it can be truly stated that Lions is becoming a family tradition, which I hope to pass down to the coming generation,” says Westlund.

On creating a Lions Learning Center (LLC) account, Westlund recalls, “The experience was extremely easy and the help screens were very informative.” Patricia Quamina, 2012-2013 president of the Dumfries-Potomac Lions Club in Virginia, agrees. “For me, it was easy to create an account and take the courses,” she says of the multi-pronged learning program.

The Lions Learning Center is a critical component of the Leadership Resource Center (LRC) on the LCI website. It provides members like Westlund and Quamina with training and development opportunities to not only promote their own personal growth, but also to spur them on to leadership excellence. The LRC also has four other areas of concentration: Global Leadership Team, Development Opportunities, Training Materials/Resources and Leadership Communication. All are designed by experts to provide Lions with an array of tools and information to increase and enhance their leadership skills.

The LLC offers a variety of online courses organized by four key skills: Leadership, Managing Others, Achieving Results and Communication. Meeting Management and Decision Making are two popular courses. Westlund adds, “So far the most interesting course to me would have to be the Servant Leadership Course.” Another experienced LLC user, Rosanne Burrus, 2013-2014 club president of the Stafford Lions Club in Virginia, says, “I recently finished Creativity and Mentoring—both were very interesting and provided solid suggestions for motivating folks to participate.”

Completed online courses are recorded automatically in a personal “Profile Report” for Lions, who can also add other training they’ve received at district, multiple district or international conventions for a comprehensive file of what they’ve achieved. The profile report may be exported, saved and sent electronically to others.

Lions can immediately begin to develop new leadership skills, says Elaine Fisher, electronic learning manager at LCI. “There are only two steps to take. First, create a user account and second, complete the requested profile information.

For a personal touch, Lions can add a photo to their profile. Lions can complete the Introduction to Leadership course and the Writing Your Personal Mission Statement course, which helps evaluate what is most important to the Lion. Courses can be taken at your convenience, 24/7. There are several course recommendation lists to provide guidance to members who want to develop leadership skills for a

specific position they want to attain.”

In taking advantage of what the LLC has to offer, Westlund says, “I have been able to expand the reach of the Lions ALERT program and have become a featured speaker at club meetings, district conventions and statewide training seminars. I hope to be able to pass along my knowledge and experience.”

One proven advantage of online learning is that students can learn at their own pace. “Don’t try to complete all the courses at once,” advises Fisher. “Learning new life and leadership skills take time and patience. Create a realistic plan for completing courses based on time, goals and Lions-life balance.”

For more information, contact [LLC@lionsclubs.org](mailto:LLC@lionsclubs.org) or visit [www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org) and search for “Lions Learning Center.”



Learning new leadership tools is as easy as the click of a mouse.

# ROAR OF APPROVAL



Jasper Lions in Georgia presented 55-year-member **Charles Chapman** with a Lions cake to celebrate

his long, illustrious membership. Chapman is a past governor of District 18 A.

"The third time is the charm," says William Dilks of the **Gloucester City Lions Club** in New Jersey. First chartered on May 3, 1922, the club disbanded just four years later in 1926. Not ready to give up on community service, Lions reorganized in 1929. On May 31, 1933, it disbanded a second time. Service-minded citizens tried a third time by chartering a Gloucester City Lions Club in 1944. Since then, Lions have been an active and involved presence in their historic community of 11,000 located on

the Delaware River waterfront. "We're now one of the strongest and most active clubs in the district," says Dilks, a Lion since 1963.

At his 90th birthday celebration, **David "Lucky" Mattson** surprised his fellow Crooked River Ranch Lions in Oregon by announcing that the will of Denni, his deceased wife, included a donation of \$10,000 to the Lions and that he wanted it to go toward a scholarship fund. Mattson has been dedicated to Lions' service since 1979.

Leos sponsor a zany race.

## THE LION ROAMS

Lions read the LION while surrounded by landmark lions. Jackie Loubet (top) of the Chiefland Lions Club in Florida peruses the LION at the iconic Medici lions that guard the Bridge of Lions in St. Augustine, Florida. Meanwhile, Dawn Rice-Norton (middle) of the Medway Lions Club in Massachusetts shares the LION with perhaps the most lion-hearted U.S. president; the shot was taken where Lincoln was shot—at Ford's Theatre in Washington. Finally, Lions surely are a reminder of America, a reassuring symbol of everyone's hometown. Lion Tony Johnson (bottom) of the Justin Lions Club in Texas shares his LION with soldiers in Afghanistan. Specialist Adams (from left), Specialist Salas and Sgt. Carias serve with the 887th Engineering Support Company.

Want to be in the LION? Just send us a photo of you with the LION, whether you're at the pyramids in Egypt, the Great Wall of China, a café or street scene overseas or even an interesting location close to home. Send the picture along with your name, Lions club, hometown and photo description to [lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org](mailto:lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org).



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# INFORMATION

## ANNIVERSARIES SEPTEMBER 2013

**95 YEARS:** Los Angeles Host, Calif.

**90 Years:** Cameron, Texas; Corona Host, Calif.; Dublin, Ga.; Georgetown, Texas; Mamaroneck, N.Y.; Nashua, N.H.; San Angelo Downtown, Texas; Villa Park, Ill.; Warren, Pa.; Wheaton, Ill.

**85 Years:** Baytown, Texas; Bloomington, Ind.; Hereford, Texas; Higginsville, Mo.; Matador, Texas; Port Gibson, Miss.; Portland Hollywood, Ore.; Rugby, N.D.; Vancouver, Wash.; Westerville, Ohio

**80 Years:** Alma, Ga.; New Freedom, Pa.; New England, N.D.; Sun Prairie, Wis.

**75 Years:** Ashland, Ore.; Brevard, N.C.; Central, Ore.; Crookston, Minn.; Eatonville, Wash.; Endicott, N.Y.; Jerome, Idaho; Kent, Wash.; Kernersville, N.C.; Leesburg Host, Va.; Meridian, Idaho; Morrison, Ill.; Morton, Texas; Oak Hill, W. Va.; Orange, Va.; Portage La Prairie, MB, CAN; Prineville, Ore.; Purcellville, Va.; Red Deer Central, AB, CAN; Red Oak, Iowa; Redding Host, Calif.; Reedsville, Wis.; San Francisco Marina-North Beach, Calif.; Silverton, Ore.; Stayton, Ore.; Valders, Wis.; Waynesville, N.C.

**50 Years:** Cedar City, Mo.; Maplewood Oakdale, Minn.; Ocala Fort King Breakfast, Fla.; St. Anthony, NL, CAN; Winchendon, Mass.

**25 Years:** Brooklyn Kings County, N.Y.

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 MAY 2013

### Grand Master Key (50 Members)

- Lion Kenneth Franz, Danvers, Illinois

## 26th Annual Lions International Peace Poster Contest

### Our World, Our Future



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

Start now. Purchase a 2013-14 Peace Poster Contest Kit (PPK-1), which contains all the materials needed to sponsor one contest.

Kits are sold through the Club Supplies Sales Department, January 15 - October 1, 2013, at International Headquarters. A kit must be purchased for each contest sponsored. Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery; outside the U.S. may take longer.



**CALL 1-800-710-7822**

To order online visit the Lions Store (Item Search: Peace Poster Kit) at [www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org) or download the order form (PR-785).

## INFORMATION

- Lion Ray Siracusa, Port Orange, Florida
- Lion Leslie D'souza, Mangalore Valencia, India

### Senior Master Key (25 Members)

- Lion Earl Slapar, Eudora, Kansas
- Lion Hj Ligia Emila, Jakarta Monas, Indonesia
- Lion Harianto Setiadinata, Jakarta Menteng Sejati, Indonesia
- Lion Ellen Theresia, Jakarta Menteng Sejati, Indonesia
- Lion Ambadi Pilla, Ayur, India
- Lion Princess Oluwatoyin Ato-batele, Ikeja Omole Estate, Nigeria

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](http://www.lionsclubs.org).

## IN MEMORIAM

**Dr. Giovanni Rigone**, of Pavia, Italy, has died. An international director from 1988-90, he was a member of the Pavia Host Lions Club. He also served as a Campaign SightFirst II national coordinator in Italy, as an adviser and archivist for many Europa Forums and the deputy mayor of Pavia.

## CONVENTION COUNTDOWN

|      |                                      |
|------|--------------------------------------|
| 2014 | Toronto, Ontario, Canada<br>July 4-8 |
| 2015 | Honolulu, Hawaii<br>June 26-30       |
| 2016 | Fukuoka, Japan<br>June 24-28         |
| 2017 | Chicago, Illinois<br>June 30-July 4  |
| 2018 | Las Vegas, Nevada<br>June 29-July 3  |

## Join other LIONS on one of these exciting Vacations!

*Depart the First Day of Spring!*

### Classic Italy Tour

**11 Days from \$1399\***

**Departs: March 20, 2014**



Fly into the historic city of **Rome**. Explore this Eternal City with sightseeing that includes the Colosseum, Basilica Santa Maria Maggiore, **The Vatican City and Sistine Chapel**. Travel North to the ancient town of **Orvieto** followed by Montecatini Terme, **Florence** and **Pisa** where you will see the **Leaning Tower of Pisa**. Continue Northeast to **Bologna**, a city probably best known for its world-renowned culinary tradition and the amazing city of **Venice**, with a sightseeing tour where you will see the Grand Canal. You will then head to **Verona**, best known as the setting for Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet; **Lake Garda**, Italy's largest lake and **Lake Maggiore**, with an included scenic lake cruise. Your journey concludes in **Milan**, with highlights including the Piazza del Duomo and La Scala Opera House. **\*Includes nine breakfasts and six dinners.**

**\*Price per person, based on double occupancy. Plus \$299 tax/service/government fees. Alternate departure dates available in 2014. Airfare is extra.**



### Alaska Cruise & Canadian Rockies Tour

**13 Days from \$1599\***

**Departs: May 17 & June 14, 2014**

Visit the last of the wilderness-like areas in North America all from the comfort of your deluxe motor coach and cruise ship. Enjoy a seven night cruise from Vancouver, BC on board the luxurious **ms Volendam** for your **Holland America Line** cruise. Sail the scenic inside passage with turquoise glaciers and green forests through impressive **Tracy Arm** to **Juneau**, the state capital of Alaska; **Skagway**, famous for the Klondike gold rush; witness calving tidewater glaciers in **Glacier Bay** and visit **Ketchikan**, "the Salmon Capital of the World." Your adventure also includes the friendly city of **Kamloops, BC**; **Jasper** and **Jasper National Park**; travel along **Icefields Parkway** to **Athabasca Glacier** where you will experience an excursion onto the glacier; **Banff** and **Banff National Park**; Canada's "Diamond in the Wilderness," **Lake Louise**; **Bow Falls**; **Calgary**, plus **Seattle** and **Vancouver, BC**.



**\*Per person, based on double occupancy. Price based on inside cabin, upgrades available. Plus \$299 tax/service/government fees. Add \$200 for June 14 departure date. Alternate departure dates available in 2014. Airfare is extra.**

**Lions Clubs International not responsible for losses incurred.**



**For reservations & details call 7 days a week:**

**1-800-736-7300**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING HAMBURG, GERMANY JUNE 30 – JULY 3, 2013

#### AUDIT COMMITTEE

1. Reviewed the results of the Agreed-Upon Procedure engagement of the district governor claim processing performed by Grant Thornton, noting no significant exceptions were found.

#### CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

1. Denied second vice district governor election complaints filed in District 4-L6 (California, USA), District 322-D (India) and District 323-C (India) and declared the following as second vice district governors in their respective districts for the 2013-2014 fiscal year:
  - Lion John Ruiz - District 4-L6 (California, USA)
  - Lion S.K. Dhar - District 322-D (India)
  - Lion Ashok Gupta - District 323-C (India)
2. Upheld the second vice district governor election complaint filed in District 301-A2 (Philippines), declared the second vice district governor election in District 301-D1 for the 2013-2014 fiscal year null and void and of no force and effect, declared a vacancy in the office of second vice district governor for the 2013-2014 fiscal year and that the second vice district governor vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the International and District Constitutions and By-Laws, and declared that the filing fee less US\$100 shall be refunded to the Complainant.
3. Upheld the second vice district governor election complaint filed in District 301-D1 (Philippines), declared the second vice district governor election in District 301-D1 for the 2013-2014 fiscal year null and void and of no force and effect, declared a vacancy in the office of second vice district governor for the 2013-2014 fiscal year and that the second vice district governor vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the International and District Constitutions and By-Laws, and declared that the filing fee less US\$100 shall be refunded to the Complainant.
4. Upheld the second vice district governor election complaint filed in District 308-A2 (Malaysia), declared the second vice district governor election in District 308-A2 for the 2013-2014 fiscal year null and void and of no force and effect, declared a vacancy in the office of second vice district governor for the 2013-2014 fiscal year and that the second vice district governor vacancy shall be filled in accordance with the International and District Constitutions and By-Laws, and declared that the filing fee less US\$100 shall be refunded to the Complainant.
5. Revised the District Dispute Resolution Procedure and the Multiple District Dispute Resolution Procedure in Chapter VII and Chapter XV of the Board Policy Manual to clarify the timing of the selection of conciliators.

#### CONVENTION COMMITTEE

1. Extended the early registration deadline and the delegation hotel assignment deadline to the second week of January of the convention calendar year.

#### DISTRICT AND CLUB SERVICE COMMITTEE

1. Appointed a Coordinating Lion for the Republic of Montenegro for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.
2. Approved a new provisional zone in the Republic of Moldova.
3. Established a policy that requires a certified guiding Lion be assigned to clubs that are placed in status quo.
4. Revised policy to allow district governors to request placement of clubs into status quo up to 90 days prior to the district or multiple district convention.
5. Revised policy to allow clubs that have a balance of US\$10 or less in dues and fees to be considered in good standing as long as the other requirements for good standing are met.
6. Clarified that the rules of audit for district governors covers the cost of multiple district events only when the event is hosted by the multiple district. This change will take effect July 1, 2014.
7. Changed policy to require redistricting proposals to include a plan for membership growth and leadership development and that proposals will only be reviewed during the October board meeting.
8. Revised the number of positions on the Global Membership Team (GMT) and the Global Leadership Team (GLT) from 40 Area Leaders for each team to 41 Area Leaders.

#### FINANCE AND HEADQUARTERS OPERATION COMMITTEE

1. Agreed the Accounting Department Manager may sign routine documents relative to the investments on behalf of the Finance and Headquarters Operation Committee.
2. Approved the 2012-2013 Fourth Quarter Forecast, reflecting a surplus.
3. Board Policy was modified regarding proposals to the board that have an impact on the forecast be reviewed with the Finance and Headquarters Operation Committee. All proposals shall include:
  - Projected costs for the current fiscal year as well as the subsequent two years.
  - Provide a brief description of impact on division's strategic initiatives and goals and objectives.
4. Approved the final budget for fiscal year 2013-2014, reflecting a surplus.
5. Due to timing of board meetings in 2013-2014, approved an exception regarding the Board Policy requiring the Finance and Headquarters Operation Committee submit a recommended full year forecast for review at the January Executive Committee meeting.
6. Approved a minor housekeeping item regarding annual physicals for Administrative Officers and Division Managers.
7. Approved amending the expense claim submission deadline from 120 days to 60 days effective July 1, 2014, for executive officers, international directors, past international presidents, past international directors and district governors.
8. Resolution 5, from the Finance and Headquarters Operation Committee of June 17 – 21, 2012 was rescinded in its entirety, and replaced with the following:
  - a. The immediate past international president and first vice president may attend all area forums. The second vice president may attend his/her own area forum. Meals and accommodations will be reimbursed by the association and charged to the officer's travel budget.
9. Eliminated the need for a signed expense claim for district governors, authorized speaking assignments and in-district budgets, unless required by local laws and regulations. This policy may not apply to all budgets so it is recommended the officer review the applicable policy before submitting a claim.

#### LCIF

1. Revised the SightFirst asset allocation as follows: 30% equities and 70% fixed income.
2. Approved the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Special Olympics to support expanded activities as global partners. The MOU will be for a five-year period and outline support totaling US\$7.8 million, with the annual budget subject to approval each year.

3. Renewed the Core 4 funding priority status for the diabetes prevention and control program for two years, until June 30, 2015.
4. Approved a block grant in the amount of US\$200,000 for the renewal of Lions Quest community partnerships grants.
5. Approved 29 Standard, International Assistance and Core 4 grants totaling US\$1,342,203.
6. Approved a major catastrophe grant of US\$100,000 for Multiple District 321 for areas affected by the Himalayan floods, and appointed leadership of the committee to lead this effort.
7. Approved a SightFirst grant (1634/324-A8) in the amount of US\$195,328.
8. Placed a moratorium, effectively immediately, on all grant applications from Districts 318-B and 323-C. Instructed both districts to repay funds due to LCIF on or before September 30, 2013, or said moratorium shall remain in effect until December 31, 2015.
9. Amended the LCIF Operations and Policy Manual to reflect changes to the LCIF Steering Committee to include two members at large, and enhance the roles and responsibilities of committee members to further support the LCIF volunteer structure.
10. Amended the LCIF Operations and Policy Manual to include the updated SightFirst policies and criteria.
11. Amended the LCIF Operations and Policy Manual with updated banking information for both the general and Lions Quest banking sections, and added the LCIF financial analyst as an authorized person/signatory to both sections.
12. Amended Chapter XVI of the Board Policy Manual to reflect changes to the LCIF Steering Committee to include two members at large.
13. Amended Chapter XVI of the Board Policy Manual with updated banking information for foundation accounts and added the LCIF financial analyst as an authorized person/signatory.

#### LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

1. Added zone chairpersons and region chairpersons (where applicable) to the Global Leadership Team at the district level (GLT-D).

#### MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

1. Determined that, effective immediately, when chartering a Leo Lions Club, to receive the charter fee credit, ten of the Leo Lions need to be a Leo for at least a year and a day.
2. Updated board policy to reflect the reintroduction of entrance fees for family members and modifications to certification processes, effective July 1, 2013.
3. Added Zone Chairpersons to be members of the GMT District Coordinator team, effective immediately.
4. Updated the responsibilities and description of the Club Membership Chairperson to utilize the GMT/GLT district structure, effective immediately. The changes will help clubs make membership growth and member satisfaction a priority and will provide a unified club team to lead the club efforts.
5. Determined that club branch program changes will give more autonomy to club branches in the area of funds, dues, dissolution, member invitation and club attendance requirements.

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

1. Determined that LCI will obtain the services of a marketing firm to assist with the centennial.

#### SERVICE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

1. Named the 2012-2013 Leo of the Year Award recipients.
2. Amended Board Policy Manual language regarding the Lions Clubs International Eyeglass Recycling Program to clarify that Lions Eyeglass Recycling Centers (LERCs) must be in compliance with board policy, not LERC guidelines, effective July 1, 2013.
3. Amended Board Policy Manual language related to the Excellence in Effort Award from, "Sight Conservation and Work with the Blind," to the official program name of "Sight Preservation, Awareness and Action."
4. Removed reference to Leo new member fee from Chapter XXIII, Article XI, of the Board Policy Manual, effective Feb. 1, 2014.
5. Removed reference to Leo new member fee in Chapter XXIII of the Board Policy Manual, effective Feb. 1, 2014.
6. Revised language in Chapter XXIII of the Board Policy Manual to indicate that sponsoring Lions clubs are able to secure items bearing the Leo club emblem from LCI Club Supplies.
7. Removed language from Chapter XXIII of the Board Policy Manual stating that Lions Clubs International shall furnish Leo club member identification cards through the sponsoring Lions club, effective Feb. 1, 2014.
8. Removed language from Chapter XXIII of the Board Policy Manual referring to contents of Leo new member kits and cost, effective Feb. 1, 2014.
9. Removed reference to actual shipping charges for Leo new member kits from Chapter XXIII of the Board Policy Manual, effective Feb. 1, 2014.

For more information on any of the above resolutions, please refer to the LCI website at [www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org) or contact the International Office at (630) 571-5466.

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# LION

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## CLUB BRIEFINGS

ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **Calais Lions** in **Maine** have diverse fundraising efforts which include a used book rack at a supermarket, casino nights, an auction and a "Weenie Wagon." During the holidays the Lions provided turkey dinners, along with gift certificates to buy gifts for low-income families at local stores.

In **Maryland**, the **Deer Park Lions Club** cleared debris, cut trees and spread grass seed for elderly residents. The Lions also presented the Boy Scouts with a donation for assisting with a mulch sale.

The **Rising Sun Lions Club** in **Maryland** welcomed an inspirational speaker, 14-year-old Katelyn Siple, to a meeting. Blind since birth, Siple spoke about the challenges she has overcome and thanked the Lions for the help they have offered throughout her life.

Several Bay Area Lions clubs in **California** worked together to assist the families of two children who traveled from Australia for ear surgery. The Lions provided car seats, transportation, groceries and a guided tour for the families. The clubs—the **San Francisco Marina-North Beach**, **San Mateo**, **Peninsula Special Interest**, **Burlingame** and **San Francisco Host Lions**—responded to the request for help from the Mooloolaba Lions in Australia, who have sponsored hearing therapy for the children.

The **Walden Lions** in **Ontario, Canada**, partnered with a school to collect 163 pairs of eyeglasses.

The **Marceline Lions Club** in **Missouri** handed out 50 pounds of candy on Halloween.

The **Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin, Lions** recently breathed new life into the Lions Outdoor Center so Boy Scouts may use the area to learn outdoor skills. The Lions and partners cleared overgrowth, painted, graded the road and installed new equipment.

# THANK YOU

THE LIONS CHANGED MY LIFE

## The Right Gift at the Right Time

Growing up in Michigan, Theresa Schuler was always looking out for her brother, James Kelm, five years her junior. She was protective as any older sister would be, except that she had more than the usual worries: at age seven, Kelm was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa. Kelm became legally blind, and as his vision continued to deteriorate, Schuler watched her brother struggle. She immersed herself in books about Helen Keller to better understand his challenges. Schuler couldn't have been happier when Kelm received a Braille writer/reader from Lions in St. Joseph in 1976. They both agree that this gift provided the key to unlock the possibilities in life for Kelm—who went to college, was a professional musician and is currently a minister studying for a master's degree—and helped Schuler rest easy knowing her brother would be OK.



Theresa Schuler and James Kelm enjoy a vacation together last summer.

## Q&A: Theresa Schuler and James Kelm

**LION Magazine:** Why was the Braille writer such an important gift?

**James Kelm:** I attended the Michigan School for the Blind until I was mainstreamed into public high school in 10th grade. That's when I really needed the writer. There was a significant river between where I was and where I wanted to be in my education. The Lions provided a bridge so that my energy could be focused on learning, rather than trying to figure out how to get to the material.

**Theresa Schuler:** I was always so proud of James, but it was hard to watch him hitting brick walls. When he received the Braille writer, it gave him a chance to shine. It was a turning point in his life.

**LM:** It sounds like the Braille writer provided you with a big boost.

**JK:** If I've ever wanted to do something, I've figured it out, and my family has helped me get there. But I have to work within a world that's not accessible and with people who don't always understand what that's like. The Lions provided me with the best gift they could at a crucial time.

**TS:** The writer really helped James excel. That meant so much to me. He's always beaten the odds when he receives help so that he can do something on his own, not have it done for him.

**LM:** The Lions may not have realized how much they impacted your lives.

**JK:** As I've gotten to know the Lions, I appreciate that they approach blind people on an equal basis and genuinely want to help us operate effectively within society. Other groups may buy things or make donations, but the Lions go one step further by directly participating and really changing people's lives.

**TS:** That's why I became a [Vadnais Heights, Minnesota] Lion a couple of years ago. I wanted to give back, and I knew the Lions would be right for me.

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](mailto:lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org). Please include "Thank You" in the subject line.

# LAST ROAR



## BOW WOW

Summer, a therapy dog, helped collect eyeglasses for the Stow Munroe Falls Lions Club in Ohio. The golden retriever's owner, John Yarsa, attached this photo of his dog to small plastic buckets with an appeal for eyeglasses and placed the buckets at local businesses. Yarsa presented the 355 donated glasses to Lions at Pawfest, the club's annual dog lover's festival that includes dog-related vendors, animal rescue groups and contests such as best dog/owner look-a-like, longest tail and best costume. Parking was either \$1 or a donation of eyeglasses.



Lions Eye Health Program

# Empowering communities to save sight

You can help fight vision loss in your community!



Participate in the Lions Eye Health Program (LEHP) to raise awareness about common eye diseases that can cause vision loss:

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- Diabetic Retinopathy
- Glaucoma



Lions Clubs International



For more information about LEHP resources, visit [www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org) and keyword search LEHP or email [programs@lionsclubs.org](mailto:programs@lionsclubs.org).

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