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Lions Clubs International

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Unbounded Spirit

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Renewed Zest
for Life



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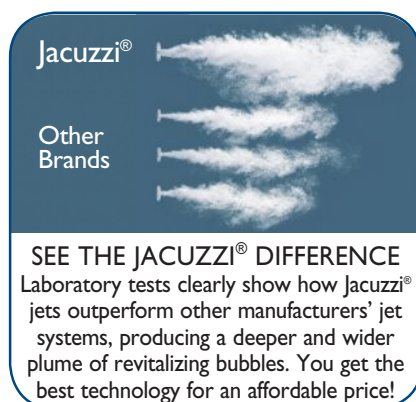
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A Message From Our President



Barry J. Palmer
Lions Clubs
International President

Small Loans Produce Big Results

This year I am urging Lions to Follow Your Dream. That may seem corny to some. But for millions and millions of people who live in poverty it's another story. **They dream of a better life.** They dream of a stable income, an education for their children and health care for their family. In India, for example, nearly 70 percent of its 1.3 billion people live on less than \$2 a day. *Many of us spend twice or three times that on a single cup of coffee.*

Lions in India have found a way for people to reach their dreams. They provide small loans so people can start a business. **It works.** It's worked in India for Lions (see page 42), and it can work elsewhere. With these

microloans people are able to lift themselves up by their bootstraps and earn a decent income.

The absolute beauty of microfinancing is that people help themselves. It's not a costly giveaway program. Neither is it tossing money at people and letting them sink or swim. In India, training is provided. In some programs small self-help groups offer support and advice as well as ensure compliance. **These mechanisms have led to incredible success stories and remarkable outcomes for microfinance programs.**

I especially admire microfinancing because the principles behind it remind me of the service of Lions. We don't toss money at people. By giving them sight we empower them. We often engage with people, meeting and interacting with them instead of writing a check and dropping it in the mail. **Microfinancing recognizes the basic dignity of people and the universal ambition to better oneself and provide for one's family.**

We're all in the same boat; with microfinancing we are reaching out to our neighbors with an oar and friendly advice on how and where to row. And we're hoisting a sail in the boat to enable them to reach their destination. **Where are we headed? Follow Your Dream!**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Palmer', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Barry J. Palmer
Your Lions Clubs International President



A 49-year-old farmer, Munna Lal Patel of India became blind in 1999. His inability to work and provide for his family devastated him. After a small loan and training made possible by Lions, Patel is working again as a small paddy farmer.

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WE SERVE

MISSION STATEMENT OF
LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL:

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

CONTACTING THE LION

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

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Convention Countdown

Toronto, Ontario, Canada
July 4-8, 2014



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

MEMBERSHIP GROWS

The final membership numbers for 2012-13 are in. Membership increased by 29 to 1,347,403, the sixth consecutive year of growth. There were 204,288 new Lions in 2012-13, an increase of 8,037 from 2011-12. Yet there were 204,259 membership drops, an increase of 13,857 from the year before. Membership in the United States decreased by 9,552 to 341,862, and membership in Canada declined by 522 to 37,629. Lions Clubs International is continuing to focus on improving member experience as well as on numerous membership initiatives.

DESPITE DEATH, INSTALLATION HELD

Margaret Chang died of breast cancer just days before she was to be installed as president of the Sibu City Lions Club in Malaysia. To honor her dedication to service, members went ahead with the installation ceremony. "Our club wants to emulate Chang's spirit of love and kindness in serving the community. She left us with the honor of being a leader who served," Secretary Stephen Chuo told the Borneo Post. Members held a minute of silence for her, played a video tribute and shaved their heads in a show of solidarity. She was buried in her Lions vest.

LIONS' WEBSITE IMPROVED

The home page of the website of Lions Clubs International has a new look. Scrolling on the front page are links to media stories on the service projects of Lions worldwide. Visiting www.lionsclubs.org now provides a quick reminder of the global impact of Lions.

LIONS RESPOND TO YOSEMITE BLAZE

The "Rim Fire" in late summer in California burned nearly 400 square miles in and around Yosemite National Park. Lions were a vital part of the disaster relief. For two weeks Lions ran the food operation for 204 evacuees and dozens of emergency personnel at a Red Cross facility set up at a fairgrounds in Sonora. Lions from seven districts and 43 clubs served 6,334 meals; 27 to 35 Lions staffed three shifts daily. Lions logged 3,257.5 hours of service, says Tom Penhallegon, a Sonora Lion who directed the food operation. The eagerness of people to donate was moving, Panhallegon says. "One person drove up and handed us a jar of peanut butter. You can tell the person was living in that car. They gave what they could," he says.



Annie Osteen of the Copperopolis Lake Tulloch Lions Club serves food at the Red Cross facility near the Yosemite fire.

Watch a video of the Lions providing relief for the Yosemite fire.



Jan Burks of the Central Lions Club in Oregon serves at a health fair. Studies show that service is beneficial to health.

HEALTH PRESCRIPTION: VOLUNTEERING

Want to be healthier and live longer? Continue to serve as a Lion. Two recent studies indicate the health benefits of volunteering. New research published in *Health Psychology* shows that people who reported a major stressor such as job loss were 30 percent more likely to die within five years than those without a crisis. The exception is people who volunteer; they show no increased risk of dying. Another study in *Psychology and Aging* revealed that adults over 50 who regularly volunteer are less likely to develop high blood pressure. The study correlated 200 hours of volunteering per year with lower blood pressure.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

ONE OF US

ROD BROOKS

During a recent trip to Uganda, Rod Brooks visited a school and watched 55 students enthusiastically learning, singing and dancing. Their vibrancy astounded him, considering that just six months earlier the dirt-floor school had opened with five malnourished, listless children. Brooks, CEO of the nonprofit Stop Hunger Now, was witnessing the impact of his organization's work to feed the hungry. He knows his vision of ending world hunger is ambitious, but as a Raleigh Host Lion in North Carolina, he also knows that when people work together to serve others miraculous things can happen.

At Stop Hunger Now's headquarters in Raleigh, Rod Brooks holds a meal bag made up of soy, rice, dehydrated vegetables and a fortified vitamin packet.



Why did you choose to focus your career on hunger?

After working for 16 years to help develop a children's museum that educated about our global economy, cultures and connections, I knew that hunger was a huge issue. As I learned more, I realized it's tied to every major global issue. If we address hunger, we'll have leverage addressing issues like health, literacy and poverty.

How does Stop Hunger Now reach those who are hungry?

Volunteers package high-protein, dehydrated meals. We send them to our network of partner organizations in more than 40 countries who distribute the food primarily through school feeding programs, which has proven to be one of the most effective strategies to end hunger. Not only do children need food to learn, but it's an incentive for parents to send their kids to school. Attendance doubles, triples or increases even more. With more children in school, we have a chance to break the cycle of poverty through education.

Are you seeing any improvement in the world's hunger?

Yes. In 2008 roughly 1 billion people were hungry. That number has declined to 870 million—still a huge number. But if you look at it as a percentage of the world's increasing population, we see improvement. The opportunity to end hunger has never been more important.

LCI's Relieving the Hunger Global Service Action Campaign is coming up. What's the single most important thing people can do to help?

Become involved. We need a grass-roots movement to end hunger in our lifetime. People can do everything from helping with local food drives to supporting agricultural development organizations. Our meal packaging volunteers have told me that as they scoop the food into bags, they realize they're just one step away from feeding a starving child across the globe. It's a powerful feeling.

Lions know all about grass-roots movements.

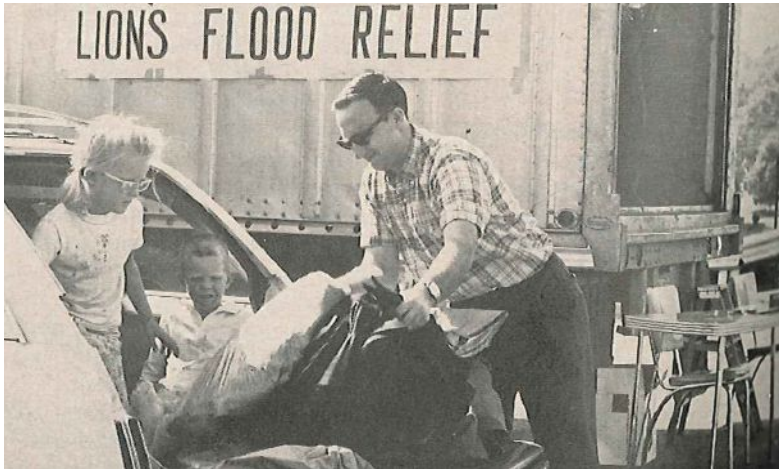
It's amazing being part of this global organization. I've met with Lions in Uganda who are making a difference just like Lions here. What drew me to being a Lion was an email a friend forwarded to me from Past President Scruggs asking Lions to get involved in the fight against hunger. I knew then that he felt the same way I do about hunger.

LCI's Relieving the Hunger Global Service Action Campaign is in December and January. Find a Stop Hunger Now volunteer meal packaging event in 17 U.S. cities at www.stophungernow.org. Find additional volunteer opportunities with LCI partners The Global Food Banking Network (www.foodbanking.org) and Feeding America (feedingamerica.org). Download resources for planning your own project on LCI's website at www.lionsclubs.org (search for "Relieving the Hunger").

Do you know a Lion who you think has a great story or deserves a bit of recognition? Email us a brief description of the Lion and the reason you're making the nomination to lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org. Please include "One of Us" in the subject line.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS



44 YEARS AGO IN THE LION NOVEMBER 1969

"Camille was no lady," the LION reported. The National Hurricane Center called it "the greatest storm of any kind that has ever affected this nation." Nearly 400 people died. In coastal Mississippi, almost all 450 Lions in eight clubs suffered severe damage to their homes. Lions from across the nation sent truckload after truckload of clothes, shoes, medical supplies and cleanup items to storm victims.

OVERHEARD

"I said, 'I'm going to Oklahoma.' So I called the team. It happened that quick—just spur of the moment."

—Ken Hall of the Monterey Lions Club Disaster Team in Tennessee on its 17-hour drive to tornado-ravaged Moore, Oklahoma, to clear debris. From the Herald-Citizen.

"Being a Lion is probably the most rewarding thing I do. I have been extremely blessed in life so giving back is important. And seeing the impact you have on another person's life? It's life-changing."

—Doug Wright of the Lemont Lions Club in Illinois in the Lemont Patch.

"We know this is a popular family event, and people like to come here before the holiday starts. Like our motto says: 'run fast—eat later.'"

—Maria Wilson of the Naperville Noon Lions Club in Illinois on the club's annual Turkey Trot, which draws nearly 8,000 runners. From the Naperville Sun.

BY THE NUMBERS

80

Age of Lion Ray Williams, who sky-dived to raise funds for the League City Lions Club, which he has belonged to since 1962.

12

Fishing rods donated to and refurbished by Coon Rapids Lions in Minnesota, and then given to youths at the Hooked on Fishing, Not Drugs fishing clinic.

130

People who waited in line before doors opened for a coat giveaway held by the Yuba City Sunset Buttes Lions in California. The club has distributed 16,000 coats in 16 years.

684

Classic cars displayed at the "car show by the sea" held by San Pedro Lions in California.

20

Percent of profits from their summer fireworks stand donated to the fire department by Broken Bow Lions in Nebraska.

1,000

Dollar amount of the first prize award in the Big Lake Chili Cook-off sponsored by Manila Lions in Arkansas.

40

People left homeless by a fire at an apartment complex in Amherst, Nova Scotia, Canada, who stayed at the town's temporary shelter at the Lions' clubhouse.

2,500

Square footage of the addition to the Troy Volunteer Fire Department in Idaho thanks to \$50,000 donated or raised by Troy Lions and a \$50,000 LCIF grant.

How a Safe Step Walk-In Tub can change your life

Remember when...

Think about the things you loved to do that are difficult today — going for a walk or just sitting comfortably while reading a book. And remember the last time you got a great night's sleep?

As we get older, health issues or even everyday aches, pains and stress can prevent us from enjoying life.

So what's keeping you from having a better quality of life? Check all the conditions that apply to you.

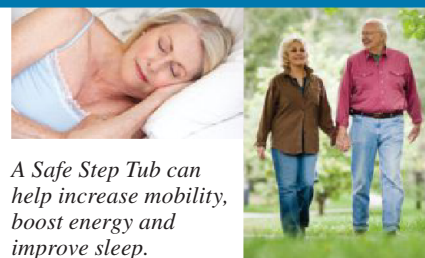
Then read on to learn how a Safe Step Walk-In Tub can help.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Lower Back Pain | <input type="checkbox"/> High Blood Pressure |

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

LIONS NEWS BRIEFS

CLUB OF THE MONTH

KNOWLTON, QUEBEC, CANADA

YEAR FOUNDED: 1956

MEETING MATTERS: The Knowlton Lions gather for meetings twice a month. Members from neighboring clubs can often be spotted at their monthly dinner meetings. The Lions also enjoy meeting regularly with their twin club from about 20 miles away in Richford, Vermont.

BALANCED MEMBERSHIP: Among the club's 52 members are 12 married couples, helping the membership to be almost 50/50 men and women. The club also boasts having had two sets of fathers and sons who served as presidents between the 1960s and 1980s.

HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED: To commemorate Armistice Day each November, the Lions honor local veterans with a Remembrance Day brunch and the laying of a wreath at the community's cenotaph. Last year more than 300 people participated.

A SAFER COMMUNITY: The Lions have donated Jaws of Life for the volunteer fire department, a scanner for the hospital (with help from an LCIF grant) and defibrillators for first responders. They also constructed a pedestrian bridge over a creek between two schools so that schoolchildren can avoid walking on the road.

REALIZING A DREAM: When a resident sold 40 acres of land to the town (for \$1) in 1966, the Lions began fulfilling their dream of creating a community park. Among the Lions' contributions are tennis, volleyball and shuffleboard courts, a baseball diamond, a playground and a shady picnic area. As part of LCI's tree planting goal in 2012, the Lions planted 13 large hardwood trees in the park.

HOLIDAY WARMTH: The Lions remember those in need at the holidays by distributing Christmas hampers full of food and toys to families. Last year 80 families were recipients of Lions' kindness.

BARGAINS FOR SERVICE: To raise funds for service projects, the Lions hold the annual Giant Knowlton Garage Sale, the largest event of its kind in the area. This popular event, along with door-to-door and mail fundraising drives and an annual Christmas fruitcake sale, enables the Lions to serve their community year-round.

HERE COMES SANTA CLAUS: For 45 years the Lions have held a festive Santa Claus parade. Following the parade, Santa hosts more than 200 children for hot chocolate, goodie bags, stuffed animals, photos and most importantly, the chance to tell Santa that they've been good all year.

An excited youngster tells Santa (Lion Errol Frechette) that he is three years old.



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Story Walking for Family Fun

SERVICE IDEA PROMOTE FAMILYTIME



Photo by Bruce Kessler

Children read the final page of “The Berenstain Bears Blaze a Trail” in a shop window.

Every picture may tell a story, but every page of a book brings families together in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. Sparked by Lion Merrilynn Kessler, the 22-member Chambersburg Evening Lions Club sponsored a unique reading event in conjunction with a community ice festival.

“StoryWalk® is a trademarked concept originated by Anne Ferguson in Montpelier, Vermont,” explains Kessler, a retired librarian. “A picture book is placed, page by page, onto signs along a planned outdoor route. Children and adults make their way from page to page reading the book.”

She adds, “Lions borrowed a book from the Franklin County Library System and installed the first page of the walk in an ice chest outside downtown’s Coyle Free Library.” The ice chest also contained a brochure explaining the walk’s origin and brief information about both the county library system and the Chambersburg Evening Lions Club. “The Berenstain Bears Blaze a Trail,” its pages laminated and placed in 17 downtown store windows facing Main Street, was the chosen story.

Lions had specific aims when they decided to adapt this project for use in their community. “In addition to bringing reading and family time to our IceFest audience, another of

our goals was to have as many club members as possible participating,” Kessler says. Illness didn’t stop Lions from volunteering. One member helped design the promotional brochure while another, recovering from the flu, “badly wanted a job,” Kessler says. She helped by folding 200 brochures for distribution.

Other Lions served as walking guides during scheduled times or families read and strolled at their own pace on self-guided tours. There was some built-in playtime. “If a group was small enough, a stop was made for children to try out the working ice slide between pages 10 and 11,” Kessler adds. A free hot cocoa stand helped warm kids and parents as they read and browsed the 65 different ice sculptures on display.

Kessler says Lions plan to sponsor a second walk next year in conjunction with the ice festival. “We know that on our Lions-led tours we had children sprinting ahead to locate the next page. Adults were asking them to wait for reading until they could catch up,” she points out. “Children who were too young to read had fun with the story and helping to find storefront street numbers. We had young and old listening and imagining what might happen, as we made our way from page to page, reading aloud, sharing a book.”

PROMOTE ACTIVITIES

Promoting your club and its activities will showcase how Lions are at the forefront of community service.

START A LEO CLUB

Recognize the contributions of young people by sponsoring a Leo club. Mentoring youth establishes the spirit of volunteerism and shows the way to future service as a Lion.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Unite with other service, civic and community groups occasionally to strengthen ties and reach more people in need.

Lions Honored in a Big Way

What says “thank you” more than having your good deeds immortalized in paint? Members of the Vandenberg Village and Lompoc Host Lions clubs in California can now view the artful appreciation of their own commitment to community service. Lions are featured prominently on a 20-foot by 40-foot mural on the side of a local business for everyone to see.

The Santa Barbara Foundation recognized Lions along with three other groups for their valuable community service. “The Lompoc Mural Society agreed to head up the project and arrange for the design and execution. The artists made the story come to life with their talent and vision,” says Vandenberg Village Lion Ann McCarty. Two of the mural’s scenes illustrate Lions’ activities—a child being fitted with a pair of eyeglasses and a Lion assisting a blind golfer. Both scenes are identified with the Lions Clubs International logo. The mural was completed by 24 artists in a single day.

“Vandenberg Village Lions have been helping with the California Classic Blind Golf Tournament for many years,” explains McCarty. “The Lompoc Host Lions Club has been instrumental in helping hundreds of individuals have access to much-needed vision exams and glasses. Both clubs cover a service area with a population of more than 60,000, encompassing the city of Lompoc, the unincorporated area of Vandenberg and Vandenberg Air Force Base.”

McCarty says, “Being immortalized with such prominence in the community has both clubs beaming with pride. The mural is on a main thoroughfare heading into downtown Lompoc. All of us have a lot to be proud of when we look upon that wall and see the strength of all of our clubs in the Lions Clubs International logo.”



Photo courtesy of The Santa Barbara Foundation

The mural takes shape as an artist draws the portion dedicated to Lions.

Photo by Rodney Lindell

SERVICE IDEA WORK TOGETHER



Mapping Out the Playground

School children in Darlington, Wisconsin, may not realize it, but they’re learning as they play. It would be hard not to absorb a geography lesson since a map of the United States is right there at their fingertips—or more correctly, feet. The

Darlington, Wisconsin, Lions create a colorful map of the United States.

16- by 28-foot map was painted on the playground of the Darlington Middle School, which is attended by kindergarten through eighth-graders.

“The project was the idea of club president Brent Erickson,” explains Rodney Lindell. “It cost \$150 for a stencil kit, and approximately \$175 was spent for five gallons of paint and painting supplies. On a Saturday morning at 8 a.m. sharp, seven Lions with the help of three spouses laid out the stencil, connected the dots and painted in the states. “We were finishing cleaning up by 1 p.m.” Lindell says.

Lindell, 72, is modest about the club’s speedy accomplishment. “The weather cooperated. But it was getting warm near the end, and the water-based paint would dry quite quickly,” he explains. “I think just about everyone had knee pads for kneeling.”

Children aren’t the only ones enjoying the colorful playground map. Second-grade teacher Lori Allendorf calls it “a wonderful resource. The second graders take great pride showing off their skills during our map unit on ‘The Peaceful Playground. They love combining movement with learning.”

LIONS ON LOCATION

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



THE BANGALORE HOST ESPANA LEOS IN INDIA VISITED A SCHOOL FOR THE MENTALLY CHALLENGED TO PLAY GAMES, SERVE LUNCH TO 90 CHILDREN AND MAKE A DONATION.



French Lions Award National Writing Prize

French Senator Alain Gournac speaks at the Lions' literary awards event at Luxembourg Palace. Looking on is Council Chairperson Francois Bertrand.

What brought French Lions together with power brokers, celebrated writers and book lovers in the ornate Napoleon room at the luxurious Luxembourg Palace? It was the 2012 Lions National Literature Prize. French Lions honored first-time novelist Chantal Foret for "Qui-vive," her moving chronicle of two brothers grappling with their feelings toward their ailing elderly parents.

Staunch supporters of the arts, French Lions "use their abilities to help others and develop many initiatives in the areas of academia, education and culture," said Dominique Mallet, chairperson of the Lions' Humanitarian Committee. The literary prize "is proof of our dedication to the cultural sphere and allows us to share our conception of humanism by promoting culture at the regional level throughout France," she added.

The Luxembourg Palace is where the French Senate meets, and Senator Alain Gournac praised his fellow Lions at the literary event. "You are participating in a reading campaign. You are providing assistance to the book publishing industry, and, not least importantly, you are helping an author," he said. "This is not a humanitarian action; it is a humanistic one (in the Renaissance sense). I can only rejoice in the fact that I belong to a club which provides service to humankind in both its earthly and spiritual dimensions."

2 EUROPE SWITZERLAND



Lions and family members make two of the 35,000 Grittibänz they've made since 2004.

Traditional Treat Becomes a Lions' Tradition

Grittibänz, or bread men, are traditional pastries made by German bakeries in Switzerland for St. Nicholas Day (Dec. 6) and then throughout Advent. The Tösstal Lions Club gives the bakeries a run for their money with its own popular version of Grittibänz.

Since 2004, the club has sold 35,000 Grittibänz. Members use a lightly sweetened brioche dough to satisfy the holiday cravings of German Swiss.

Lions and their children make and sell the pastry at a local Christmas market. The sales fund the club's charity. "An equally valuable result was the countless hours club members spent with their friends and family members—not to mention the countless bright eyes of the children who form their own Grittibänz and take them fresh from the oven," according to the Switzerland LION.



THE BIRGANJ LIONS IN NEPAL COORDINATED SEVERAL TAILORING TRAINING CLASSES TO HELP MORE THAN 1,000 IMPOVERISHED PEOPLE DEVELOP JOB SKILLS.



LIONS IN DISTRICT 351 IN LEBANON PARTICIPATED IN A LIONS DAY WITH THE U.N. CELEBRATION AT THE U.N.'S ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA HEADQUARTERS IN BEIRUT.



THE DISTRICT 308 B1 LIONS IN MALAYSIA COLLECTED MORE THAN 6,500 EYEGLASSES IN FIVE MONTHS AND SHIPPED THEM FOR PROCESSING TO THE LIONS EYEGLOSS RECYCLING CENTER IN REDCLIFFE, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA.



Musicians help launch the golden anniversary of the Tongeren Lions Club.

Club Ups the Ante at Anniversary

For half a century Tongeren Lions of Belgium hit upon a simple formula: meaningful projects plus conviviality equal success and longevity as a club. To celebrate its anniversary members came up with another formula: 50 times 1,000. The club's goal it to raise 1,000 euros for each year since its charter in 1963.

The funds (a total of US\$65,000) will benefit the club's longtime cause, TEVONA, a home for adults with mental disabilities; a school for children with learning difficulties or behavioral disorders; a group that helps children with disabilities; and a research fund dedicated to new therapies for cancer. Lions kicked off their anniversary celebration with a concert and also published a colorful club history.

The club has flourished because of its strong social component, says Koen Nulens. "Serving the community as a Lions club is one thing. But being with a group of friends is another," says Nulens, a civil engineer who works as an investment manager. Members annually spend a fun weekend together, regularly attend other social outings and meet with its twinning club, Zwolle Zwollerkerspel Lions in the Netherlands. "Humor and the ability to relate to one another mean a lot to us," he adds.

Settled in 15 B.C., Tongeren is the oldest town of Belgium. The club's oldest and most popular fundraiser harkens back to the days of old: an equestrian weekend first held in 1982. The horses scamper and leap over barriers, and a huge circus tent accommodates bingo games.

Norwegian Lions Kick ...

It's not been the butt of jokes that Lions in Norway are behind an anti-drug campaign. To persuade youths to not use drugs, Lions for nearly 40 years have commissioned films, held drug-free concerts, sponsored youth camps and funded drug-tracking dogs for police and custom officials. A more recent gambit is getting a woman's handball team in Fredrikstad to feature the Lions' anti-drug logo on its shorts. Two prominent professional soccer teams also display the tulip logo.

Lions have used the logo since the early 1980s, and it's now a well-known symbol in Norway. A sturdy red tulip faces up, signifying the result of good choices in lifestyle, and a drooping gray tulip symbolizes the effects of drug abuse.

The tulip logo is appropriate for another reason: Lions have sold tulips since 1982 as a major fundraiser. In 2012 alone the sale raised more than US\$2 million. Some of the funds go to Lions Quest, which has a strong anti-drug component.



The goal of the tulip logo campaign is to discourage youths from using drugs.



Tribe Helped Without Washing Its Hands of Its Past

For centuries the isolated Karen tribe in the dense forests of Northern Thailand practiced a slash-and-burn cultivation to grow crops like hill rice. In recent years some of the tribesmen also grew poppy to produce opium. With its own language and customs, the ruggedly independent mountain tribe sustained itself and its singular culture.

Today the tribe is caught in between the modern world and its traditional ways. The Thai government has been eradicating poppy production and has encouraged the Karen tribe and other indigenous peoples to grow tea and coffee. Yet the forests, the source of the tribes' food, clothing and medicine, are withering, and the government often pushes the tribes onto lower land and presses for their assimilation into mainstream society.

The tribal peoples gained the rights of other citizens but lost their ways of life. Entrenched poverty took root. The difficulties of the mountain peoples have led Japanese Lions to undertake several initiatives in Northern Thailand including a clean water project near Chiang Rai City. New in Pakura Village are a well, a hefty water tank on a nine-meter tower and a renovated school with functional toilets, sinks and, finally, a roof and walls without gaping holes.

"The walls were all shoddy. There were bird droppings on the floor. Some children had pink eye and diarrhea because of the dirty water," says Japanese Lion Yoichi Hayakawa, who toured the site with other members of the Tokai Lions Club.

The Tokai Lions teamed up with Chiang Rai Lions and LCIF on the \$20,000 water project for the members of the Karen tribe in the village. Both the reservoir water and the river water, polluted with pesticides, were making villagers ill.

The Lions tried to help without unduly changing the culture of villagers. "We always tried to be careful not to rearrange villagers' lives by carelessly bringing foreign materials and people into the village," says Japanese Lion Atsuro Takeuchi.



Schoolchildren use the new sinks at their school in Pakura Village.

April is **Family & Friends** Month!

"Helping people is fun. And, anytime you can get together with more than one person it makes it even more fun."

Jeff Gans, USA



"Lions can be the whole family. It can be everyone, because that's really what community is – it's everyone."

Denise Lum, USA

It isn't too early to start planning your "Family and Friends" event for April. Invite your family and friends to participate in a club service activity, open house, or casual gathering like a picnic or barbeque. There is no better way to introduce Lions to those who may be less familiar with the organization you have come to know and love.



Lions Clubs International

630.571.5466 | www.lionsclubs.org



In the Wake of Sandy

Lions are helping New Jerseyites and others recover from the epic storm that hit a year ago.

by Jay Copp

Standing outside his damaged home, Dave Fesette holds his smartphone out in front of him and smiles wryly. The photo of the home in New Jersey featured in the online newspaper story looks eerily similar to his home. It is his home. His residence is “the poster child,” he says, of the devastation of Superstorm Sandy.

A year ago the storm ravaged his two-story residence in Port Monmouth. The first floor filled with water, and the powerful winds tore off the roof, ruining the second floor as well. The newspaper story relates that the deadline for state grants available for homeowners impacted by the storm expires soon.

Yet Donna and Dave Fesette have been unable to secure a grant. It’s confusing and maddening. They once were told the damage did not meet the minimum requirement, obviously not true. Then their paperwork was lost, says Dave.

The Fesettes have 3-year old twins and an 8-year-old. Since Sandy, their lives have been turned upside down. They’ve lived nearby in a cramped apartment not designed for a family. Their steely resolve to do what it takes to regain their home has been severely tested.

“This is a never-ending story. It’s even more heart-breaking now,” says Donna, who leans into their van parked in front of the house to check on the twins. “We were clueless early on. OK, we thought, we’ll get through this. We’re up against the state, the mortgage company. Now that we have Bill, he’s given us hope. He’s our miracle.”

Adds Dave, who works in the events industry, “We’re

losing faith and hope. Bill has restored our faith in humanity.”

“Bill” is Bill Bechtoldt, who is here today to check on the Fesettes. Bechtoldt, relaxed and self-possessed, wears a bright yellow Lions shirt. Since Sandy, he’s logged two to four hours a day helping repair nearly 400 homes along and near the Jersey shore. Most have been fixed up by teenagers from across the country for the Jersey Shore Workcamp, a longstanding church-based volunteer group run by Bechtoldt. But many have been repaired by Lions from New Jersey or Lions who drove in on weekends from Pennsylvania and North Carolina. Lions clubs and districts also donated money for the repairs.

Today two skilled volunteer laborers, here because of Bechtoldt’s connections, are working beneath the home, now elevated as a precondition of receiving federal relief.

Bechtoldt, who talks often to the Fesettes and knows the details of their travails, hugs them before he leaves. “I want to get you back in here by October 1,” he promises.

The beaches, bars and amusement parks along the Jersey shore reopened this past summer. But the neighborhoods remain an unsettling mishmash of abandoned or boarded-up homes, half-repaired houses and restored homes. Dumpsters, barricades and yellow cautionary tape pockmark street after street, frequented by dusty pickup trucks and construction workers. Recovery is a work in progress.



Bill Bechtoldt has used his connections to speed the repair of the Fesette’s home.

Photos by AP/Charles Sykes



Donna and Dave Fesette are eager to move back into their home, damaged by Superstorm Sandy.

Watch a dramatic video of Superstorm Sandy and the damage it caused.

A Club Worthy of Its Name

Thomas Edison lit the world with the light bulb. But the eponymous town in New Jersey where his lab was located went dark—and cell phones failed—after Sandy. Those technological setbacks did not deter the inventive Edison Visionary Lions Club.

Chartered four years ago, the 38-member club was prepared for an emergency. It had followed the advice of LCI's ALERT program in having ready an action plan. Five members also were graduates of FEMA's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. After Sandy hit, the club took seriously its role as responders. Members gathered nightly for more than a week at a command center—the home of Sabita Shah, the only member with a functional cell phone.

A family friendly club with married couples who involve their children in service, Edison Lions helped run a shelter. They drove a caravan of cars and vans to distribute blankets to residents without heat. Because Sandy damaged the water plant, they worked with FEMA to distribute an astonishing 28,000 cases of water bottles at a nifty drive-through operation at a school.

In the middle of it all was indefatigable Mahesh Chitnis, charter president. A management consultant, Chitnis knows local mayors and other elected officials, and he called them to relay concerns of residents. He even successfully contacted State Senator Barbara Buono, running for governor, about placing police barricades in a storm-compromised neighborhood plagued by theft.

Service is part of his identity, says Chitnis, who was a Leo growing up in India. "It's in my blood. It's who I am. Lions have been a part of not only me but my family for a long time. Most of my social life is Lions. My friends are Lions," says Chitnis, vice district governor.

The next step for Lions is joining other nonprofits and government officials in long-term recovery and also planning for the next disaster. Lions are part of a county-wide recovery effort, and Chitnis wants to publish a handbook on what to do and who to contact after a large-scale crisis.

A lesson he learned was that in times of crisis people under stress often overlook the most fundamental needs. At a shelter he once chatted with an elderly woman who rambled on for 20 minutes about her predicament. "Do you need anything else?" Chitnis asked as she finished her story. She reflected for a moment and then excitedly told him, "Oh, yes, I need to charge my oxygen machine."



Edison Lions and their children were out and about in neighborhoods to talk to residents and assess needs after the storm. Shown are (from left) Leo Shreya Bajpai; her mother Rina Bajpai; Anu Chitnis, immediate past president and cabinet treasurer; Ojas Chitnis, the son of Anu and Mahesh; and Mahesh Chitnis, vice district governor.



Bechtoldt and Past District Governor Craig Finnegan visit the repaired home of Patti Faldetti.

Sandy killed at least 125 people in the United States and caused more than \$62 billion in damages. State and federal governments are scrambling to meet needs and restore a sense of normalcy. Lions have helped fill in some gaps, got people back on their feet and, most of all, lent a personal touch, a measure of decency and kindness in the wake of a devastating calamity. The LION accompanied Bechtoldt for a day as he visited homeowners he and other Lions have helped. The Jersey shore suffered a terrible blow, but it's picked itself off the canvas and, though wobbly and still weakened, stands again.

Bechtoldt smiles when told no sign signals the Jersey Shore Workcamp. The camp is run from his floral shop on a main street in Middletown, five miles from the sea and thus mostly spared from the wrath of Sandy. His business lost power for two weeks, terrible for business but fortuitous for distressed homeowners. "Gail [his wife] and I took a ride to check on the people we've helped in the past," he says.

A seaside town, nearby Keansburg took a direct hit. The surging waters breached the sand berm and walloped 10 blocks before meekly stopping at St. Anne Church. The amusement park on the bay was no match for Sandy. A solitary bumper car was found in the middle of a street blocks away. For months the massive parking lot adjacent to the amusement park was a crazed, surreal collection of ruined parts of homes. There was nowhere else to put debris.

Prior to Sandy, Bechtoldt had supervised dozens of repair jobs in Keansburg, occupied by many low-income, single-parent households. That includes Patti Faldetti, who works for the school district.

She's at work but Bechtoldt now knows her well enough that he's comfortable entering the home when no one answers his knocks. His crew gutted her entire first floor, now gleamingly new. "The water was up to here," says Bechtoldt, putting his hand at his throat.

Disasters are no picnic, but the unexpected troubles that erupt in their aftermath often retraumatize people. Faldetti was told by her insurance company to not move a thing until it could get an examiner out. That took three weeks. "It was like living in sewage," she says by phone from her workplace. There was no heat, and her pipes froze and burst. She came down with pneumonia and an infection. Her cat developed tumors. She also learned that FEMA required her to raise her home if she wanted federal aid. "It will look ridiculous. I'll be living in a tree house," says Faldetti, chagrined but fortified with a survivor's humor. "I guess I'll have a good view. I'll be in the penthouse."

Bechtoldt wrangled with the insurance company and government officials for her. "Thank God for Bill. He's my Clarence—from 'It's A Wonderful Life,'" she says.

Next stop is the beautifully restored home of Ann Campbell, a demure 77-year-old woman. She's been in her cinder block home in Keansburg since 1967 and lived alone since 1988, when her mother died. Before she retired from a job as a home health aide, she worked as a secretary at a busy insurance firm in New York City. The work was intense, but she handled it. "My replacement had a nervous breakdown after a few weeks," she says matter-of-factly.

On the wall is a plaque with a Bible verse from the book of Job, the blameless man who suffered terribly. "The rod of God is not on them,"

Lions Aid Victims

Superstorm Sandy whipped Lions nationwide into a frenzy of relief and aid.

Lions in New York and New Jersey provided food, water and blankets. When the weather turned sharply colder, they supplied generators for those without heat as well as hats and gloves. Lions in North Carolina used the boat of the district governor to ship food and water to residents stranded on Hatteras Island. Lions in Connecticut delivered several truckloads of food to pantries.

Clubs nationwide held fundraisers for Sandy relief. Repaying New York Lions in kind for their assistance after a hurricane, Lions in Florida held a quilt drive. The support continued through the summer. Camp Marcella, a camp for blind children in New Jersey, held two sessions in July for children of victims of the storm. The camp was made possible by an LCIF grant, as were many of the relief efforts. LCIF mobilized \$740,000 to help those affected by Sandy including a \$100,000 Major Catastrophe grant.



Thousands of severely damaged homes in New Jersey will be torn down.

Watch a video on Lions' relief efforts after Sandy.



Ann Campbell is elated with her new kitchen countertop.

the verse reads. The plaque is signed by the teenagers who worked on her home. “They said they’d write to me. I hope they do,” she says quietly.

Jim Groff of the Christiana Lions Club in Pennsylvania also worked on her home. Groff is a story by himself—have hammer, will travel. After Sandy, weekend after weekend, Groff and other Lions bid adieu to their jobs, families and hobbies and drove hundreds of miles armed with tools and the skills to repair homes. Groff, the owner of a restoration company, rebuilt a day care center in New York with Lions from New York. He toiled with Amish craftsmen on homes in Union Beach and Sea Bright in New Jersey. He helped fix up Campbell’s home, too. Today, for the first time, Campbell is seeing her new kitchen counter top in her brand-new kitchen. “Oh, my God,” she murmurs.

For months Campbell has stayed with a kind friend. But the day is coming when she can move back. “This is my home,” she says simply.

Bechtoldt, a Middletown Township Lion, drives with a fixed gaze on the road. An occupational hazard of post-disaster home repair are flat tires. He’s had six of them. “Debris was piled in the street. You couldn’t put it on the sidewalk,” he explains.

A U.S. flag covers the door of the white-framed home where Bechtoldt parks. “Hi, it’s Bill,” he says, poking his head in the door and hugging Ronnie McCann, who wears a baseball cap. The interior is dark—but repaired. McCann got new subfloors, walls and electrical wiring. She almost

lost her sister, who uses a wheelchair. As the water rushed in at night, McCann was able to get her sister on a platform on the stairs. The water rose to her sister’s neck, and she came down with pneumonia.

McCann can now worry about more mundane matters. She shows Bechtoldt the cluttered bathroom. “I really need a medicine cabinet. There’s no place to put my stuff,” she tells him. “Give me a couple of days,” he assures her as he exits.

Disasters are particularly hurtful to those with little means, those whose network of friends don’t extend into lawyers’ and government offices, those who sometimes don’t expect a fair shake from society. “I do a lot of comforting of people. I talk to insurance companies for them,” says Bechtoldt as he drives. “Some people at or below the poverty level don’t have the know-how to deal with these things.”

Bechtoldt passes a long white van with a Lions logo that is stopped at a home. It’s headed to Camp Happiness, a haven for the blind. Life goes on after disasters—for good and bad. Bechtoldt tells the sad story of the next home on the itinerary. The husband, a contractor, got sick not long after Sandy and died. That left Bobbi Lariviere alone in a severely damaged home where their three children, now grown, once romped.

“I’ve got all kinds of memories here,” says Lariviere. It’s not easy to pick up the pieces. “I try—with Bill’s help,” she says.

The surge turned her home into a churning washing machine with her furniture as the load. “The dining room

Bobbi Lariviere lost her husband not long after Sandy.



was floating. The living room was floating,” says Lariviere, who fled upstairs as her mind raced on what to do if the water followed her.

The devastation, especially after her husband died, left her feeling powerless. “The first time I met her she started crying. She wouldn’t get out of the chair,” says Bechtoldt.

Lions and others put in new walls, windows and a kitchen. “It’s 90 percent better. Everything is much better in some ways. It’s prettier,” she says.

She and Bechtoldt trade small talk before he heads toward the back door, where he pauses. “I’ll see you on Saturday. We’ll get working on the back room,” he says as Lariviere nods.

In his car Bechtoldt keeps a notebook of names and needs. At the floral shop he has a stack of business cards of contractors, government officials and Lions. He knows better than anyone that his contribution is representative of the volunteerism and cash donations of many others. A turning point for him was when the Chester Lions donated \$25,000 for the repair projects, followed by \$14,000 from the district governors in New Jersey. When funds or labor was needed, money or people materialized.

Bechtoldt hurries behind the counter of his floral shop. He’s ready to allot the rest of his time today to his flowers and the beauty and comfort they provide to customers, an apt encore to the first portion of this Lion’s day.

Watch a funny Lions’ video on disaster relief.

Community Spirit Buoyed a Town

Sayreville is not on the Jersey shore, but the wide Raritan River rolls through it on its way to the sea. The ferocious, double-digit tidal surge produced by Sandy swept over entire neighborhoods.

The tight-knit town of 42,000 was changed forever. FEMA has bought out 129 homeowners, and dozens more are expected. The scale of the destruction thrust Sayreville into the headlines. Governor Chris Christie visited, as did rocker Bon Jovi, a native.

On a drive through Sayreville, Kevin Kosobucki and his fiancé, Dawn Myatt, offer a detailed narrative of the fates of homeowners. This family will never return. These folks are moving out after their son graduates high school this year. This couple lost two cars. This family’s repairs are almost finished.

On some blocks the couple knows two or three family tales. Their familiarity is a product of being longtime residents—and through their service as Lions, especially after Sandy.

The Lions’ couple keeps a Lions’ vision and hearing van in their driveway, and after the storm they loaded up its interior with donated food and cruised the streets. They knocked on doors to let people without power and spoiled food avail themselves of a free meal or two. “We broke the rules,” says Kosobucki with a grin, referring to the Lions’ ban on food inside the van. The mobile food operation complemented the emergency food pantry at a church, staffed by Lions and others.

For 10 days after Sandy the van’s generator also came in handy. The couple posted a sign on their lawn that read “Lions Charging Station.” Hundreds came to re-activate their phones and laptops. Lions built a fire pit and erected a tent to deal with the elements. Before long, residents, out of sorts with their usual routines disrupted and their normal gathering places shut down, arrived for the company as well as the service. Teenagers particularly showed up in bunches. “I got a big hug from one lady. She said, ‘Thank you for looking after my son,’” says Myatt, president of the Sayreville Lions. Two months later, she came home to find at the



Dawn Myatt and Kevin Kosobucki used the generator from the Lions van to charge cell phones and lap tops for residents after Sandy.

door a lovely Christmas card, simply addressed “to the charging station family.”

But not all is well a year later. Kosobucki and Myatt visit with Paul and Doris Emmons, in their early 80s. They’ve lived in their home for 55 years, and FEMA has offered them a buyout, probably their best option. “It’s terrible,” says Doris. “I lay awake at night thinking about it. Where will we go? It’s extremely emotional considering our age.”

Age and longevity—those are facts of life that can’t be dismissed. As she talks, Doris sits in a chair more than a century old—her grandmother’s. Unfortunately, many of their other belongings were lost to the flood waters. But buried in debris outside, Paul miraculously found a Christmas ornament given to them by Doris’ mother when they were married 59 years ago.

Outside the Emmons’ home, Kosobucki, the club’s second vice president, knows Lions can only do so much, but they do what they can. “We help them get through this. Talking to them lets them know people care,” he says.

The Lions’ couple drive through another hard-hit neighborhood. They know what happened to who here, too. They know the story of Sayreville, the story of their neighbors and friends. The two Lions have a sense of living through historic times. The hardships people endure trouble them, but they are proud of having risen to the occasion as Lions. Recalling the days and nights of the crowds at her home, Myatt says, “I enjoyed it. I enjoy helping others.”

Unbounded Spirit

A gift of two wheelchairs sparks a renewed zest for life.

by Anne Ford



The Golden Eagles bond over basketball and shared hardships.



Wheelchair basketball gave Blake Loftin (releasing the ball) another shot at happiness.

It took only a few harrowing moments for the engine of Allen Champagne's helicopter to sputter and stall as it flew over the Gulf of Mexico 12 years ago. It took only a few horrifying moments more for him to plunge with it into the unforgiving water below. But after he woke up in the hospital and learned that he'd be permanently confined to a wheelchair, time seemed to pause forever.

"Everything just seemed to have stopped in my life," says Champagne, 39, a former high school athlete who lives in Thibodaux, Louisiana, and speaks with a smooth drawl. "I remember saying that if this was going to be life for me, I would rather not be here. As I ventured out of the hospital, I felt really different than everybody else—so weird being in this chair, and so helpless. Life didn't seem to have much of a purpose."

That began to change about a year after the accident, when he learned about a local wheelchair basketball team. Popularized as a means of rehabilitating injured soldiers after World War II, wheelchair basketball uses specially designed chairs that allow players to move quickly and deftly around the court, dribbling, passing, and shooting just like standing players would.

In wheelchair basketball, hoops are at the same height as they are in the regular, stand-up version, and the rules are only slightly modified. (Pushing one's chair more than twice in a row while dribbling the ball, for example, counts as traveling.)

Like many people who'd never seen a wheelchair basketball game, Champagne showed up to his first practice not expecting a terribly competitive experience. He was quickly blown away by the players' strength, speed and aggression. "It was definitely more intense than I could have ever thought it would be," he laughs now.

Just as amazing as the athleticism on display was the obvious camaraderie among the players. "It was the first time I had ever seen so many people in wheelchairs," Champagne says. "It was like a big support group." After that point, he says, "Life became a lot more normal, a lot more functional."

Unfortunately, wheelchair basketball is an expensive sport. The special wheelchairs it requires are pricey—and then there are the travel costs. "Most states have only one, maybe two teams in them," Champagne points out. "So being able to compete takes a lot of traveling. Most of the time, when we have a competition, it's in a tournament, where you play four or five games over a weekend. That's why financing is one of the hardest things about keeping a team going."

Fortunately, funding from the Lions of Mississippi and others has made it possible to add one more wheelchair basketball team to the nation's roster: the TLC Southern Miss Golden Eagles of Long Beach, Mississippi.

The Golden Eagles are sponsored by the University of Southern Mississippi's Technology Learning Center, a



Loftin lost the use of his legs in a boating accident.

community-based, university-directed non-profit that works to enhance the lives of people with disabilities. The team quickly became a competitive powerhouse in the world of wheelchair basketball after it began in 2011.

More importantly, the Golden Eagles, for which Champagne is both player and assistant coach, offers its players the same chance he received: to remain in top physical shape while making social and emotional connections that have the potential to change their lives forever.

It all began with a catastrophic storm. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina decimated the central Gulf Coast, killing nearly 2,000 people and resulting in more than \$100 billion of damage. Among its victims was the Technology Learning Center (TLC), which was totally destroyed during the storm and its aftermath.

Nancy Ann Sherman, who is both a Biloxi Lions Club member and a TLC visual impairment consultant, quickly went to her club and asked for help. The result: a Lions Clubs International Foundation grant of nearly \$100,000, administered by the Lions of Mississippi. The grant helped TLC replace vital equipment including two wheelchairs suitable for basketball.

“That’s how we started the program—all from those two chairs,” says Ashley-Nicole Ross Flowers, the coach of the Golden Eagles. An energetic 26-year-old, Flowers has been known to pick up a player and hoist him into the team van herself when the wheelchair lift isn’t working. Flowers works as an assistive technology and certified recreational therapist at TLC. The wheelchairs allowed her and other staff members to encourage TLC clients to try out the sport.

By 2011, local interest in wheelchair basketball had risen so high that Flowers obtained a grant from the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services to fund an entire team’s worth of wheelchairs, jerseys, and other equipment. That’s when the Golden Eagles were officially born.

Among the players to join was Blake Loftin, 24, who attends college in Mobile, Alabama. Loftin lost the use of his legs in a boating accident at age 13. The accident did not dim his competitive spirit. He relishes the sport's cut-throat competitiveness. The sport has become part of his identity, and he's training hard for the 2016 Summer Paralympics.

"Most people think that it's a feel-good thing, that we're just rolling around," Loftin says. "It blows their minds when they see top-notch players going at each other, moving at 15, 20 miles an hour and scoring 80, 90 points a game."

Thanks to that kind of intensity, the Golden Eagles won the Division III National Wheelchair Basketball Association (NWBA) Gulf Coast Conference Championship in 2012—just one year after the team was founded. Not only that, but "that was actually the first time that the whole team had come together to play," Loftin says. "I believe we beat our opponents pretty handily by about 20 points."

The team went on to win the Capitol City Classic tournament last year in Jackson, Mississippi. It quickly became one of top 24 teams of the NWBA's Division III and then won second place in the 2013 Gulf Coast Conference Championship in Biloxi. Last April, they played in their first national competition, the NWBA Division III National Tournament, and came home with the fifth-place trophy.

Yet Flowers enthusiastically attests that the team benefits players in ways that have nothing to do with a scoreboard. "I have one player who had almost committed suicide," she says. "His therapist told him about our program, and he went from being suicidal to being someone who wants to play, wants to live, wants to be competitive again. He got his life back together. He felt like he could be somebody. His whole life just changed right in front of me."

How is such powerful change possible? For one thing, playing wheelchair basketball requires that players stay in top-notch physical condition. "To see a person shoot a three-pointer from a chair—the whole stadium goes berserk because it takes so much upper body strength," Flowers says. "Try sitting in a chair sometime and shooting. It's very intense."

Champagne agrees. "You push more in one game of wheelchair basketball than you push in a week of regular day-to-day life," he says. "And it's a whole different way of pushing. You're pushing harder and faster, and there's more contact." When a player devotes that much time and effort to maintaining physical health, mental health is bound to follow.

Then, too, being around other people who experience the same mobility limitations helps foster a sense of com-



munity and connection. "It gets them to see that they're not the only people going through this," says Flowers. "It helps them feel as if they're in their element."

And then there's the many practical tips for life in a wheelchair that the players inevitably end up sharing with one another. "If you haven't been injured long and haven't figured out a whole lot of things yet, it helps to have this group of people who have been through it and can pass on advice on how to do things better," Champagne says. "A lot of times [at practices] you'll see people off to the side, talking about different things. They help you realize that there's still a way to do things. You just have to figure it out."

Loftin, for instance, was taught by previous wheelchair basketball teammates how to go up and down an escalator (by using his upper-body strength to support both himself and his chair), how to get his chair to fit to his body so that he could get through narrow doorways and how to sit at a desk without having his chair accidentally roll away from it.

"I've learned so much besides basketball from guys that have been in chairs longer than me," he says. He tries now to do the same for others. "It stinks that bad things happen to people, but if I hear of an athletic person getting hurt, I immediately go into recruiting mode. You get them on the team, and you get to teach them little things about how to move your wheelchair. It helps them; it helps me. It's making a good situation out of something that's less than ideal."

Champagne does his share of recruiting and mentoring, too. "You definitely see that person, who, given time, almost blossoms into someone different," he says. "A lot of times, when you first meet them, they're almost like a clam—just real quiet and not sure of themselves. As they get more comfortable as a player, as a person, you can see their attitude change. You can see who they were before they were injured come out. It's not *all* due to basketball. But I do believe that basketball makes a big difference."

These Are A Few of Our

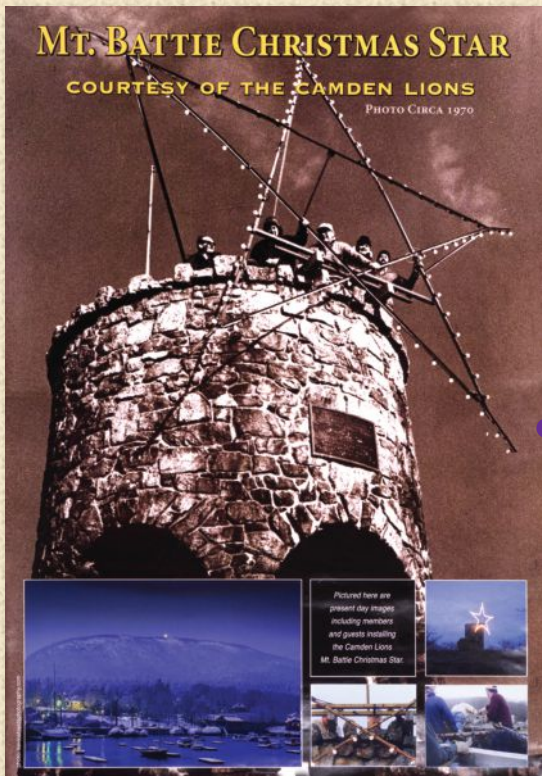
Favorite Things

by Jay Copp

Lions are spirited. What's in our hearts drives our service. It can't be touched, measured or seen. Yet objects can help us reach our objectives. They are totems of the good will of Lions. Inanimate objects reveal the passion for service. Their outward beauty reflects the attractive kindness motivating Lions.

Each year since 1990 Fairmount Lions in Indiana remember their most famous son with a collectable pin. The club makes 1,000 pins of James Dean, who grew up on a farm near Fairmount. The 1949 graduate of Fairmount High School was "a brilliant senior guard," according to the yearbook. The "anniversary" on the pin refers to the year of his death. Pin proceeds fund a scholarship for a high school senior. Dean will live on in another way thanks to the club. Lions recently removed the stage from the old Fairmount High School, where Dean first acted, and will rebuild it in a new park pavilion.



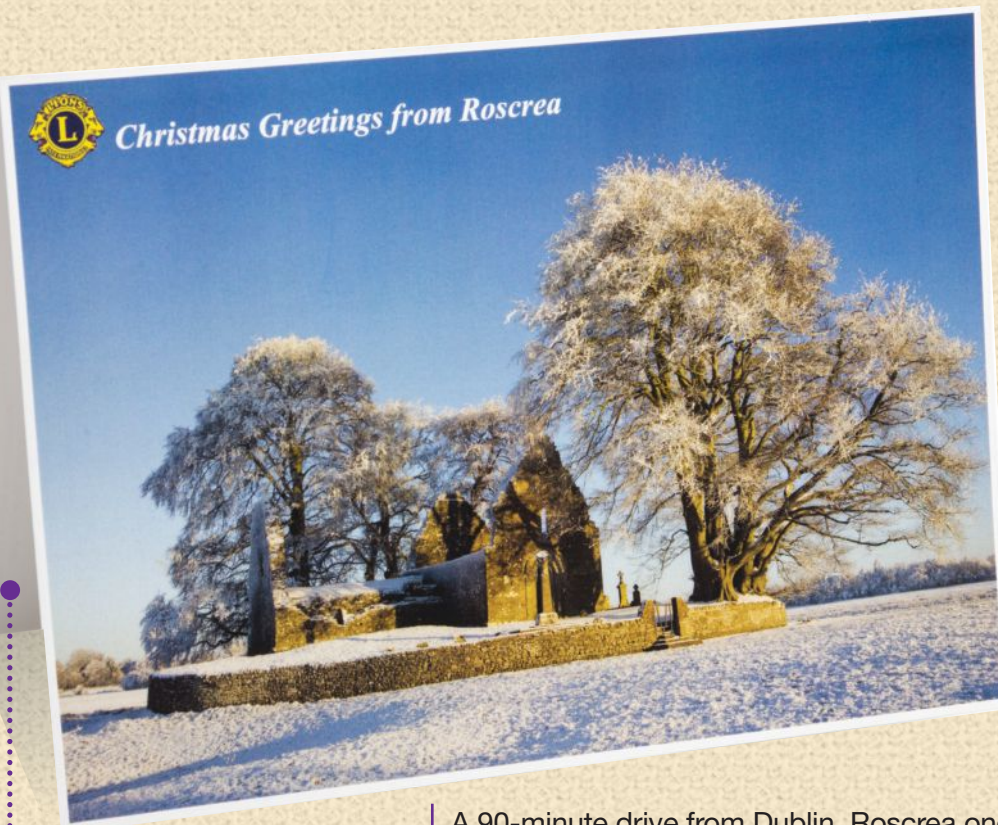


Camden Lions in Maine commemorated the 50th anniversary of their annual Christmas star on Mt. Battie in 2011 with a poster. The 19- by 27-inch poster sold for \$5.95. The star, placed on an old tower honoring World War I veterans, glows majestically from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m. from Thanksgiving to New Year's Eve. A rounded, rocky knob, the 800-foot Mt. Battie forms a scenic backdrop to the town and harbor. Lions must ascend the mountain each day to refill a generator with gas.



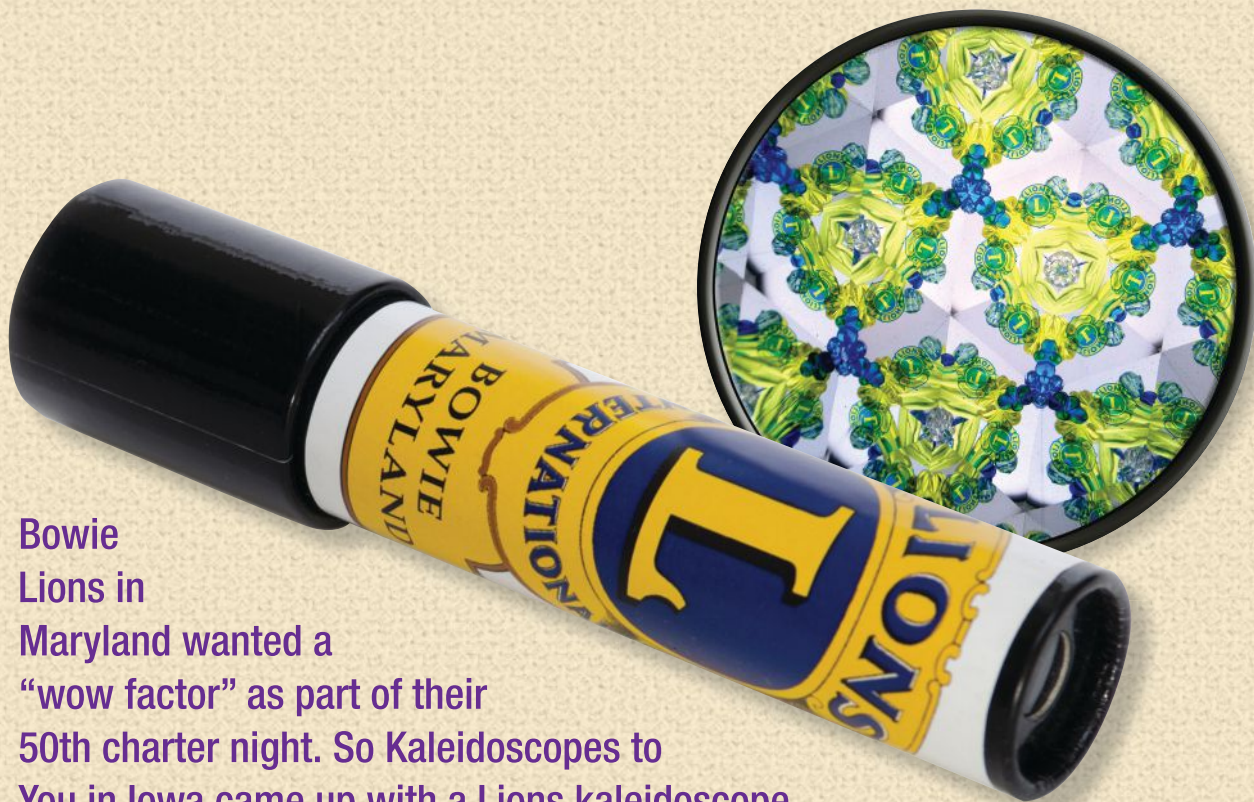
Eight youths died in car accidents in a short span in Manheim, Pennsylvania; five of them played on the popular high school football team. So Manheim Lions sold prints of the school's football field and used the funds to offer a voluntary hands-on defensive driving course. The prints sold for \$75. About 300 teenagers have taken the BRAKES course (Be Responsible And Keep Everyone Safe).

If Lions are part of their fabric of our communities, shouldn't we embrace the iconic places and events within our communities? Yes, say the Middlebury Lions in Connecticut. For nearly a decade they've created and sold Christmas ornaments with themes that resonate with residents. Scenes depicted include sledding on the Town Green, skating on a local pond, the annual tree lighting, a local school and the encampment during the Revolutionary War of French General Rochambeau, hurrying to join General Washington to defeat Cornwallis at Yorktown. Last year's ornament celebrated Johnny's Dairy Bar, a hot dog stand that opened in 1952. Lions and other Middleburians worked the counter or downed sodas, devoured the 25-cent, foot-long hot dogs, traded stories, jokes and furtive looks of longing and otherwise acted like the teenagers they once were.



A 90-minute drive from Dublin, Roscrea once sat on the ancient highway of Ireland known as the "Slighe Dala" (Parliament Way). The small picturesque town is dotted with old monasteries, churches and castles. Roscrea Lions took advantage of the beauty that surrounds them by selling Christmas cards featuring historic sites. Lion Brian Redmond took the photos. A packet of eight cards sold for eight euros (about US\$11).

Bowie
Lions in
Maryland wanted a
“wow factor” as part of their
50th charter night. So Kaleidoscopes to
You in Iowa came up with a Lions kaleidoscope
for members. Speakers at club meetings also now
leave with it as a keepsake. Makes you see Lions in
a whole new way.



A columnist from the Oakland Tribune in California praised the new planters in the attractive Montclair neighborhood: “Not since the days when shopkeepers swept their sidewalks have I seen this kind of community pride.” Oakland Montclair Lions recruited Gina Dominguez of Snapshot Mosaics to create intricate mosaics that include a Lions Club logo for planters scattered throughout the hillside, tree-covered neighborhood.

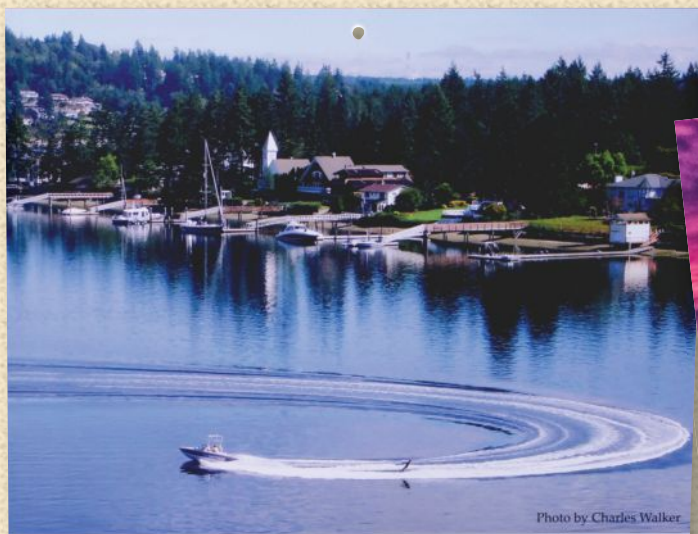


Photo by Charles Walker

August 2013
Voted best breakfast and burgers in town.

Kelly's Cafe and Espresso
 7806 Pioneer Way, Gig Harbor, WA
 253-851-8697
Kelly's Espresso
 5120 Bergen Blvd NW Unit A, Gig Harbor, WA

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 About the Photo: Water skiing on calm Echo Bay near Fox Island. Charles Walker	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

www.gigharborlions.org



Photo by Ed Johnson

We are the Gig Harbor Lions Club
 Support Our Fundraisers - Become a Member

We serve our community:

- Low Vision Services
- Partnerships With Our Community
- Adopt-A-Road Program

We serve our youth:

- College Scholarships
- Food Backpacks For Kids
- Camp For Kids With Diabetes
- Little League Baseball

We serve our world:

- Disaster Relief
- Eye Disease Care
- Eyeglass Recycling

We serve our region:

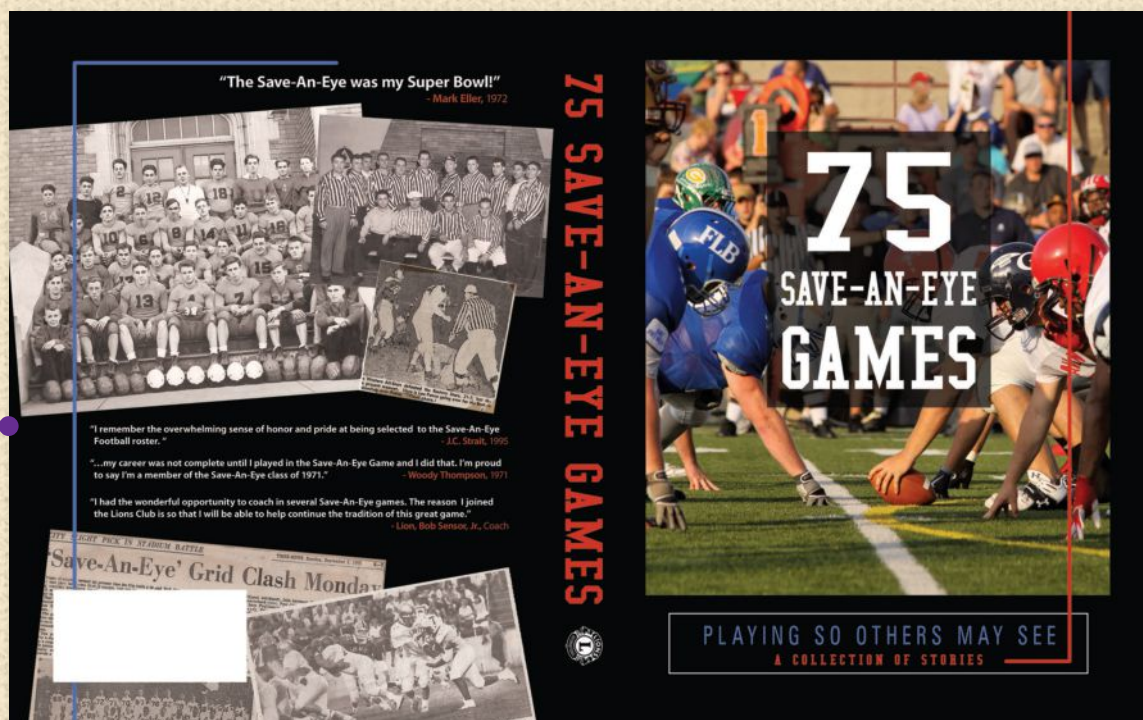
- White Cane Days
- Santa's Backpack Program
- The Homeless

Learn More: www.gigharborlions.org
 Lions - The Global Leader in Humanitarian Service
 Like us on Facebook

Gig Harbor, Washington, ends up on magazine lists of “best small towns” or in newspaper stories on weekend getaways. Located near the towering Tacoma Narrows Bridge, the town of 7,000 on Puget Sound has boutiques, fine dining, and most of all, a picture-perfect waterfront. Gig Harbor Lions leverage the attractiveness of their town by producing a calendar with gallery-quality photographs. Lions believed their 2012 calendar was especially well-done, so they printed 5,000 calendars instead of the usual 500. The club had no trouble selling them.



Maybe you're in the mood for something routine like a casserole or taco dip. Or maybe you're game for something more exotic like a moose and squirrel meatball. The cookbook of the Mad River Lions in Ohio has something for every palate: 430 recipes for appetizers, soups, salads, main courses and desserts submitted by club members, other Lions and residents. The cookbook committee included Russ and Alesha Stringfellow, who designed the cover.



For 75 years high school football stars in and near Erie have battled in the Save-An-Eye Game. Held by the Erie Lions, the game has raised more than \$3 million for eye care for needy children through The Sight Center of Northwest Pennsylvania. Last summer a colorful Save-An-Eye history book was published, and NFL Films sent a crew to work on a feature about retired fullback Brian Milne, who played in the all-star game.

It Takes a Lion

A remarkable family and an extraordinary school in Philadelphia lovingly embrace children with disabilities. Behind the scenes Lions are working their magic.

by Vicki Glembocki

MaryAnne Roberto said no. She had to say no.

There was just no way—*no way*—she and her husband Matt could afford to adopt another child. They had four children of their own, three of them teenagers, the fourth just starting college. Plus, the couple already had 8-year-old Sophie, whom they adopted from China in 2005, and little 4-year-old Shane, also from China, who “came home,” as MaryAnne puts it, just the year before, in 2009.

Shane was a challenge. They knew he would be, from the moment the Robertos first came across his file on the adoption agency’s website. He was totally blind. Sophie, too, was partially blind and the Robertos dug deep to pay the hefty \$13,000 tuition to send her to St. Lucy’s Day School for Children with Visual Impairments in Philadelphia, a 30-minute drive from their home in Bensalem. Even so, the Robertos had planned to send Shane there when he was ready for elementary school, but quickly realized that his developmental delays were far more severe than they expected. They didn’t know yet what kind of expenses his care might incur. But they did know one thing: “We couldn’t afford to adopt again,” says MaryAnne, 52, who works as a recreational therapist, doing early intervention with visually impaired infants and toddlers, while Matt, 55, works for the government.

Adopting children wasn’t even her idea in the first place—it was her daughter Megan’s. Years before, Megan had been diagnosed with a rare autoimmune disease that had the potential of permanently damaging her vision. She spent a lot of time in hospitals with other kids, many of whom did not have the support system she had. So she began to ask her parents if they would consider adopting. MaryAnne thought it was merely phase—a compassionate girl caught up in the emotion of her situation—but even after Megan recovered, she kept asking. And asking. MaryAnne decided to explore the idea a bit and, when she

came upon the agency that worked with special needs children in China, she realized what she needed to do.

“These were our children, waiting for us in China,” explains MaryAnne with an accent so strong it’s clear she was born and raised in Philadelphia. “We just didn’t know it.”

By 2009, their family of six had grown to eight.

A year later, as MaryAnne was finishing up some of Shane’s paperwork on the agency’s website, she came across the photo of a girl. The girl, Maeleigh, had a tethered spine and needed to walk with crutches but, otherwise, was perfectly healthy. In fact, she’d been on her way to being adopted but, for some reason, the adoption had fallen through. It happened at a critical time—Maeleigh was almost 14 years old, which meant that she was about to age out of the adoption process in China. If she weren’t adopted that year, she would lose her chance, likely living out the rest of her life in a Chinese nursing home.

“I found a girl who needs a family,” MaryAnne told her husband that night.

“Can we afford it?” Matt asked.

“No,” MaryAnne answered. They looked at the photo of Maeleigh, and both of them began to cry.

A few days later, a letter came in the mail. It was from Sophie’s school, St. Lucy’s. When MaryAnne opened it, she could hardly believe what she was reading: “Sophie’s tuition is paid in full for the next year.”

It was a sign, she thought. From God. And God’s message was clear: “You can do this.”

* * *

Three years after the letter came, MaryAnne holds her son Shane’s arm as he thunders his way through the crowd in the gymnasium at St. Lucy’s Day School for Children with Visual Impairments. It’s Saturday, March 23, Irish Day, one of the school’s biggest annual fundraisers. Orange, green, and white balloons bob above the center of the 24 tables in the gym, all of them packed full.



(Above) Louise Hanson and 2012-13 Vice District Governor Tony Mangabat greet a student on Irish Day at St. Lucy's Day School for Children with Visual Impairments in Philadelphia. (Below) Mangabat chats with a student at Irish Day. Photos by Joan Ford



The families of students are there, of course, many wearing T-shirts imprinted with a verse from Corinthians: “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” But there are also hundreds of people from the school’s North Philly neighborhood, who stop by and donate up to \$10 a pop to eat ham and cabbage and soda bread, watch Irish step dancers tap, bid on the auction baskets (there’s an iPad in one this year), and listen to the band on stage that is, right now, playing “Irish Eyes Are Smiling.” Everyone is singing along. Literally.

The Robertos stop to chat at a table in the very front of the room, right by the door where there’s still a line of people waiting to come in despite the fact that the afternoon event is half over. This table is the Philadelphia Lions Club’s spot, where six members are sitting, clapping to the music, sporting their bright yellow Lions’ aprons like little pots of gold. The analogy isn’t an exaggeration. For St. Lucy’s, donations from the District 14 Lions make up a huge portion of their pot of gold, explains school principal Sister Meg Fleming, who is sitting at the table, too, listing the ways the Lions have helped her students during the 25 years the club’s been involved with the school, which opened in 1955.

“We asked them to buy us a Braille computer, and they said, ‘Yes,’” says Sister Meg, whose enthusiasm is so kid-like it’s hard to believe she’s 64. “Then they said, ‘What else do you need?’ And, they kept asking, ‘What do you need? What do you need?’ If it weren’t for the Lions, we wouldn’t be as good as we are.”

By far, the biggest help comes from the money the Lions donate every year to offset tuition costs. There are 41 children at St. Lucy’s, all with parents trying to scrape together the \$13,000-a-year tuition. Half of those kids get aid from the Lions, including the Robertos. Both Sophie and Shane are in school here, but Matt and MaryAnne earn slightly too much money to qualify for other kinds of assistance. The Lions money is just about all they get.

MaryAnne talks with South Philadelphia Lions Louise Hanson, Nick Montone, Don DiAntonio and his wife Rita, a third-generation Lion who remembers going to fundraising events just like this when she was a child, tagging along with her father and uncle and grandfather who all wore those bright yellow vests, too. The way they’re all smiling and hugging, it seems as if the Lions know the Robertos well, as if they’re aware of what, exactly, the Lion’s tuition donation enabled the Robertos to do. Certainly, they *must* know. They *must* have been told what it meant for MaryAnne and Matt when they saw that letter from St. Lucy’s three years ago, what the couple was able to do once Sophie’s tuition was paid in full.

“It was the exact amount we needed,” MaryAnne explains.

But as everyone stands to pose for a snapshot, and MaryAnne starts proudly introducing her kids to the Lions, it becomes clear—the Lions don’t know. Their gift to the school was like any other from the Lions, given quietly and without any expectation of thanks. They only want to help. And they did. Because there, in the photo, are Matt and MaryAnne. And daughter Sophie. And son Shane. And right there, standing between MaryAnne and South Philly Lions Club president Don DiAntonio, is the Roberto’s third adopted child, pretty and friendly and confident—Maeleigh.

It took almost two years after the letter arrived for the Robertos to arrange for Maeleigh to “come home.” There was so much paperwork, plus the home study meetings with the agency, then all the planning for the trip to her orphanage in China, the airfare, the hotels. Finally, in 2012, Maeleigh set foot in her new home in Bensalem.

“It’s really big what the Lions give,” MaryAnne says. “It’s more than money.”

Indeed.

Because there is another child in that group photo as well. His name is Vincent. He is five-years old, bouncing with spunk, dressed in a festive green shirt with his mother’s



Sister Meg Fleming of St. Lucy’s poses with one of her students.

arms wrapped around his chest. Vincent goes to school here, too—he has retinal blastoma, which means he’s totally blind. The Robertos met him two years ago, when they arrived at Maeleigh’s orphanage—a trip they wouldn’t have been able to make without the help from the Lion’s Club—and saw this sweet little boy.

Oh my gosh! MaryAnne thought. I can’t believe this child. He is so smart, so funny!

They couldn’t adopt both kids. But MaryAnne wanted to. She and Matt both wanted to. They knew, as they did with the others, that Vincent was *their* child. He was just waiting for them in China. And Vincent seemed to know it, too.

As MaryAnne left the orphanage, she hugged

Vincent, who said something to her in Mandarin. Maeleigh translated his words: “Hurry back and get me, mama.”

And, in January this year, she did.



(Above) The Roberto family meet with Lions: (from left) Mangabat, Hanson, Rita DiAntonio, Matt and MaryAnne Roberto with their children Sophie, Shane, Vincent and Maeleigh, 2012-13 District Governor Don Richardson, Don DiAntonio and Nick Montone.

Hanson finds the entertainment at Irish Day inspiring.

Shelter from the Storms

Typhoon Morakot devastated Taiwan. Aided by LCIF, Multiple District 300 Taiwan Lions have given vulnerable villagers a safe haven for the next typhoon or earthquake.

by **Hélène Franchineau**

Nestled in Nantou County in the heart of the island of Taiwan, Tongfu Junior High School is reached by taking a zigzagging, shoestring-like road. The nearest town is two hours away. Ninety-percent of its students are Taiwanese aborigines, whose homes are scattered among the nearby mountain slopes. The school looks out on a spectacular vista of palm trees leading to an opulent tropical forest. In the summer the school disappears into the mists that creep from the steep mountainsides.

Tongfu Junior High School could be considered an idyllic location, were it not for the dangers brought about every summer by the typhoon season.

The doomsday people feared arrived in August 2009. For four days the Morakot typhoon pounded Taiwan. Rainfall in one day alone equaled the annual amount. The nation suffered its worst flooding since 1959. Nearly 700 people died—the worst typhoon in the nation's recorded history. Flags throughout the nation flew at half-staff for three days.



The shelter at Tongfu Junior High School (background)
is just beyond the school's baseball field.

Photos by Hélène Franchineau



In a protected location, Tongfu Junior High School avoided the landslides and mudslides. But the families, who have lived on the mountainsides long before the Han Chinese immigrated here in the 17th century, were at the mercy of unleashed nature. “Every year we would get flooding during typhoon season,” says Xie Zaikun, the chief of Shenmu, the village closest to the school. “Then Morakot happened. The rivers submerged everything. It was as if the mountains moved.”

Lions from Multiple District 300 Taiwan made donations. Lions worldwide contributed funds to LCIF, which issued multiple Emergency grants and then a Major Catastrophe grant to Lions in Multiple District 300. Lions there decided the best course of action was to offer a plan of escape when typhoons inevitably struck again. Lions built four shelters to serve as evacuation points for the local population when a typhoon hit. The multipurpose buildings, costing US\$4 million, also serve as activity centers for everyday life. The shelters are much-needed venues for medical services, vocational training and classroom instruction.

Tongfu Junior High School was chosen to receive one of the multi-functional shelters. The oval-shaped athletic field in front of the school and the location between two mountains, Ho-so and Dong-pu, made the school an ideal choice for a helicopter landing.

Taiwan is located on a major seismic fault, and the one-story building is robust enough to withstand earthquakes. The roof is made of a special fireproof material. It has its own electricity supply, and two water towers can provide enough water for 200 people for an entire week.

Wen Liyuan, the project manager and past 300 C3 district governor, drove three times a week several hours from his office in Taichung city to the school to inspect the



A choir of students sings Taiwanese aboriginal songs.



The shelter at the junior high is strong enough to withstand an earthquake.

construction. “We chose to build the shelter next to the school because the location is safe. Also for years, the children here did not really have a place to play sports. We wanted to remedy that,” he says.

Children practice badminton or volleyball inside the shelter. On the spacious stage bands play or people sing karaoke—a passion for most Asian people.

“There is a handicapped access,” says Shen Mingren, the school principal. “We provide to schoolchildren but also nearby villagers a big building where they can gather for weddings, funerals and festivals.”

To show how important it was to anchor the building into the community, its exterior façade is adorned with black and red drawings, typical to the high-mountain Bunun minority that lives in the area.

“Before this was built, we would sleep in our cars during the typhoons,” says Xie, the village chief. “So we are especially happy to have a place like this. We are very grateful to the Lions.”

The school children can vividly recall what happened during the two days Morakot devastated the area. “I was terrified. We were completely isolated,” said Chen Jiajun, 15. “If the roads are blocked, at least now we can stay at school inside the building and play.” Before, the students were stuck in their dormitory building.



Workers pick high mountain tea leaves on Ali Mountain, one of Taiwan's most famous landmarks.

Baseball is popular among Tongfu students.





Tom Jun, head of social services for Ali Mountain County, tests the facilities at the 1,000-square-meter shelter built by Lions.

About three hours away from the school is Ali Mountain. One of the most famous scenic sites of Taiwan also bears the brunt of many typhoons and other natural calamities every year. The torrential flow of water during Morakot destroyed two dozen bridges in Ali Mountain County. Seven families lost their homes completely, and 300 were affected one way or another.

“When there is a typhoon, I usually sleep on the sofa in my office to help coordinate the rescue effort,” says Chen Mingli, the Ali Mountain county mayor. “After Morakot, I slept there for two months.”

Due to the gradually improving relations between China and Taiwan, groups of Chinese tourists are in greater number coming to see Ali Mountain. On the sides of the steep road leading to its summit, workers pick up fresh leaves of Oolong tea. A type of Arabica coffee that is increasingly popular for coffee connoisseurs also grows on the mountain, which helps spur the economy of the 12 villages here, home to the Tsou minority. Now halfway to the Ali Mountain summit, on a flat terrain, stands the newly built emergency and relief shelter.

Chen Kunmao, the past 300 D-1 district governor (where Ali Mountain is located), says it was important to locate the 1,000 square-meter shelter close to the danger zone. “The location is convenient because it is close to the

potential disaster area. The land is flat so it is safe. Helicopters can land here and we have easy access to government offices,” he says.

“Before, the only place the population could be evacuated to was an army shelter, but it was some one hour and thirty minutes away,” he adds.

Inside the building, which can accommodate 240 people, rows of mattresses populate the ground and first floors. “We are still waiting for bunk beds,” says Tom Jun, head of Social Services for Ali Mountain County. On the first floor are a karaoke machine and a flat screen TV.

The Taiwanese government completed a study that found that about 300 families in the county were the most at risk during a typhoon or an earthquake. When a disaster strikes, these designated houses receive a notice to evacuate. “Some will take care of themselves, some will move to their relatives and we take care of the rest,” says Tom. “About 200 people cannot find shelter. We are here to help them.”

“We have coffee, tea and mattresses where people can sleep. There is no time limit for the people to stay. Our first concern is safety,” he says.

Similar to the Tongfu Junior High School, the shelter building in Ali Mountain is also widely used throughout the year. “During normal times, people like coming here,”

Shelter from the Storms

says Tom. “All the furniture is foldable so we can quickly remove it to hold meetings, for example.”

The shelter provides peace of mind. People know they have a place to flee to when a disaster strikes. “We are very thankful to have this building,” says Shi Zhiying, a 24-year-old handyman at the shelter.

Taiwan typically experiences five big typhoons annually, and last year the shelters were used several times. Says Past International Director Pei-Jen Chen, instrumental to the four projects, “This is an example of a great project because we truly can save lives.”



The shelter at Ali Mountain can accommodate 240 people. After the Morakot typhoon, Lions also built shelters/activity centers/classrooms in Nantou, Kaohsiung and Taitung counties. (Below) Proudly standing outside the Ali shelter are (from left) Chang Chujen, past council chairperson for MD 300 Taiwan; Past International Director Pei-Jen Chen; and Past District Governor Chen Kunmao, shelter project manager.



Major Changes Thanks to Microloans

by Jay Copp

One day a field worker from a group that helps the blind in India visited the home of Dinesh Kumar, 36, who is blind. The worker explained to Kumar's mother about support and job training. Her son, who most days sat idly because of his disability and lack of education, could actually work and lead a decent life. The mother listened for a short time, angrily rebuked the worker and stomped off.

Kumar's mother was realistic. None of her six children, except for one, even went to school. Their father toiled long hours as a laborer and earned little. The region offered no schools or programs for the blind. Kumar, blind since 16, had little self-confidence. Loving but hardened by experience, his family was convinced he was incapable of doing anything meaningful or productive.

The field worker was not bothered by the mother's harsh reaction. He was accustomed to such resistance in a society often lacking resources to help the disabled. So he met with a relative of Kumar's mother whom she held in high regard. The worker explained to the relative how other blind people had received basic mobility and daily living skills and started their own small businesses with microloans, small, interest-free loans. The relative convinced Kumar's mother to give it a try.

After 14 weeks of training, Kumar, once morose and listless, began making his way around the village by himself

with a white cane. "His siblings were awe-struck," reported the field worker. When he began to raise poultry, sold eggs and boosted the family's income, his mother literally believed a miracle had occurred. "She thought some special providential intervention had taken place," said the worker.

Kumar is one of 500 people who will receive mobility and vocational training and one of 250 to receive microloans thanks to Lions of India and a SightFirst grant. Lions are partnering with the All India Confederation of the Blind (AICB) to help those with vision impairments in the Kaushambi District, where 60 percent of the 1.6 million residents make less than 53 cents a day. The US\$106,724 grant will support not only the training and microloans but also 50,000 eye screenings, 1,000 cataract surgeries, assistive devices for the blind, Braille books and counseling/mentoring for blind children's parents, who often need guidance on educational opportunities and other pathways to independence possibly available to their children.

Thanks to life skills training and a microloan, Dinesh Kumar raises poultry after two decades of sitting around.



International President Barry J. Palmer is championing microfinance programs to help poor families gain stable incomes. Watch a video on a Lions' microfinancing project.



Phoolkumari Pasi left her sadness behind her once she began raising pigs.

Because communications are poor or unreliable, teams of field workers and optometrists are going door to door providing eye care and identifying those in need. AICB has a solid track record in microfinance. Nearly 85 percent of the 1,266 people given microloans through AICB continue to run their microenterprises, and most are repaying their loans.

The independent-living training and microloans have turned people's lives around. Bitterness and helplessness have dissolved, and self-reliance and self-esteem have mushroomed. Among those helped by Lions are Mohammed Mobin, blind since birth. He hired a small boy to take him begging so he could support his ailing wife. He initially told the field worker not to waste "his sermons" on him. After the field worker persistently lobbied him, a relative agreed to provide food and money so Mobin could take part in the training sessions. He now runs a small shop.

"He says with some pride that begging would be disgraceful for him now," the field worker reported.

Phoolkumari Pasi, a mother of five, sunk into a depression when she lost her sight at 30. A female field worker consoled and encouraged her as she cried and unburdened herself. An eye specialist treated her. She can now see two feet in front of her, and she raises pigs.

Phoolmati Pasi lost her sight from a disease at the age of six. Her family sharply told the field worker that "a blind woman cannot do anything ... Mind your own business." But the worker made headway with her younger brother. Pasi now runs a small shop and gets along better with her family. "Every day she looks forward to opening her shop," the field worker reported. "She feels that life has smiled on her again."

LCIF Grants Change Lives

by Allie Stryker

This school year students in New York might have a new favorite class as part of their curriculum, something that stands out a little more than the regular reading, writing and arithmetic: learning life skills.

A program of Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), Lions Quest focuses on social and emotional skill building, anti-bullying, substance abuse, dropout prevention and service learning. The program is designed to create a positive school climate and unite the home, school and community.

“Teachers who implement the program discover that strong bonds and positive relationships develop in their classrooms, while students develop important skills such as working collaboratively, making informed decisions, solving problems, and achieving their goals,” explains Joan Fretz, co-founder of the Long Island Social Emotional Literacy Forum. “Students then choose to contribute positively and that maximizes instructional time.”

Lions in District 20-S in New York were given a \$100,000 Lions Quest grant from LCIF for program implementation in area schools. Lions will conduct 21 workshops to train 660 teachers, benefiting approximately 60,000 students across 13 school districts.

This grant was awarded as part of the August 2013 Lions Quest Advisory Committee (LAC) and SightFirst Advisory Committee (SAC) grant review process. The LAC awarded just over US\$1.4 million for 26 Lions Quest grant projects. This is the largest grant amount ever awarded at one time for Lions Quest, LCIF’s social and emotional learning program for schoolchildren.

While the program implementation in New York is a good example of a Lions Quest grant, Lions Quest is not only available in the United States—teachers have been trained in more than 80 countries.

Following a successful pilot program workshop in 2007, Lions in Zambia received a grant of \$23,997 to implement Lions Quest for the first time. Combined with local match-

ing funds, this grant allows Lions to conduct two workshops, training 60 teachers to implement Lions Quest in low-income schools. This will benefit approximately 900 students.

In other countries and communities around the world, from Mexico to Lebanon to Japan and more, Lions Quest is helping more than 12 million children to become well-rounded citizens.

In the realm of sight, the SAC awarded more than \$7.4 million for 32 SightFirst grants. As part of these grants, Lions from Maryland, Delaware and Washington, D.C. were awarded \$567,647 to establish a Lions-led low vision rehabilitation network with Johns Hopkins University. Low vision occurs when vision is significantly reduced and cannot be corrected or improved with glasses, contacts or surgery.

Through this grant, low vision training and education will be provided to local ophthalmologists, optometrists, therapists and Lions, giving more than 11,700 people with low vision access to services locally.

In Belize, Lions are providing assistance to people with diabetic retinopathy. This disease results from poor diabetes management and can lead to vision loss. A SightFirst grant of \$130,699 will help

Lions expand the existing diabetic retinopathy screening and treatment services at the National Eye Clinic and its five satellite facilities. Implemented in partnership with the Belize Council for the Visually Impaired and the Ministry of Health of Belize, the project will provide training in diabetic retinopathy screening and diagnosis, upgraded equipment and more. An estimated 10,663 people will be screened for diabetic retinopathy and 1,650 people will be treated for the disease over the course of three years.

Through these grants and more, Lions and LCIF are making a difference.



Thanks to an LCIF grant, these children in Zambia will learn social and emotional skills through Lions Quest.



**Lions Clubs International
FOUNDATION**

Lions Partner to Protect Millions against Measles

by Christopher Bunch

There's strength in numbers. And progress, too.

At the 96th International Convention in July in Hamburg, Germany, Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) and the GAVI Alliance announced a partnership designed to protect tens of millions of children in the world's poorest countries against measles and rubella.

"As Lions, we are excited to continue our work in the fight against measles and rubella," says LCIF Chairperson Wayne Madden. "Through our partnership with GAVI, we will focus on supporting routine immunization and strengthening health systems to benefit children in developing countries."

Lions will also raise \$30 million and deploy its network of volunteers to improve access to vaccines through the GAVI Alliance, a public-private partnership whose mission is to save children's lives and protect people's health by increasing access to immunization in the world's poorest countries. The funds will be matched by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, bringing the total to \$60 million.

"We are grateful for the continued and generous commitment of Lions Clubs International and its members to improving the health of the world's poorest children," says Bill Gates Sr., co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Since 1968, LCIF has awarded more than \$800 million in grants to support humanitarian projects including measles vaccination initiatives. Although Lions are extraordinary fundraisers, their true value is measured in something far more valuable than dollars: members.

"Having 1.35 million members around the globe is incredibly powerful because most of the work that GAVI does occurs on the ground in developing countries," says David Ferreira, managing director for innovative finance at the GAVI Alliance. "We need help mobilizing mothers and fathers to get kids to immunizations and to spread the word about just how important immunization is. To have this partner that is so present and so committed is extraordinarily valuable."

Local Lions clubs and GAVI will work with ministries of health in developing countries to ensure children are vaccinated against measles and rubella. Lions will also play a key role in social-mobilization efforts by working with local leaders, coordinating community-level publicity and serving as volunteers at vaccination centers. Additionally, they will work as community advocates by promoting vaccinations at the policy level.



Lions in Kenya stand ready to comfort a child receiving a measles vaccination.

Lions have recently participated in GAVI-supported vaccination campaigns in Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and Bangladesh, as well as campaigns in Malawi, Madagascar and Botswana. Lions are playing an important role in combating these deadly and debilitating diseases.

Measles is a highly infectious disease that kills an estimated 432 people every day, mostly in developing countries, and leaves many young children vulnerable to serious health issues such as pneumonia and blindness. But measles can be prevented with a safe, inexpensive vaccine that costs around \$1 per dose. GAVI provides both the measles and rubella vaccines in a single shot.

By 2020, more than 700 million children in 49 countries are expected to be immunized against measles and rubella through GAVI-supported campaigns. International partners such as LCIF, the Measles and Rubella Initiative, WHO, UNICEF, the Red Cross and countless others have all played a critical role in this global fight, but success will ultimately be achieved at the local level.

"We really need people at the community level to get the job done," says Matt Hanson, program officer in vaccine delivery at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "In the end, measles is a disease that happens at the community level."

And that's where you'll find Lions—donating, mobilizing their communities and fighting for a safer, healthier and brighter future for children who desperately need help.

For information or to donate, go to www.lcif.org/measles.

Watch a video on the new measles partnership.

Want to Woo Women Lions?

Female Lions Leaders Know How

When they got married, Karen Sell's husband, Lloyd, had been an Olympia Host Lion for 35 years. She thought becoming a Lion would be a great way to share experiences and create memories together. When Sell joined the Washington club in 1993, she was one of just two women members. The Lions welcomed the change. "They almost immediately invited me to take on a leadership role. They could not have treated me better. I was proud when I became the first woman president of a 60-year-old mostly male club. Today, women make up close to 40 percent of the club's membership," Sell says.

Immediate Past District 21 B Governor Sell has continued to thrive with her current club, the Tucson Downtown Lions in Arizona. She has also become an enthusiastic champion of recruiting women Lions and building women leaders. Why? She believes in what Lions do, and she knows this is a place for women to contribute and prosper. "Women are eager to work on causes that touch their hearts, and they have skills and talents we need," Sell points out. "To recruit women, we have to do things like go where the women are and do projects and programs that women would find interesting. And current women Lions need to step up more publicly and show that women are active and valued in Lions."

President Palmer also wants to welcome more women members. He has asked Lions to increase women's membership from 24.5 percent to 30 percent by the end of 2013-14 with the ultimate goal of achieving a 50/50 parity of men and women by LCI's centennial in 2017. LCI formed a Women's and Family Development Task Force in 2010 to increase female membership and leadership. International Director Judy Hankom, chair of the task force, says that the group is engaging in public relations and participating in workshops, focus groups and symposiums worldwide. "We are missing out by not including more women. It can be as simple as when you invite a man to join then invite his wife

or daughter. Ask a few women to join together. Then get them involved, find out what service they're interested in doing," says Hankom, a Hampton Lion in Iowa.

It may or may not always be that simple, points out Kelly Wiseman, who in 2010 at age 42 became the first female president in the El Paso Downtown Lions Club's 87-year history. Wiseman loved the 12 years she spent with the 97-percent-male Texas club, but she eventually needed an environment that better suited her lifestyle. "The club was steeped in tradition and routines. You have to determine what works best for your club, but I believe you can't have traditional clubs anymore and continue to recruit new members,

women or men. Life is too hectic," says Wiseman.

Now a zone chairperson, Wiseman found a great fit in the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Lions Club. "I wanted to be able to focus more on my career, and this club was not as traditional. They were doing more service projects and met less often. I could continue serving and focus on other aspects of my job and life as well. Joining the UTEP Club has helped me realize that women can really grow to their potential in Lions," says Wiseman. The

more flexible, fresh approach of the UTEP Club must be working—60 percent of members are women.

—Jennifer Gilbert Gebhardt



Members of the University of Texas at El Paso Lions Club lead the pack in the club's fundraising walk for Alzheimer's disease.

Watch a video celebrating the contributions of women Lions.

Read an inspiring list of ideas for recruiting women in Karen Sell's "50 Ways to Woo a Woman—Member That Is."

Thanksgiving for Lions

Strengthen Your Club by Showing Appreciation

The Mountain Grove Lions don't serve for the glory. Whether collecting coats for needy children, holding their 5K run or staffing the booth at Kidsfest, these Missouri Lions serve their community without the need for acknowledgement. But when one of them receives a recognition certificate housed in one of Lion Ken Lewis' handmade frames, they don't mind one bit. "Everyone loves how much care Ken puts into making those frames," says Lion Sandy Richey. "We serve without expectations, but who isn't appreciative when they get a thank-you? It's a motivator."

Lewis began making the frames when he was club president and wanted to show his appreciation for members taking on responsibilities and leadership roles. A skilled woodworker, he used spare firewood to make the custom frames. "Lions are ecstatic when they receive them, and they all look forward to seeing them because each one is different," says Lewis.

Since Lewis began presenting the framed certificates, the club has strengthened and grown. Coincidence? "It used to be more difficult to get members to take on responsibilities. The Lions gained confidence, and little by little they began stepping up more. Of course, it's not just the framed certificates, but I think they may have had something to do with it," Lewis says with a smile.

Recognition may make a Lion feel great, but it's not just a "feel good moment." When Lions are personally recognized within their clubs, they may feel more motivated to serve and build confidence to take on more tasks. LCI's

publication "The Art of Recognition" explains that recognition can benefit the whole club by building productivity, enhancing morale, improving retention and increasing membership. The key is to make the recognition personal and genuine. A little creativity can help too.

In addition to presenting certificates printed on a home computer to the Camelback Lions in Arizona for their various talents, Lion Sally Shears gives small personalized gifts as special recognition for a job well done. "It tells them 'I know you,' and they appreciate the thought that went into it. And it doesn't have to cost much," says Shears. She enjoys giving gifts that either reflect the personality of the Lion or the work that they did. "One Lion loves candles, so I gave her a candle set. Another Lion did a great job on a fundraiser, so I gave him a piggy bank," says Shears.

Ultimately, it's the thought that counts. A verbal thank-you or a handwritten card often does the trick. When she was president of the Dilworth Loco Ladies Lions Club, Kristine Johnson made sure to show her appreciation. "I tried to verbally thank members at meetings and functions, and I also sent personal thank-you cards. At the end of my term, I gave every member a rose and a thank-you card with pictures of the club," says Johnson. Her efforts were appreciated, and even became contagious. "I received a thank-you card from one of the members thanking me for my thank-you card!"

—Jennifer Gilbert Gebhardt

Photo by Sandy Richey



Mountain Grove Lion Ken Lewis thoughtfully makes a frame that will hold a Lion's recognition certificate.

Find 70 ideas for recognizing Lions in LCI's "The Art of Recognition" publication.

Positive Publicity Helps Club Grow

Lion Bryan Gordon of Toccoa, Georgia, is the first to admit that when his club sold community calendars even his own wife, Florence, also a Lion, thought them unsightly. “She told me, ‘that calendar is too ugly to sell or hang on my wall,’” Gordon admits. “We had problems with our own membership not wanting to sell subscriptions or listings in our calendar.” The calendar was banished to Bryan’s workspace.

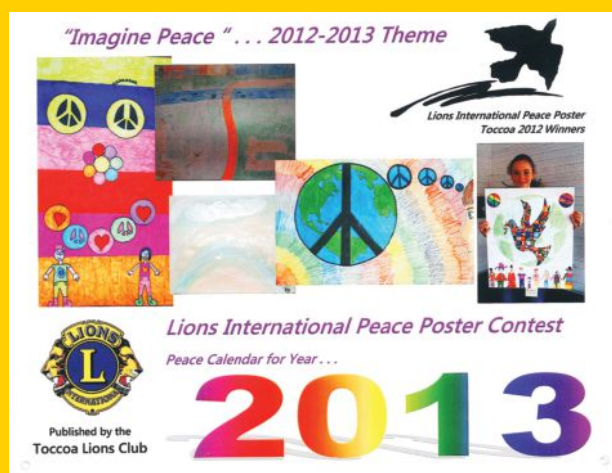
The 2013 calendar signaled a change. “We’re now recognizing the children for their efforts in the Peace Poster contest. Our club decided to publish the children’s art in our

own calendar,” he points out. The club netted \$2,665 this year because of the calendar’s extreme makeover. Color ads sold for \$25, and 375 subscribers paid to have birthdays and anniversaries listed in the calendar.

Toccoa Lions use the calendar to not only raise funds but also to raise awareness of what Lions do in the community. “We gave away 125 calendars to non-advertisers. We gave them to city and county commissioners, the school board, principals and art teachers. We gave them to the sheriff, chief of police and county and city government heads,” says Gordon. This dissemination of their signature product is proving priceless as a marketing tool, Gordon says. “Think PR, PR, PR!”

Florence Gordon points out that the new calendars are much more fun to sell to eager customers. “The old calendar was just that, a calendar. It was something to keep track of dates and write your appointments and birthdays down while hanging inside the closet door. It was the perfect example of what not to do when designing a calendar.” The Gordons are no longer a house divided when it comes to where to hang the club’s annual calendar. “I hang this one on the outside of the door because of the new graphics,” Florence says proudly.

The 2013 community calendar produced by Lions in Toccoa, Georgia, is now a small work of art thanks to an extreme makeover.



Tree Sale Raises Funds and Spirits



Moving big trees around the lot is a challenge Dave Hunt and Doug Winbury (foreground) easily master.

For 40 families in need in Ojai Valley, California, Christmas is a bit brighter each year because they know that Lions will donate a beautiful fir tree for them to decorate during the holidays. For the past six years, Lions have sold Christmas trees as their most significant fundraising activity. They average \$33,000 annually from the four-week event. In 2012, the club began a canned food collection at the tree lot for families and community assistance programs.

“We open the weekend following Thanksgiving and generally close when we sell out, usually around the 18th of December,” says Lion Vicki Hunt. The mix of firs, including Nordman, Noble, Douglas and Grand, are sold from a lot donated by a local hotel. The tree sale helps fund scholarships and other community service activities.

Nobles usually sell for \$54; Douglas firs go for \$35. The tallest trees sold every year are between 10 and 11 feet, although Hunt says the club has taken special orders for some as tall as 13 feet. While Lions work hard at the tree sale, they do have fun when families receiving donated trees come to pick them up. “They’re all very gracious and thrilled,” says Hunt. “We often find the kids running, hiding and giggling in between the trees.” Making happy memories for families is just one reason Lions don their heavy work gloves each year, ready to wrangle more trees into the homes of excited children.

CLUB BRIEFINGS

ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Starting with a dream of Lion Al Kassin, the **Lake Orion Lions** in **Michigan**, along with help from clubs in **District 11 A-2** and **11 D-2**, opened Bear Lake Camp in 2000. The Lions had operated camps for visually impaired youths in various locations since 1982. Hundreds of youths with disabilities enjoy swimming, fishing, Leader Dogs, crafts and a new rock climbing wall and zip line at Bear Lake Camp each summer.

The **Smithfield Lions** in **Virginia** welcomed the 4,000th vehicle featured in their classic car "Cruz-In" show, held twice a month from April to October. The Lions also provided sight and hearing screenings for more than 600 middle and high school students over two days.

The **St. Croix Lions** in the **U.S. Virgin Islands** held their 14th annual Diabetes Fair, featuring diabetes screening, medical exams and other medical services for 198 people.

The **Lansing Lions** in **Illinois** have awarded more than \$240,000 in college scholarships since 1937. The Lions also donated \$3,000 to Meals on Wheels toward the purchase of a commercial stove.

In **Kansas**, the **Girard Lions** have held the "Girard Lions Club Country Christmas" music show for three years. Last year's show raised more than \$2,000.

In **Virginia**, the **Forest Lions** held a membership drive during which they staffed tables at a grocery store, farmer's market and shopping mall. The Lions' outreach resulted in five new members, a 25 percent increase in the club's membership.

As part of the Reading Action Project, Lions in **District 36-0** partnered with a literacy nonprofit, SMART, to help strengthen reading skills of children in **Oregon**.

The **Sebastian Lions** in **Florida** provided vision screenings for a children's choir from Uganda touring the United States.

The **Fox Lake Lions** in **Illinois** sponsored two free exercise classes for children.

After four years of planning and more than 700 hours of work, the **Mohawk Valley Lions** in **Oregon** completed a new community park. The park was dedicated in honor of deceased Lion Lee Downing, who had been instrumental in the park's creation.

The **Berkeley Annapurna Lions** in **California** support Gorkha Lions Eye Hospital in Nepal.

In **Florida**, the **St. Petersburg Lions** participated in the annual Santa Parade with a holiday float. The Lions also held a "Breakfast with Santa" for more than 75 children.

The **Isanti Lions** in **Minnesota** purchased a personal transmitter bracelet for a child to participate in Project Lifesaver, a program that enables law enforcement to locate missing children quickly.

The **Cottage Grove Lions Club** in **Wisconsin** gave a magnifying reader to a visually impaired 11-year-old girl to help make reading and homework easier for her. In 2012, the Lions also performed vision screenings for more than 120 preschool children.

For 25 years the **Venice and Englewood Lions clubs** in **Florida** have worked together on a vision clinic that has served more than 9,000 people, thanks to 55,000 volunteer hours by Lions and partners.

The **Covington Lions** in **Georgia** coordinate the 156-float Christmas parade each year.

INFORMATION

ANNIVERSARIES NOVEMBER 2013

90 Years: Beloit Noon, Wis.; Chicago Logan Square, Ill.; Gardena Valley, Calif.; Longview Pioneer, Wash.; Meriden, Conn.; Newburgh, N.Y.; Santa Monica, Calif.

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50 Years: Camden, N.Y.; Carleton Place, ON, CAN; Cherokee, N.C.; Cowley, AB, CAN; Hortonville, Wis.; Leask, SK, CAN; Madison, Ohio; Mammoth Lakes, Calif.; Poplar Wentworth, Wis.; Vega Alta, P.R.

25 Years: Chanhassen, Minn.; La Baie Nord, QC, CAN; Liberty Hill, Texas; Ocean Park Area, Wash.; Odessa Ante Meridian, Texas; Springfield Lincoln Land, Ill.; Staten Island United Asian, 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 JULY 2013

Key Of State (75 Members)

- Lion V. R. Sayana, Francistown, Botswana

Grand Master Key (50 Members)

- Lion H. Wayne Kennerly, Salisbury, North Carolina

- Lion Balasingham Janaranjan, Trincomalee Town, Rep. of Sri Lanka
- Lion T. Shanmugasundaram, Vellore Fort City, India
- Lion N. Ganesh, Madurai Alavai, India

Senior Master Key (25 Members)

- Lion Wyatt Leinart, Lufkin Host, Texas
- Lion Jerry Brandt, Harrison, Michigan
- Lion Sumner Price, Mountain Home, Idaho
- Lion John Dale, Yackandandah, Australia
- Lion Estrella Recto, Batangas Crown, Philippines
- Lion Sitara Satwat, Islamabad Executive, Pakistan
- Lion Uddagiri Pandu Vithal, Bantumilli, India

- Lion B. Rajendra Shenoy, Kanhangad, India
- Lion Mahendra Jain, Calcutta Salt Lake, India
- Lion Suresh Jaiswal, Buxar Ganges, India
- Lion Gopal Panday, Patna Navya, India
- Lion Pushpendra Jain, Surat Silk City, India
- Lion P. Balaguru, Nandivaram Guduvancheri, India
- Lion T. Meenashi Sundaram, Madurai South, India
- Lion P. Muthusamy, Dindigul Diamond, India

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

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THE LIONS CHANGED MY LIFE

Off to the Right Start

The first months of Abigail Voigt's life were stressful for her parents, Stacy and Jeremy. Although overjoyed to take Abigail home after 10 days in the neonatal intensive care unit, they later learned that Abigail had severe hearing loss. When the Voigts found out that hearing aids were not covered by insurance, they panicked over how to pay for them. While they relied on loaner aids from a local clinic in St. Cloud, Minnesota, a co-worker of Stacy's recommended she write to the Lions. St. Cloud Lion Bob Seitz then contacted the Metro St. Cloud and St. Cloud Southsiders Lions, and the three clubs joined together to provide the family with \$3,000 for hearing aids. Now the Voigts can financially plan for the future while 16-month-old Abigail can delight in her favorite sounds—especially her mommy's voice.

Q&A: Stacy Voigt

LION Magazine: Were you surprised that hearing aids were not covered by insurance?

Stacy Voigt: We were shocked. We were glad to know Abigail would be able to hear with hearing aids, but we didn't know how we would pay for them without time to save up. After appealing the insurance claim denial three times, I wrote to the Lions. It was hard to ask for help. We would have been happy with anything, but what they did for us was amazing.

LM: What do the hearing aids mean for Abigail's development?

SV: If children don't hear properly early in life, it can worsen their disability and slow their gross motor development. Abigail is behind in speaking, and she'll start walking later because of her inner ear balance. But she's in speech therapy now, and she's making wonderful progress.

LM: What was it like when you knew Abigail was hearing well for the first time?

SV: It was the happiest day when we found out that she's experiencing only a mild hearing loss with the new hearing aids. After leaving the clinic when her aids were adjusted to the correct amplification, we said her name and she looked right at us. We cried knowing she could hear, really hear us!

LM: Can you tell that Abigail notices the difference?

SV: She is much more aware of her surroundings. It's so fun to watch her—it's like she can't get enough of life! When we put the aids in, she lights up and starts babbling. When she wakes up in the morning she can hear me tell her good morning and that I love her. That means the world to us.

LM: Did the Lions get to meet Abigail?

SV: Yes, Lions from each club came to meet us. Abigail smiled and happily let everyone hold her. It was like she was thanking them herself! It was so joyful. She touched their hearts the way they touched ours. Abigail will always know about what the Lions did for us.

Photo courtesy of Jason Wachter/St. Cloud Times and Times Media



Abigail Voigt beams with happiness.

Lions, has your club heard from a recipient of your service or charity? Tell us about the feedback you've received from those whose lives you've changed for the better. Email a brief description to lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org. Please include "Thank You" in the subject line.



DEVOTED READER

Rita Juhász (left photo), president of the Miskolci Első Lady Lions Club in Hungary, brought along her LION while visiting the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. Lions Terry Shears and his wife, Patti, of the Boardman Lions Club in Ohio went to great lengths—back in time, so to speak, and over dangerous roads—to get a dramatic snapshot of them and the LION. They traveled over hairpin roads in Peru to the top of Machu Picchu, a 15th-century Inca site 7,970 feet above sea level. They kneel in front of the Temple of the Sun. Terry holds Patti more than just because he loves her: a step behind them is a sheer drop of nearly 3,000 feet to the Urubamba River. 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.

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Mary Kay Rietz, Adv. Mgr.
LION, 300 W. 22nd St.
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(Istanbul, Turkey)

Nov. 7-10:

OSEAL Forum (Singapore,
Singapore)

Nov. 14:

World Diabetes Day

Nov. 15:

Postmark deadline for a club to
send one winning Peace Poster
(per contest) to the district
governor

Top Ten Youth Camp and Exchange
Chairperson Award applications
(YCE-110) due

Annual District/Multiple District
Youth Camp and Exchange Activity
Report (YCE-1450) due

Leo October Membership Growth
Award nominations due

Nov. 15-17:

Emerging Lions Leadership
Institute—Constitutional Area VII:
Australia, New Zealand, Papua
New Guinea, Indonesia and Islands
of the Pacific Ocean (Wellington,
New Zealand)

Nov. 22:

Application deadline for Lions
Quest grants to be reviewed at the
January 2014 LAC meeting

Nov. 30:

Deadline for Family Membership
Certification Forms

ROAR OF APPROVAL

Lion **Andy Romano** moved to Ormond Beach, Florida, as a 12-year-old when his family fled the snow and cold of Massachusetts to live among the palmettos and scrub pines in what was then a tiny, pre-World War II community of 500. He joined the Ormond Beach Lions Club a year after it chartered in 1954. Now with a population of 38,000, Ormond Beach is recognizing 90-year-old Romano as one of its premier citizens with the building of the \$8.2 million Andy Romano Beachfront Park. Romano's daughter, Heidi, an architect, designed the park with input from the city and residents. A playground, splash park, picnic areas, rest-rooms and a concession stand complete the Andy Romano Beachfront Park. "I drive up here every day and still can't believe my name's up here," he says of his legacy. "I never expected something this nice."

At 91, Lion **Henry Chiminiello** of North Port, Florida, still spends more than 1,000 hours a year in service to others. A World War II veteran, he volunteers at his local VFW Post 8203 and the Salvation Army. He visits a nursing home and spends time at elementary schools in the area to help students with their literacy skills between two and three times a week. "This gentleman starts his day at 8 o'clock in the morning and doesn't quit until sometime in the afternoon," says Lion Vergne Gregrich.

When **Ralph Wilson** first joined the Marshalltown Lions Club in Iowa in 1937 as a young man in his mid-20s, he probably had no idea that he'd still be a Lion 76 years later. Now 102, Wilson recently moved to Mesa, Arizona, where his son, also named Ralph, drives him to his club meetings. "He has given up golf and driving but still has the gift of gab," Wilson, a Rotarian, says of his father. The retired banker celebrated his milestone birthday on a fishing trip in San Diego. Accompanied by family members, Wilson may have become one of the sport's oldest anglers on his quest to hook sand bass in Mission Bay. "He somehow caught the most fish," his son says.

Ted Allen of the Taber Lions Club in Alberta, Canada, proudly notes that had he waited five more minutes to make his entrance into the world on Feb. 28, 1912, he would have shaved more than 75 years off his age as a leap year baby. At 101, he's been a Lion for most of his adult life. He is the only remaining charter member of his club, established in 1935.

The organization AARP Virginia and **Dr. Warren Stewart**, who served as its president from 2006 to 2012, received the J. Franklin Jameson Archival Advocacy Award from the Society of American Archivists for the Desegregation of Virginia (DOVE) project. Stewart, a retired educator, is a member of the Norfolk Ocean Lions Club in Virginia. The DOVE exhibit of photographs and documentaries chronicling the state's desegregation movement was on display at the state capitol. AARP provided financial and logistical support as well as volunteers to staff the display.

Hot Springs Village Lion **Surry Shaffer** was among a select few World War II veterans in Arkansas who enjoyed a free flight and tour of the memorial built in their honor in Washington, D.C. Part of the Honor Flight Network, a national effort to recognize WWII veterans, the trip included volunteer medical personnel and other individuals who personally looked after the veterans during the whirlwind day trip. Shaffer, 88, is a recipient of the Purple Heart, awarded to soldiers wounded or killed in combat.



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18. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete.

(Signed)
Dane La Joye, Managing Editor

LAST ROAR



Photo courtesy of Christina Allan

BARNEY AND BETTY BUT NO FRED

J.R. McDonald of the Wrentham Lions Club in Massachusetts and partner Jillian Wojnowski perform a Barney and Betty Rubble cave man stomp during a Dancing Stars competition. The couple did not win but drew lots of laughter and applause. The Wrentham Lions raised nearly half of the \$50,000 generated by the event, held by a group of women in town to benefit charities. Three dance studios held rehearsals for participants. "This is a perfect example of a Lions club taking full advantage of a fundraiser that fell in our laps. We didn't even put it on," says Greg Stahl. The Lions club donated part of its revenue to each of the five other community groups in the competition as well as to other causes. Wrentham has historical importance to Lions: Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan once lived here.

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