

# LION



Lions Clubs International

WWW.LIONMAGAZINE.ORG JUNE 2014

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



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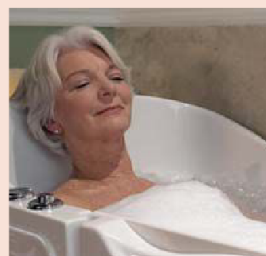
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Former NFL executive learned the X's and O's of service from his father.

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### On the cover:

College junior Ferlandic Bell (center), a popular counselor at the Louisiana Lions Camp, jokes around with Jacob (left) and Phillip, two physically challenged campers. Photo by Erin Arledge

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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



# A Message From Our President



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

## We Dreamed and We Achieved

Earlier this year I met in India a hearty group of people who climb mountains, cross rivers, raft through rapids and face wild elephants. They take on these challenges to prove to themselves that limits and barriers exist often only in the mind. *Lions generously support this inspiring program for those with physical disabilities.*

As I traveled the world as international president I was similarly inspired by Lions' programs and projects that feed the hungry, give sight to the blind and teach youths responsibility. I urged Lions to Follow Your Dream this year. It's been humbling to fully realize and see for myself that Lions have been achieving dreams in innumerable ways and places year after year. **I hope my voice of**

**encouragement aroused into action even more dreamers and motivated engaged Lions to keep moving ahead past new milestones and toward new dreams.**

As my presidency winds down I realize more than ever the importance of dreams and the exalted role of Lions in serving our communities. We Lions are not made for ordinary stuff. Too often we encounter in society a "me-first" mentality. In the Lions kingdom others come first. **In our world, dreams become reality, and dreamers triumph over cynics, naysayers and pessimists.**

My best advice is to keep carrying on. *Our formula has worked for nearly a century. Let's not fix what is definitely not broken.* But I do urge a certain vigilance, a determination to think positively. Watch your thoughts; they become words. Watch your words; they become actions. Watch your actions; they become habits. Watch your habits, they become character. Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.

Anne and I are deeply appreciative of the hospitality and warmth Lions have shown us. No matter where we traveled, we encountered kindness and caring. To speak as an Australian, "I dips me lid" to all of you. Continue to Follow Your Dream and may we meet at the other end of the stars—happy and fulfilled as Lions who relentlessly serve.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry J. Palmer".

Barry J. Palmer  
Your Lions Clubs International President



President Palmer and Anne read to children in a school in Australia to promote literacy.



Doctor *Designed.* Audiologist *Tested.* FDA *Registered.*

# Affordable *New* Digital Hearing Aid *Outperforms* Expensive Competitors Delivers *Crystal -Clear* Natural Sound

Reported by J. Page

Chicago: Board-certified physician Dr. S. Cherukuri has done it once again with his newest invention of a medical grade ALL DIGITAL affordable hearing aid.

This new digital hearing aid is packed with all the features of \$3,000 competitors at a mere fraction of the cost. Now, most people with hearing loss are able to enjoy crystal clear, natural sound—in a crowd, on the phone, in the wind—without suffering through “whistling” and annoying background noise.

After years of extensive research, Dr. Cherukuri has now created a ***state-of-the-art*** digital hearing aid that's packed with the features of those expensive \$3,000 competitors — at a ***fraction of the price.***

## New Digital Hearing Aid Outperforms Expensive Competitors

This sleek, lightweight, fully programmed hearing aid is the outgrowth of the digital revolution that is changing our world. While demand for “all things digital” caused most prices to plunge (consider DVD players and computers, which originally sold for thousands of dollars and today can be purchased at a fraction of that price), yet the cost of a digital medical hearing aid remained out of reach.

Dr. Cherukuri knew that many of his patients would benefit but couldn't afford the expense of these new digital hearing aids. Generally they are not covered by Medicare and most private health insurance.

The doctor evaluated all the high priced digital hearing aids on the market, broke them down to their base components, and then created his own affordable version—called the MDHearingAid®*AIR* for its virtually invisible, lightweight appearance.

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Of course, hearing is believing and we invite you to try it for yourself with our RISK-FREE 45-day home trial. If you are not completely satisfied, simply return it within that time period for a full refund of your purchase price.

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## Ecstatic Users Cheer

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— Dennis

*“I'm a physician, and this product is just as effective (if not more) than traditional over-priced hearing aids. I will be recommending (it).”*

— Dr. Chang

*“As a retired advanced practice nurse, I purchased the MDHearingAid AIR after the Wall Street Journal review. I am so pleased with the quality. You are providing a real service to our affordable health care.”*

— Ned Rubin

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## THE BIG PICTURE

### Touching Therapy

A camper at the Louisiana Lions Camp befriends a horse on the day an equestrian therapy group visited. Lions in the state have run the camp for special needs children since 1961. Former campers cherish the summer fun they had and often return for one reason or another—Jenn (in the blue hat), a diabetic, is a former camper and counselor.

Photos by Erin Arledge









## THE BIG PICTURE

### Big Leap Forward

A camper at the Louisiana Lions Camp takes a giant leap into the swimming pool. Campers relish their fun-filled days with peers and credit their time there for moving beyond worries and anxieties.



# First Roar

## LIONS FEED TWO MILLION

Lions' Relieving the Hunger Campaign in December and January served 2,008,243 people. Clubs worldwide also reported to Lions Clubs International 9,286 projects and 511,230 service hours. The numbers in the United States were: 269,152 people served, 1,944 projects and 66,393 service hours. The statistics in Canada were: 18,050 people served, 177 projects and 18,473 service hours. Lions take part annually in four Global Service Action Campaigns: engaging youth in August, sight initiatives in October and an environmental project in April as well as hunger relief.



Lions in Multiple District 300 Taiwan feed 250 impoverished children during the Christmas season.



The first billboard for student art features an anti-bullying message.

## STUDENTS GIVEN A PLATFORM

Inspired by the Peace Poster contest of Lions Clubs International, Johnston Lions in Rhode Island are running a three-part billboard contest for students in town. The three winners get their art featured on a large billboard on busy Atwood Avenue in Johnston. The winner of the first art contest on bullying was no other than Lauren Civetti, daughter of Lion Robert, project chair. ("It wasn't rigged!" he sheepishly says.) The themes of the other contests will be recycling and avoiding drugs and alcohol. Lions constructed the billboard in the 1990s, and it typically features public service messages.

## MILAN PICKED FOR CONVENTION

When the moon hits your eye that's ... Milan. Lions will no doubt love the 2019 International Convention city: Milan, Italy. A financial and fashion center, Italy's second-largest city boasts 26 centuries of history. Its sights include the Duomo, a majestic Gothic cathedral; the Castello Sforzesco, a grand medieval castle; and the Santa Maria alle Grazie Basilica, which contains Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper." The board of directors made the choice in the spring. Lions meet in Toronto this July, followed by Honolulu in 2015, Fukuoka, Japan, in 2016, Chicago in 2017, the centennial for Lions Clubs, and Las Vegas, Nevada, in 2018.

## A CAPITAL IDEA: A DAY ON THE HILL

The first Lions Day on the Hill in Washington, D.C., on March 12 resulted in more than 60 meetings with members of Congress and staff on Capitol Hill. Lions Clubs International organized the day to raise the visibility of the community service of Lions. Taking part were First International Vice President Joe Preston, Past International Presidents Wayne Madden, Al Brandel and Clement Kusiak and international directors. An evening reception for invited members of Congress celebrated the partnership of LCIF and the GAVI Alliance to save children's lives through immunizations.



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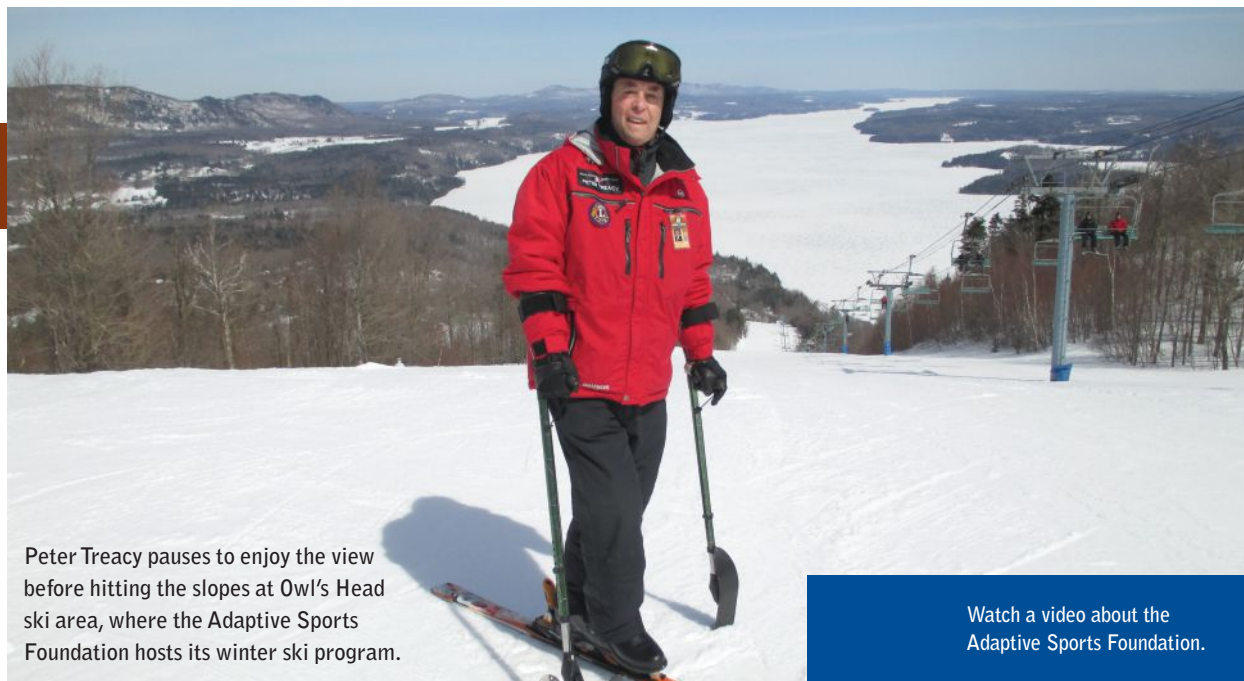
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# ONE OF US



Peter Treacy pauses to enjoy the view before hitting the slopes at Owl's Head ski area, where the Adaptive Sports Foundation hosts its winter ski program.

Watch a video about the Adaptive Sports Foundation.

## PETER TREACY

Thanks to Peter Treacy, hundreds of disabled children and adults in Quebec, Canada, each year realize that they can conquer mountains. Participants in the Adaptive Sports Foundation, which Treacy founded in 1995, experience the senses of accomplishment, freedom and sheer joy that come from downhill skiing and other exhilarating sports. Treacy, a 20-year Knowlton Lion and retired IBM manager, knows firsthand that when a disabled person has the chance to do something he never thought he could, in an instant all things can become possible. After losing his right leg in a car accident in 1980, Treacy thought he would forever be removed from society and his once active lifestyle. Luckily, a chance sighting showed him he couldn't be more wrong.

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

### What happened that made you discover you could ski again?

I was watching my sons ski when I noticed a man with one leg skiing with specialized equipment. I chased him down to ask him about it. I didn't know it was possible. I took lessons and soon I was skiing. It was an unbelievable feeling! It made me completely forget about my disability, and I started thinking about my ability.

### Why did you found the Adaptive Sports Foundation?

I wanted to give others the confidence, independence and improved self-esteem that I had experienced. Being active means being healthier and happier. Disabled people just need some modifications to be able to realize our potential.

### You've been able to share your vision with thousands of people.

We started the winter program with five students and 10 volunteers. Today we have more than 60 students and 100 volunteers. We also have a summer program when a few hundred students go water skiing, kayaking and sailing. Watching the progression the students make, the smiles on their faces—the benefits are astounding.

### Have you seen many transformations?

Here's just one story of so many: A family had been in a car accident that killed the mother and left all three children as paraplegics. When their father saw his children coming down the ski hill laughing, he cried. He said they hadn't laughed in a year. It showed them there was light at the end of the tunnel. The kids are all athletes and at university now, and both boys are on the Canadian national wheelchair basketball team.

### It must be powerful to be a part of life-changing moments like that.

I've met the most wonderful students with great courage and determination. Our volunteers have such generosity and big hearts. Our donors don't just write checks; they come and encourage the students. And the Lions have always been there to help. I wouldn't wish my accident on my worst enemy, but in a way it's the best thing that ever happened to me. I wouldn't change anything.

Find out more about ASF at [www.adaptivesports.ca](http://www.adaptivesports.ca).



## OVERHEARD

**"You did a little dinner, and it feels like you did a thousand things for them."**

—Shirley Barrett of the Eynon Archibald Lions in Pennsylvania on the appreciation shown for her club's cooking and delivery of 130 meals to residents. From the Times-Tribune.

**"I always buy a ticket. I buy whatever someone's selling at the grocery store."**

—Scott Bell, winner of a four-minute shopping spree at a grocery store in a sweepstakes of the San Juan Lions in Washington. From the Journal of the San Juan Islands.

**"You find out what the international organization does, and it's totally overwhelming. I get the LION magazine every month, and I see every time there's a tsunami or a tornado, the Lions are one of the first groups out there with money or helping people. Even though I had nothing to do with those things, I'm still a part of it because I'm a Lion."**

—Past District Governor Jack Hines of the Rogers Lions in Minnesota in the Star News.

## BY THE NUMBERS



**130**

Snakes captured recently in annual Rattlesnake Roundup hosted by Oglesby Lions in Texas.

**15,216**

Pieces of candy distributed in the Easter egg hunt of the Narragansett Lions in Rhode Island.

**103**

Charter members of the new Hartford Saint Lucian Lions Club in Connecticut.

**75**

Price in cents of the pancake breakfast of the Claymont Lions in Delaware, chartered 75 years ago.



**100**

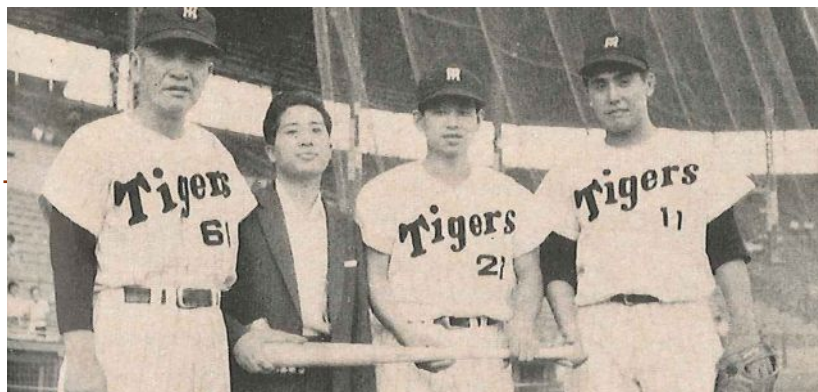
Dogs at a Humane Society shelter fed for three days thanks to a donation by Manvel Lions in Texas in honor of the service of a local 10-year-old girl at an animal hospital.



**300**

Distance in meters from a Baddeck wharf to an island beach with lifeguards provided by Baddeck Lions in a free, all-day ferry run by the club in Nova Scotia, Canada. The shuttle service was threatened by new government boat operation regulations until Lions met with officials and forged an agreement on satisfying safety criteria.

## 51 YEARS AGO IN THE LION



### JUNE 1963

The LION profiled Japan's ichi bon (No. 1) baseball fan, diminutive dentist Jun Imazato of Nishiwaki (shown with his beloved Hanshin Tigers). His passion grew out of listening to U.S. major league games on short wave radio to hone his English skills. Lion Imazato received free season tickets to Japanese parks because he translated U.S. baseball data for the Japanese baseball commissioner. But his proudest moment came when the San Francisco Giants toured Japan and he not only sat in the dugout but also treated Willie Mays for a toothache.

[Read the full story.](#)

# CLUB of the MONTH



Lion Deb Weaverling (left) and President Kim Pearl show that it doesn't have to be December to ring the bell for the Salvation Army.

## LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS

### DATE FOUNDED: 1937

**MEETING MATTERS:** The Lions gather every Thursday at noon at a community center. Each meeting includes "Truth Time," during which members announce personal milestones such as birthdays or anniversaries. Weekly guest speakers

have included the Kansas governor, U.S. senators and local celebrities.

**MASSIVE MEMBERSHIP:** At 182 members strong, the Lions, aged 21 to 94, are a varied and powerful force. The Lions are adept at networking, bringing in most of their new members this way.

Many members hail from Fort Leavenworth, serving both through the U.S. Army and Lions.

### LEAN BURGER-FLIPPING MACHINE:

The Lions are known for the aptly chosen buffalo burgers they serve up at the annual Buffalo Bill Days festival. On a good day they sell about 600 of the low-fat burgers, along with 300 bratwurst—par-boiled in a secret recipe.

### GAMBLING FOR A GOOD CAUSE:

The Lions can't resist throwing \$1 in the weekly Big Pot Payout. A weekly winner gets a third of the pot, and then tries to win big by drawing a playing card. Drawing a Joker gets the big pot; until that happens, the pot grows. The club wins big, too: one-third of the pot goes into the club's service project fund.

### SOWING FRUITFUL SEEDS:

Inmates at the U.S. Penitentiary, Leavenworth, are providing nourishment to those in need and gaining work skills, thanks to the Lions. The Lions provide funds for inmates to plant and grow food. The produce is then donated to local charities, cultivating a bounty of rewards for all involved.

### A WELL-DESERVED BREAK:

The Lions are a nonstop service team, whether they're ringing Salvation Army bells, conducting children's vision screenings or participating in the Cancer Relay for Life. But they take time out for times together that they call "Just Because." From attending baseball games to enjoying cookouts, the Lions step back, relax and have fun—just because.

**WHY BE A LION?** "There is no better way to serve mankind than to roll up our sleeves and do whatever is necessary to support those less fortunate than ourselves." – Lion John Raletz



## SERVICE that ROARS



Sighted and blind rafters work together to navigate the rapids.

## Shooting the Rapids

Their pulses pounding and adrenaline spiking, whitewater rafters know the sport can induce some very white knuckles as they navigate rushing river waters. Gary Rapier of the Chesapeake Deep River Creek Lions Club in Virginia, an experienced rafter, wanted to share this exciting sport with the visually impaired. "This adventure would not only challenge their senses, but their courage to take on their fears of the unknown," he says.

Rapier and several Lions first helped guide 12 blind rafters down the New River in West Virginia during his year as 2009-10 District 24 Governor. The next year, he and then-District Governor Donna Weiler led another group. In 2013, Deep Creek Lions sponsored the trip, paying the way for two young blind rafters, although one declined just prior to the trip. Nikki Jeffords, a member of the Virginia Beach Town Center Lions Club who is blind, did go. "This was truly a life-changing experience. I came home with more confidence and a sense of accomplishment. These were definitely not your grandma's rapids," she says lightly. Her husband, Chris, also a Lion, accompanied her. The other blind rafter, a young man named Noah, was with his parents.

Jeffords, a vocational regional counselor for the Virginia Department for the Blind, says the rafting "builds self-confidence, self-esteem, a sense of accomplishment and a 'can do' attitude. I was scared but figured if other people could do it, I could do it, too." Jeffords' twin 7-year-old daughters were awestruck. "They were so impressed," she says. "I think this will go a long way in showing them that even though their mom is blind, she can still do really cool things and be successful, too."

Rapier says, "Halfway down the river, we were given an opportunity to climb a 12-foot cliff and jump off. Everyone in our raft, including Nikki and Noah, climbed up and jumped off. We all cheered. Adventure complete; memories made. We're ready to go again."

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# History is Made at Home



Photo courtesy of C. Kurt Holter, Tourism Council of Frederick, Maryland

A ceremony at Francis Scott Key's memorial at Mt. Olivet cemetery in Frederick, Maryland, pays tribute to the author of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Held captive aboard a ship in Baltimore Harbor in 1814, Francis Scott Key watched in stunned silence as Fort MCHenry took cannon fire from British warships. So moved, he penned a passionate ode that revealed his deep pride in his country. On that desperate night even Key couldn't have predicted the role his heartfelt words would play in the nation's future. His poem eventually became "The Star-Spangled Banner," chosen as America's anthem more than 100 years after he wrote it.

Key, born in Maryland in 1779, is so beloved in the state that the Francis Scott Key (FSK) Lions Club in Frederick is just one organization that bears the patriot's name. Lions participated in a celebration of Key's famous ode last summer during Maryland's three-year commemoration marking the War of 1812—an event that actually continued for 31 months.

The festivities included "Anthem & Author Reunited," which brought Key's priceless manuscript home to Frederick for two days. Lions volunteered their help. Nearly all of the club's 25 members served as crowd control for the 2,300 people who waited to see the manuscript at the Frederick City Hall—formerly the county courthouse where Key once roamed the halls as an attorney.

"To me, it actually looked more like a piece of paper," says Lion Lynn Stimmel of the priceless poem. She's correct.

Key wrote the ode to American freedom on a scrap of paper he carried in his pocket. "It was a goosebump moment since you were right there looking at a piece of history," she adds.

A visit to Key's gravesite at Mt. Olivet Cemetery capped off the celebration. In 1898, a stately granite monument was placed there to memorialize Key, who died in 1843. "This is where the manuscript was symbolically reunited with its author," explains Stimmel of the program's title.

A procession from the courthouse to the gravesite included members of the police and fire departments, military, historians and residents. One of the speakers was FSK Lion Christopher Haugh of the Tourism Council of Frederick County, who was instrumental in securing Lions' involvement.

"It was a natural fit since Francis Scott Key is our namesake," says Haugh. "I'm always thinking in historical terms regarding both our community and Lionism. This is due to my job promoting Frederick's rich heritage along with the fact that I'm a third-generation Lion following in the footsteps of my late father and his father before him."

FSK Lion Raymond Gafney, 102, participated in the flag-raising ceremony at Frederick's Courthouse Square. As one of two remaining World War II veterans at Francis Scott Key Post 11 American Legion, he saluted the raising of a 15-star American flag that inspired Key to write his epic poem.



## Smooth Sailing at Last After Theft



The club's boat is a fixture in the beach town.

**NEW ZEALAND:** Crime doesn't pay? It did for a Lions club in a New Zealand beach town.

Blockhouse Bay-Lynfield Lions anchored a boat which displayed Lions logos on its bow and stern at a busy traffic roundabout. The boat, dubbed the "Pride of the Bay," was the club's contribution to an association of local groups promoting the nautical character of Blockhouse Bay. (Lynfield borders Blockhouse Bay, and both are suburbs of Auckland City.)

In its 37 years, the active club has held carnivals, fun runs and sausage sizzles, donated rescue equipment to the Coast Guard, beds for muscular dystrophy patients and wheelchair lifts for the disabled, and served hands-on by chopping firewood, bagging coal and weeding the yards of senior citizens. The boat was a nifty branding tool. Its image was part of the club's stationery, website and signage.

The Lions weren't born yesterday. They cut a hole in the bottom of the boat and chained it to a tree to preclude a prank. Alas, the precautions proved to be insufficient. The boat disappeared.

That's when Lions turned misfortune into good fortune.

"We garnered quite a bit of publicity," says Alan Gray, secretary. "I immediately emailed an SOS to papers, radio stations and every contact we had in our address book."

No one stepped forward, but the boat reappeared within 24 hours. A young man reported that he had awoken to find it on his front lawn. "He said he would get his mates to bring it back to the roundabout," recounts Gray, who has his suspicions about who the culprit was.

Would-be thieves now would have to possess supernatural strength. The boat, back at the roundabout, is filled with soil and flowers.

Zany New Zealanders celebrate the 50th anniversary of their club in style. Watch the amusing video.

## Club Finds Its Niche

**AUSTRALIA:** Yanco has no stop lights, and its one commercial street has a pub, a club, a hairdresser, a school and a small grocery store that doubles as a post office. "That's about it," says Sue Parker, one of Yanco's 572 residents. But it's not so small that it doesn't have a Lions club.

The 13-member Yanco Lions Club holds an annual garage sale and ham raffle and uses its homemade van to cater sports and music events, sales and private parties. Yanco is small enough that everyone knows everyone else but not so small that a service club can't make a difference. "Our role is to raise money for people that may be struggling and need a little help," says Parker, secretary.

The club in New South Wales was bolstered recently by two new members. The nearest Lions club is in Leeton, five kilometers away. The next closest club is in Narandera, a distance of 25 kilometers. People in Yanco are hardy, self-sufficient and accustomed to close encounters with wildlife: kangaroos, wallabies, wombats and snakes often hop, amble or slither into town.

The club is a way for residents to not only help others but also to feel more at home in town. "Our meeting nights are filled with jokes and laughter," says Parker.



Buster Ryan, club president, spins the wheel for the ham raffle.

Australian Lions craft a powerful public service ad warning of the dangers of drugs. Watch the video.





District Governor Yngri Joa de Sepúlveda enjoys one of the perks of serving at Medical Day for mothers and expectant mothers.

## Moms Get a Day

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC:** Moms and moms-to-be in Lagunas de Nisibón enjoyed a shower of sorts: they received a slew of baby care products and toiletries. Even better, a wide range of health care specialists treated them.

More than 450 women attended the Medical Day organized by several Lions clubs in District R 1. Their free maternity cases included sheets, mosquito nets, diapers, bottles, pacifiers, soaps, shampoo, cologne, brushes, combs and shoes. Six mobile medical units sponsored by the Ministry of Public Health and assisted by Lions provided medical care. Specialists from gynecology, cardiology, dermatology, ophthalmology and dentistry attended to the women.

# Education Rises After Era of Terror

**CAMBODIA:** Boys who enter the new library of Trakiet Elementary School drop a straw into a plastic container designated for their grade. Girls leave a clam shell. A quaint, practical way to track the usage of the library, the containers often are filled. Children who once ran outside during break times now race to the library to read.

The school is located in a small farming village 33 kilometers from Angkor Wat, the Buddhist temple that is the world's largest religious monument. The farmers are less than two generations removed from the reign of terror of the Khmer Rouge in which intellectuals, teachers and educated people were considered enemies of the state and murdered.

The school system in Cambodia is still recovering. The lack of schools means students are limited either to a morning or afternoon session. Teachers must take side jobs because of the low pay. School is free for nine years, but many children drop out to work to support their family or to take care of younger siblings while parents work menial jobs.

Members of the Kota Lions Club in Japan first visited the small village where Trakiet School is while on a fact-finding tour of Cambodia in 2008. The club wanted to help Cambodians as other clubs in Japan were. Standing alone in a rice field, the decrepit wooden school had two classrooms for 500 children. The banana-leaf roof was no match for heavy rains, and the school often was flooded and shut down.

The club raised funds and secured LCIF Standard Grants to build a new school and later a library. Villagers were so inspired by the cleanliness and sturdiness of the new school as well as by the increased attendance and learning that they banded together to build a middle school next to the elementary school.

In the last decade, clubs in Japan have completed 38 LCIF education-related grant projects in Cambodia. Like the buried mines that continue to claim limbs and lives, the wounds inflicted on Cambodian society and its schools remain real and life-altering. But Kota Lions first recognized the transcendent value of education while touring India in 2005. Tomio Yamamoto, past club president, was "deeply moved to see the children's love of learning in spite of their poverty," he told the Japanese LION. He felt the same way when he witnessed the dedication of Trakiet School. "We were welcomed by the unclouded, shiny eyes of children. We gain energy from every time we visit," he says.

Lions who return periodically to the school bearing school supplies marvel not only at the avidity for learning but also its sheer loudness. School libraries in Japan are hushed—not so at all in Cambodia. The noise does not impede reading. The students "don't seem to care. They have their noses buried in the books," says the Japanese LION.





Students at Trakiet School read in the new library.



# Their Summer Place

The Louisiana Lions Camp offers a fun-filled haven for special needs children to be the 'normal' ones.

by Jake Clapp

Photos by Erin Arledge



The mission of the camp is to give disabled children a normal summer camp experience.





John, a severely disabled camper, hangs out at the shallow end of the pool with two younger counselors. Ray Cecil, camp director, had been concerned that John might not be able to stay the full week, but with the help of counselors he had a great week and especially enjoyed the pool.

Maya, 15, hollers with excitement as the beanbag she launched with a catapult lands with a light thud on a small platform a couple of feet away. Maya chooses her prize—a stuffed animal that she glancingly admires before stuffing it into a large bag already filling up with other toys. She then quickly rolls her wheelchair to the next game.

Around her, Matthew's Midway is bustling. It's the weekly carnival night at Louisiana Lions Camp, one of the camp's most popular evening events. Lions who live nearby in Leesville and Anacoco grill sausages, make snow cones and run typical carnival attractions such as Skee ball, sponge toss and face painting.

A quiet, older camper named Tim is trying his first snow cone, a banana flavored ice ball. Yu, a counselor, asks him if it's turning his tongue yellow. Tim smiles and sticks out his yellow-dyed tongue, prompting two other campers around him to stick out their own to be checked for red and green. Meanwhile, Kristian and his girlfriend Ashley, two campers who met at Lions Camp, sit on a bench watching younger kids try their hands at a Wheel of Fortune game and the water balloon pop.

It's become tradition for both campers and counselors to come in costume for the evening. A group of older boy counselors dresses in wigs, jogging shorts and sorority tank



tops, trying to look like the sorority pledges you might find on the University of Louisiana at Lafayette campus. More than a few campers and counselors are dressed as zombies. One camper is wearing a Batman mask while his counselor is a mild-mannered Clark Kent.

Before the night is over, several campers and their counselors are hauling multiple large garbage bags filled with stuffed animals around the area. Campers will now face the difficult decision of which ones they can shove into their luggage for the trip home in a few days.

The night is an exciting mid-week highlight during the Lions Camp session for physically challenged campers. It's one highlight among many. There is the Kangaroo Court, in which campers can accuse counselors and staff of "not cheering enough" or having "bad taste in music," resulting in the punishment of being slimed or sitting in ice. Also memorable are the spectacular July 4th fireworks show and the teary-eyed final night campfire. There will be a lot for both campers and counselors to remember. There always is at "Our Summer Place," as campers affectionately call the camp.

## LC Love

For 56 years, 51 at its current location outside of Leesville, the Louisiana Lions Club has operated a residential summer camp for youth with special needs, diabetes and pulmonary disorders. Broken into seven one-week sessions over the summer and featuring a small counselor-to-camper ratio, the camp provides the state's children with a place where they can have a memorable summer camp experience—complete with archery, swimming, fishing, volleyball, basketball



A counselor gets blasted with water after camper hit a target with a ball.



# Alumni Cherish Time at Camp

Even after more than 50 years, Dean Navarre, Carl Cortez and Joe Territa still talk about their first summers at the Louisiana Lions Camp like it happened last July. The three will go on for hours on the pranks they pulled, the trouble they caused—and narrowly avoided—and the lifelong friendships they made in the early 1960s.

The three men regularly stay in touch, and through the Louisiana Lions Camper Alumni Association, an organization they helped shape, they work to keep past campers connected and foster “LC Love” years after they’ve passed the camp’s age requirements. The memories of the camp are powerful and long lasting. Ask any alumnus and they’ll gladly share why the camp was important to their lives.

## Can’t Leave

Celeste Naquin lied about her age for six years just to be able to continue attending Lions Camp past the cutoff age of 19.

Celeste, who is now 37, began attending camp when she was 13, but her mother, Cindy Naquin (at right with Celeste), admitted to being hesitant to let her go that first year and called the camp multiple times to check in. She relaxed after that first summer.

“The first thing [Celeste] told me when she got off the bus, ‘Can we go back next year, please?’” Naquin says. Celeste was able to make it to 25 before someone noticed she was too old for the camp. Still, her devotion to the camp was honored with a plaque.

## Skills for Life

“We had counselors who believed in us,” says Brenda Hughes DuFour, who attended camp five times between 1958 and 1965. “We didn’t believe in ourselves, but the counselors believed in us. I have confidence today because of what I did at Lions Camp.”

When Hurricane Andrew blew through south-central Louisiana in 1992, DuFour volunteered with the Red Cross at a shelter, helping to unfold Army cots—a skill she picked up while setting up cots at camp.

DuFour spent most of her childhood in foster care. The camp gave her stability in her life. “The thing that I held on to, kept me above water, was the fact that I went to Lions Camp.”

## Priceless Peers

While New Orleans native Greg Johnson was at the camp from 1964 to 1967, he gravitated toward archery—proudly earning every award he could with the bow and arrow. “Those years were priceless,” he says. “You could not put any kind of value on it. ... I think it was the idea of seeing people that I could relate to. Seeing kids that really understood me, with the handicap that I have and just knowing you’re in the same group of people that have problems just like you. Not like going back home and you’re one in thousands.”

## Passing the Lessons

Chris Usé Stoll (at right) remains one of the few campers who was asked back to be a junior counselor—a younger staff member who helps around the camp. “It was a real experience because I worked with different disabilities while I was there,” she says.

Stoll became a teacher for more than 25 years. Her time at Lions Camp influenced how she worked within the classroom. “When I think about what I possibly would have been without camp, when I think about all the things we did in our lives because of it, that is the utmost thing in my mind,” she says. “I hated school, but I became a teacher because I worked with children of all disabilities at camp.”







Campers and counselors joke around.

and other outdoor sports—that they might have otherwise missed. As several campers, counselors and alumni put it, at the Lions Camp “no matter the disability, the campers are the normal.”

The camp is completely free for boys and girls in the state. Louisiana Lions cover the costs, and many clubs sponsor local children for whatever additional cost it might take to get them to camp. Clubs also charter bus trips for area children to get to the camp.

Ray Cecil’s first encounter with the camp dates to 1977 after he finished eighth grade. He rode with his father to pick up a camper to bring to the Lions Camp. He had never before been to Leesville but liked the camp enough to volunteer the next summer. Now the camp’s executive director, the 2013 summer marked his 26th year at the Louisiana Lions Camp.

“The campers have a way of intertwining their lives into yours, and you learn all sorts of things,” Cecil says.

The effect is a chain reaction of good feelings called “LC Love” that seems to catch anyone who turns off U.S. Highway 171 and drives past the lion statues onto the Lions Camp grounds. Symbolized as an “L” drawn into a heart, LC Love is seen everywhere on the campgrounds—scrawled with Sharpies on picnic tables and benches and painted into mosaics.

As Cecil puts it, the summer camp is like any other camp, where kids can have normal experiences with others like them. Family bonds begin to form between the campers and also draw in the counselors and staff, many of whom once were campers themselves. It’s what keeps campers and staff wanting to come back year after year.

“Really, the more things change, the more they stay the same. And tradition-wise, the mission of the camp—with what we’re trying to offer to the kids—that hasn’t changed,” Cecil says. “This is their place and that’s what we want them to know. This is their home; they’re looking forward to this every summer. They’ve been packed [to come here] for weeks.”

## Building Confidence

The Lions Camp summer typically begins in June with Camp Pelican, a program hosted with Louisiana Pulmonary Disease Camp, Inc., for children with cystic fibrosis, severe and chronic asthma and those with tracheostomies. Camp Pelican is followed by a week of training for summer staff, then two weeks for mentally challenged campers ages 8 to 19, two weeks for physically challenged campers ages 7 to 19, followed by a diabetes camp for ages 6 to 10 before a week for diabetic campers ages 11 to 14. On average, more than 500 kids will go



through the Lions Camp during the summer, Cecil says.

The first physically challenged camp week last summer saw 47 kids with 57 staffers. Children with disabilities such as spina bifida, visual impairments, cerebral palsy and Rett syndrome cycle through the day's activities: swimming, archery, arts and crafts, fishing and team sports. They are split into groups, called patrols, based on their ages, with the staffers divided out among them. The girls go into the Cherokee, Sioux, Caddo and Cree patrols, while the boys are divided into the Apache, Comanche, Crow and Hopi. The groups quickly form team bonds and learn to work together to win challenges: which patrol can cheer the loudest or earn the most points at an activity.

"Kids come away with a lot more confidence," says Brittany Barbier, the camp's program director. This is Barbier's eighth summer at the camp, a place she credits for her current career path as a special education teacher.

"This shows them they can do anything they want to do. They don't have any obstacles bigger than what they have already faced," she says as she points to a camper in the swimming pool. The young man has a form of arthritis that limits his arms' range of motion, but he has learned to catch a Frisbee and ball.

During diabetes weeks, campers are taught tips to help keep their blood sugar in check, and some young campers even learn how to administer their own insulin shots. In fact, several current staffers once were diabetes campers.

Kristian Bellard, a camper with spina bifida from Pine Prairie, has been going to the Lions Camp since he was 10 years old. Now 17, Bellard has won nine state championships in wheelchair racing. "[I've learned] to be lucky that I have what I got," Bellard says. "I'm lucky that I'm not like some other kids. You learn to live with what you got."

## Away from Cruelty

Any time during the day chants and cheers can be heard echoing across the campgrounds. There seems to be a chant for everything: when campers are late for an activity, when it's time to eat, when someone drops something, or when a camper wins a challenge—not to mention the unique cheers each patrol has for their own group names. The enthused yells are a big part of the camp experience, and they're shouted at the top of each camper's lungs.

If you're lucky, you might even get your own chant, like the energetic, gravel-voiced Ferlandric Bell (cover). "The smiles on the campers' faces, when we do the cheering, it really does something to me, it really melts my heart," Bell says.

Bell, a junior at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, began volunteering in 2010, and by the 2013 summer he was the BB gun and archery instructor.

"You know, away from here [campers] might not ever get to experience going out to a dance," Bell says. "The world can be cruel and if you're not like everyone else, you can be excluded. But here they can experience things that they

might not normally. Like shooting BBs, archery and things like that. That's what I love about camp."

Maya Humphrey, who is in her sixth summer at camp, says she mails off her camp application letter the day after she gets it in the mail and "likes coming for the kids like her." Bailey LeBlanc, a Cherokee camper, shares a similar sentiment, although she adds she comes back every summer to see Brittany Barbier.

The counselors aren't allowed to choose favorites, Barbier says, but that doesn't stop the kids from having favorite staffers and forming friendships.



A camper lets out an "evil genius" laugh during the Kangaroo Court at the request of Ray Cecil, the camp director. Chants, cheers and yelling are regular occurrences at the camp.



It was a summer of fun in 1966 at the Wisconsin Lions Camp as detailed in the LION. Get the complete story and photos.



The most common graffiti at the camp is the LC Love symbol, signifying the affection for the camp.



The grand fireworks display draws a crowd.

“The most difficult part is saying goodbye to the kids,” Barbier says. “Knowing that it’s their last year and they won’t be back next summer. It gets hard.”

To help stay connected, alumni associations have started for both staff and campers. Many alumni have left their own mark on the camp. Matthew Palm, a camper who passed away in 2008, is the namesake behind Matthew’s Midway.

## Happy Tears

In 1957, a group of Lions wanted to send a few post-polio and physically challenged children to summer camp but couldn’t find an accepting program. Taking matters into their own hands, they founded the Louisiana Lions League for Crippled Children, Inc.

For the first few years, the league piloted a program at Camp Windywood, until the Leesville Lions Club donated 100 acres of piney woodlands north of town to build a permanent camp. Lions Camp occupies about 8 acres, plus the lake. The first camping session opened on July 9, 1961, and since then, the camp has become an American Camp Association accredited camp with more than 22,000 children having attended, all for free.

The league made every Lion in Louisiana a charter member who is personally responsible for the financial stability of the camp, says Logan Morris, president of the Leesville Lions Club and grandson of one of the camp’s founders. “It takes a good bit of money to fund the camp season, and it’s funded entirely by donations, 90 percent of which come from the Lions clubs of Louisiana,” Morris says. The full cost is met through pledges, memorials and donations to the Louisiana Lions League for Crippled Children.

“Our camps typically stay pretty full,” Morris says. “The thing we fall short on is identifying the campers in local school systems as they are available or may exist, and to adequately explain to the parents that they can be comfortable letting their kids go.”

But once parents do let go, or a staffer volunteers for the first time, the positivity is infectious. “You’re bit, and you can’t get away,” Morris adds.

“A prime example of that is a lot of kids that come here for the first time are crying when they get off the bus, or out of their parents’ car. They do not want to go to camp. But by Friday night, they’ll be crying because they don’t want to leave, and they can’t wait to come back. If you can get them here for the first time and let them see the experience, they will never forget it.”



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# SUPER SERVICE

Not every project saves a child, prolongs lives, pioneers a mission model or shatters mindsets and barriers regarding the blind. But some do.

by Jay Copp

## A Routine Eye Screening That Was Anything But

Bloomfield is a picturesque New England-style community in western New York. Less than 1,400 people live here, and residents are quick to point out that “everyone knows everyone else.” So Mike Bartle saw one familiar face after another when he screened schoolchildren last spring. He certainly knew Brianna Leitten, 6. Her older sister and Bartle’s daughter played on the same softball team.

Brianna would have stood out in any case. “She’s just a bundle of energy, a real happy-go-lucky kid,” says Bartle, a member of the Bloomfield Lions since 1997.

Bartle screened Brianna, and what he saw was startling. “There was a huge discrepancy in the size of the pupils. Something was not right. It was pretty blatant,” he says.

The Lions recommended she get an eye exam. When Bartle ran into Brianna a month or so later, her left eye was completely gone.

Brianna’s parents, Dorie and Gerry, had taken Brianna to see eye doctors after the screening. The news was not good. Brianna had either Coats’ disease or a tumor. Delay could result in the spread of cancer. “We were in shock,” says Gerry. “But you do what you have to for your children.” Surgeons removed her eye. A post-surgical biopsy showed the problem indeed was a tumor. “We made the right decision,” says Dorie.

Before long, Brianna sported a prosthetic eye, which Lions partly funded. “It’s identical to the other eye. It matches perfectly,” says Dorie. Brianna, a gymnast, is back doing cartwheels. In fact, two days after surgery, Dorie found her doing a headstand on the couch. Even though she has no physical restrictions, that was too much for mom, who told her to cease and desist.

The local Messenger Post ran a story on Brianna with the headline “Eye screening helps save Bloomfield girl’s life.” Just 64 percent of the families had signed the





Brianna Leitten poses with Lion Mike Bartle, who first noticed a problem with her left eye.

Lions' consent form for the screening of Brianna and her classmates. The Leittens encourage area schools to attach a copy of Brianna's story to notices of upcoming screenings. "People go to the dentist. They need to regularly see the eye doctor too. You can live without your teeth," says Dorie.

Leittens' friends rallied around them and their benefactors, the Lions. A friend of the couple organized a can drive for the Bloomfield Lions to purchase their own screening camera instead of sharing one with other Lions clubs. Mourning the recent loss of his own mother, a customer of Gerry's construction business gave the Leittens \$5,000 toward the camera.

Here's the thing even about small towns: you may know everybody. But sometimes, owing to a family in crisis and how folks respond, you can get to know them better. Before the screening, Bartle and the Leittens shared the small talk typical among parents who are acquainted with one another through their children. That's all changed. "It's a friendship now," says Bartle. "We've gotten to know each other better. We've bonded."

[Watch a video on Brianna's story.](#)



## Fun and Games and Much, Much More at Weekend Camp



AP Images

Mika Baugh helps Susan Jones grip a bat during a Beep softball game at the weekend outing held by Indiana Lions near Westville.



Kevin Roe watched with wide eyes as people without sight played cards, competed in disc golf and then handled dinner duties. Blind youths and adults adeptly grilled hamburgers at the weekend camp held by District 25 A in northwest Indiana. “They do things a little differently. They touch the meat and push it down to tell it’s done,” says Roe, a Winamac Lion.

Nor did the lack of vision preclude baiting a fish hook, erecting a tent or clobbering a baseball. His own surprise at the capabilities of the blind left Roe, a Lion for 21 years and a past district governor, a tad sheepish. “They can do the things we do. It really was an eye opener,” he says. “I had thought they probably just sat around and didn’t do much.”

But while those with sight marveled at the abilities of those without it, some at the camp instead believed the latter actually sold themselves short. As they saw it, the purpose of the Fishing for Life weekend was to gently nudge those with blindness out of their comfort zone and toward new endeavors and an increased self-confidence and self-reliance. Christopher Meyer, 21, a full-time college student who has applied for an internship in Germany, immediately picked up on the reticence and reserve of the two dozen blind children and adults at the camp.

“On the first day they were in a shell. They weren’t ready to engage. They had a passive mentality,” says Meyer, self-assured and energetic. “The blind are taught to sit back. You have to try new things. Experience is the best teacher.”

Meyer, who has been blind since birth, served as a mentor for other camp participants. “I felt I could help them break through by modeling it,” he says.

About 15 Lions helped at the weekend camp, held on the spacious farm of Lions Butch and Rhonda Weston near Westville. (“There must have been a sign for a free lunch,” quips Roe.) Other volunteers came from the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the National Federation for the Blind, and even a professor from Butler University helped out. On the surface, the camp was a typical outdoor event for the blind featuring sports and activities such as Beep baseball, fishing and hay rides and multiple occasions for cama-

raderie and new friendships among peers.

But on a deeper level the weekend involved bridging gaps and stereotypes, a kind of cultural exchange among the sighted and non-sighted and even among the blind in which perceptions and habits are set aside and richer perspectives and experiences take root. Never was that more evident than during a nighttime hike through the woods. Meyer’s designated role on the trek was to lead those with blindness, but he also helped show Lions the way. “The Lions were supposed to lead the non-blind through the dark forest. Being in the dark was a pretty normal situation for me. But they—to use an expression—were stuck in the dark,” says Meyer.

So, really, how can a person without sight navigate thick undergrowth? “I felt the path. I kept my cane down with a light grip,” he says. “It’s either the path or no path. It’s a matter of developing a sense of touch.”

During the day, campers played golf with discs and holes that emit sound. Camper Jacob Ayers had designed the game. “He calls himself the president and CEO [of blind disc golf]. He’s very bright. I was watching him, and you could just see the wheels turning,” says Roe.

Campers also congregated at a pond. Bursting with excitement with each tug on the line, a boy of 12 or 13 snagged 27 bluegills. A young girl surprisingly discovered a new obsession. “She put up a big fight. She wanted to have nothing to do with fishing. But her father stuck with it,” says Roe. “By the end of the day you couldn’t drag the pole out of her hand.”

By the end of the weekend new friendships were forged and an easy familiarity had taken hold among camp participants and volunteers. In just two days nicknames had superseded given names for some. With his casual, carefree attitude and blonde locks, Meyer was hailed as “Surfer Dude.” Explains Roe, “He just fits that part of a man on the beach with a surf board.”

Not everything went perfectly at the camp, yet that was part of the plan, too. Putting up the tent led to a smashed finger or two. “It’s like what the instructor from the School for the Blind said, they’d never learn otherwise,” says Roe.



# Bringing Modern Eye Care To a Timeless Place

To find it, wander through the dusty, timeless streets, teeming with Mayan Indians in shaded stalls selling homegrown vegetables, aromatic native foods and boldly-colored clothes. Enter the sacred adobe church, dating from the 15th-century. Stroll past the throngs of solemn worshipers, silently praying at all hours of the day. It's right next to an eerily quiet room, once ordinary and nondescript but now a revered chapel with walls stained reddish-brown, the dried blood of an Oklahoma priest slain four decades ago in the civil war. Deep inside the old church, a testament to faith in service and the efficacy of modern technology, is a well-equipped eye clinic.

The permanent eye clinic abutting the chapel includes a phoropter, a slit lamp and keratometer—sophisticated, eye care equipment found in cities like Tulsa and Oklahoma City.

“We wanted to bring metropolitan standards of eye care to a mission trip. We wanted to bring it up to the level of care you find in Ada,” says John Garber of the Ada Lions Club in Oklahoma. His club established the clinic at the church in Santiago Atitlan in November. Four times annually Garber and other Lions will travel to Guatemala to dispense glasses and do eye exams.

Garber worked for 30 years as an optometrist with Indian Health Services, part of the U.S. government. He still works for the Chickasaw Indian Nation. A cheerful, energetic 63-year-old with a bushy mustache, Garber describes himself as “a guy who looks like Groucho Marx.” His answer as to why Santiago was selected for the clinic is similarly lighthearted. “Well, we didn’t have to change time zones. No jet lag,” he says. But the real reason has to do with two new hospitals, a long history of altruism, and, ultimately, a bond felt between people stronger than the gap in material prosperity and geographic distance.

A few years ago Garber, while on an eye care mission to a town near Santiago, learned of a new hospital in Santiago. Garber, who had done missions in Central

America, Alaska and one of the Fiji Islands, understood that the hospital would welcome the presence of an eye clinic and an eye clinic could refer patients with cataracts and other more serious problems to the hospital. He also knew that the Chickasaw Nation in Ada had just built its own hospital. When he returned to Ada, Governor Bill Anoatubby, the leader of the Chickasaw Nation, quickly consented to letting him use the ophthalmic equipment no longer needed because of the new hospital, and his Lions club decided to support a permanent clinic. Ada Lions have since supplied the clinic with an autorefractor and other equipment.

The clinic hands out glasses with lenses that are “the exact prescription,” says Garber. (Missions commonly provide lenses, especially to adults, that are a close match.) The vision of the Mayans is tested, and Garber and crew return with glasses, purchased from an online optical company, on the next trip. A network of churches in Ada underwrite the cost of the glasses. The Mayans also get to choose a frame from a set of pictures. “The young men and women especially don’t want to wear Elton John glasses. They know what people are wearing,” says Garber.

Elmy, a brilliant 16-year-old local girl who speaks Mayan, English and Spanish, one of the very few trilingual people there, serves as a translator. Sometimes no translation is needed. Some Mayans know common English words, probably from movies they watch. A 19-year-old woman put on her first pair of glasses and softly said “wow.”

Garber relishes each trip. “The people are wonderful. They’re happy. Ben Franklin said a rich person is someone who has no wants. I don’t think he’d consider them [the Mayans] poor,” he says. He returns to the United States with his own sense of contentment. “You assume they need you. But you need them,” he says. “They bless us more than we bless them.”





John Garber does an eye exam at his club's clinic in a church in Guatemala.



Before the Ada Lions came along, you could get nearly everything in Santiago Atitlan—including handcrafted shawls and ethnic food—except decent eye care.

## Lions Pool Their Talents for Campers



Painting the pool at Living Well Village are Dean Goodman (foreground) and Don Binz of the St. Louis South Side Lions and Zone Chairperson Teddi Speeler and her daughter Becky Speeler of the Webster Groves Lions.

Lions in St. Louis first took control of a wooded, 273-acre plot of land outside the crowded city in 1926. Through the decades Scouts learned how to pitch a tent here, special needs children hiked on handicapped accessible trails and underprivileged city youths shook off the sweltering summer heat by swimming in a 5-acre lake.

After years of absence, members of the St. Louis South Side Lions Club and other Lions roam again on the hilly timberland. Children still need a place apart amid the charms of nature and the allure of outdoor ac-

tivities. But today they need a place away from fast food restaurants, cell phone and game cartridges. The camps here today revolve around prolonging and enriching lives through encouraging a healthier lifestyle.

The South Side club no longer owns the grounds, but its members are vital to the success of the camps here. “We would not have survived without their help,” says Jean Huelsing, who runs the place. “We’ve become a society of ‘what’s in it for me.’ That’s not who they are.”

Huelsing and her family founded Camp Jump Start to teach children and adults how to lead a healthier



lifestyle. Her nonprofit, the Living Well Foundation, doesn't run a "fat camp." Instead, campers undergo a "healthy lifestyle immersion" to not only lose weight but also to take to heart the need to take care of one's body and soul.

Camp Jump Start is testament to the passion for health of Huelsing, a longtime nurse who saw the destructive effects on youths of fatty foods and lack of exercise. The camp also owes a lot to Lions, who persistently improved the property and supported various enterprises on it since the 1920s. The property's complex history includes the South Side Lions donating it to the Boy Scouts in the 1920s, buying it back in the 1960s and using it for Scouts and the Missouri School for the Blind, among others, and leasing it to a group that assisted those with mental and physical challenges in the 1970s. The Living Well Foundation purchased the property in 2008 in a deal involving the Lions and the Wyman Center, which has provided camping for underprivileged youth since 1898.

Huelsing quickly realized whose considerable footsteps she continuously walked in: an old sign near the camp entrance displayed the Lions logo. Then she learned the level of Lions' commitment when she discovered in a trash can pages upon pages of the camp's history. So she reached out to the club a couple of years ago, and Lions came out in force. They painted the swimming pool, sprayed for bugs and cleaned the cabins. They raised funds for health equipment and flipped burgers (no salt or cheese!) at camp barbecues. When the pool's pump broke just two days before a summer session, Lions stayed 18 hours to fix it.

Tom Beetz, club president and a volunteer at a camp barbecue, admired the camaraderie and contentment of campers. "I think these kids are building up their self-esteem. A lot of them have been bullied. Here they can get together and make friends," he says.

Adults often enroll in weekend camps, and children come for a summer camp, which can be as long as eight weeks. Last summer 166 campers lost a total of 2,512

pounds, says Huelsing. The average mile time dropped to 10:32 from 15:18. A dietician is on staff, and support groups on underlying issues such as divorce, grief over loss and anxiety are overseen by a psychologist and run by her doctoral-level students.

The camp is adept at almost covertly ingraining healthier choices. Moderation, not deprivation, is one of Huelsing's mottos. "The best way you learn is when you don't realize you are being taught. You learn while at play," says Huelsing.

Huelsing began the camp with a sense of mission, and she runs its operations with a fervor. Her family cashed out its home and other assets including her grandmother's crystal to get the camp running. She can recite a long litany of facts and statistics on the scourge of obesity. "We see 4-year-olds now with cirrhosis of the liver. Twenty-year olds have heart attacks," she says. "Ten-year-olds have type 2 diabetes. We used to call that adult-onset diabetes. We'll see 25-year-olds who are blind [because of diabetes]."

Lisa Stravinskaskas of Rockford, Illinois, raves about Jump Start. Her 16-year-old daughter M.E. (short for Marie Elise) was once teased for being overweight. Four summers at the camp did wonders. "She changed her eating habits. She's integrated exercise into her lifestyle," says Stravinskaskas. "It's affected her self-esteem and personality. She's more sensitive and caring."

Mother and daughter now share a personal trainer and competed together in a triathlon. Stravinskaskas donates to the Living Well Foundation "so it can do miracles for other kids."

Through the decades clubs have done super service.

- As affluence takes root, New York Lions stage mammoth home show (December 1960 LION).
- A Texas club searches for the "country's most nearly perfect baby" (February 1939).
- As the Roaring Twenties wind down, clubs roar ahead with a wide range of interesting projects (January 1930).







# Peace Poster Winner Draws from Experience

by Jay Copp

Rail-thin and quiet, Tongbram Mahesh Singh, 13, does not stand out from his peers. His grades are average at Little Birds School in Moirang, India. He plays football (soccer) and performs in school plays. He fits in. His demeanor is what people notice. Adults admire his honesty, humility and obedience.

Tongbram has reason to be cautious and somber. Nine years ago a speeding bus roared down the road out of control. His father, who worked for the police, was sitting on the lawn of a neighbor, celebrating the birth of a new baby. His widow's pension came to 6,060 rupees a month, about \$266. Tongbram's mother also works as a weaver to support him and his disabled younger sister, who is blind and doesn't speak.

Tongbram lives in a normally safe neighborhood. But violence looms in the region. A northeastern state, Manipur is wracked by insurgency. More than 30 militant groups roam its hills and valleys. Killings and kidnappings occur with frightening regularity. Roadblocks and blockades are part of daily life.

Tongbram has drawn and painted since first grade. "When I was lonely, I painted," he says. Last fall he submitted a peace poster for the contest of Lions Clubs International and then forgot about it. A few months ago, while being tutored, his teacher told him he had won the grand

prize. In utter disbelief, he ran out of the room. "At first he did not believe he could win the prize," says Dr. Kshetri-mayum Umananda Singh of the Moirang Lions Club.

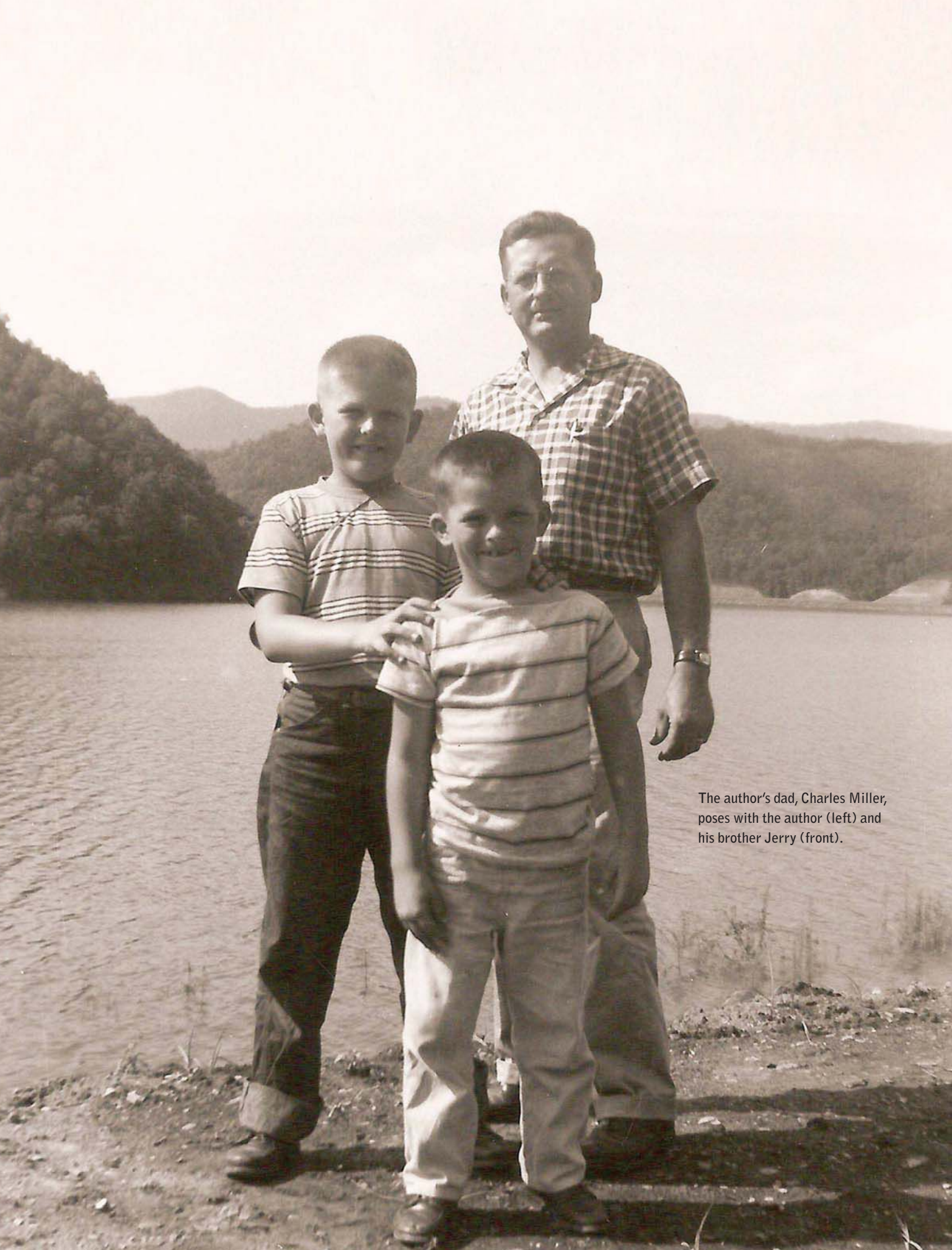
His poster is an extension of his protective personality. "Children of different countries are together painting a world. A big dove with an olive branch in the beak is behind them as if the chicks are protected by the mother hen," he wrote of his poster.

He portrayed children from America, Europe and Asia. "We belong to different countries, different religions and colors, but the feeling for love of peace and hatred of violence and war is the same to us," he wrote. "My native state, Manipur, is a conflict society. My friends in Lebanon, Syria, Tibet and Africa are suffering from the same strife. It makes us fear. When we fear we cannot enjoy playing. That is why we want love and peace. Where there is love there is peace."

His mother says his \$5,000 award will be put in a bank to finance Tongbram's education. He wants to be a cartoonist. Maybe by then, when he is an adult and drawing cartoons for children, peace will have come to Manipur.

View all the 2013-14 Peace Poster winners at [www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org).





The author's dad, Charles Miller, poses with the author (left) and his brother Jerry (front).



# My Dad, the Lion

Former NFL executive learned the X's and O's of service from his father.

by Jim Miller

Thursday night was Lions Club night in 1957 when my father was the 35-year-old president of the Simpsonville Lions Club in Kentucky. I was 9 and my brother Jerry was 6, both of us selfish in the manner of boys who wanted their dad home every night without excuse. But Dad knew that his responsibility as a prominent member of a small community involved much more than his own family. Dad was a Lion, and he was proud of it.

While Dad attended his meetings, our mother kept us occupied with games of Candyland and Uncle Wiggly or TV episodes of "Dinah Shore," "Dragnet" and my personal favorite, "Sergeant Preston of the Yukon." But around 9 p.m. we would hear the garage door go up and Dad would walk in. We'd run to him like he had been away for months. He gave Mom an affectionate peck, then made sure the TV was set to the "Tennessee Ernie Ford Show," and our earth was once more rotating on its proper axis.

Today, Simpsonville bills itself as the American Saddlebred Horse Capital of the World, but for decades dairy farms dotted the landscape. A half-century ago, 627 dairies averaging 132 acres each were in production, making Shelby County the largest dairy-producing county in the state. Dad and his brother, Bill, who also was a Lion, were right in the middle of it as owners and operators of Miller Brothers. They picked up the milk at farms and transported it to the large dairy processing plants in Louisville. The milk hauling business was a seven-day, 12-month business

that required the hauler's presence every day. Frustrated by his absence, I once asked Dad when he was going to take a day off. He paused and then replied, "When I invent the five-day cow."

Barely a decade past, World War II still was a fresh memory when former tech sergeant and radio operator Charles E. Miller was named president of the Simpsonville Lions. He was not an imposing presence. He stood only 5-foot-7-inches and weighed 160 pounds with neatly combed dark hair and glasses that gave him a studious appearance. He was quiet and reserved yet always managed to give the appearance of being in control. I can count on one hand the number of times I heard him swear, and each time I can blame a faulty hammer or other external malfunction. But when he spoke people listened because they knew it was coming from a man of high character who saw the mission as paramount. Dad was a good representative of what Tom Brokaw called "The Greatest Generation," a generation whose members practiced their values without proclaiming them. And that made him a good fit for the Lions.

Being club president was hard work, but Dad was always prepared for it. Many nights he sat at his small desk in a corner of our family room, pounding out the club's agenda and any other official Lions business on his reliable, war-surplus Remington No. 16 typewriter. Club fundraisers occupied a great deal of his attention as president. In the summer, the Lions operated a softball league in which Jerry

I will always be grateful to the Lions for providing Dad with a rare break from family and work and for allowing him to do something extra for his community and for himself.

and I were avid participants. In the winter months, the club held an annual talent show that revealed a hidden whimsical side of Dad. It was a revelation to see him and two other tailtwisters dress in drag as the Andrews Sisters and lip-sync “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy.”

Jerry and I never would have seen that side of Dad if it weren't for the easy camaraderie and willingness to sacrifice some dignity in order to help the Simpsonville Lions perform service in the community. The funds raised went to Christmas baskets for the poor and to the organization's newest enterprise in the 1950s, the Kentucky Lions Eye Bank. That was about the time that the Kentucky Lions began sponsoring an annual high school all-star series that matched the state's best high school basketball seniors against the best in Indiana. Since its inception and through the early work of men like Dad, the Foundation has received more than \$2 million in proceeds from this game that support an eye bank, eye clinics, eye research and programs including the Vision Van and KidSight programs throughout the state.

Dad remained active in the Lions after his term ended, and he even enlisted his sons to help in various ways. When I grew into an age of semi-responsibility, he assigned me to help sell refreshments at the club's stand at the annual Shelby County Fair. (The old sergeant never *asked* us to perform tasks, but he was not shy about *assigning* them!) The Lions' stand at the fair was like the clock at Grand Central Station, a convenient meeting place for fairgoers, located strategically between the major walkways, just behind the horse show ring and a few yards from the midway bustle of shooting galleries, ring-tosses and carousels.

While Dad saw many of his business customers and friends at the booth, I was busy with my first experience of selling hamburgers, hot dogs and soft drinks and counting out change. In the days before McDonald's and a zillion other fast food options, I can still taste those unsold hamburgers left over after the fair that members were allowed to buy. They just had a taste I will never forget.

As Jerry and I grew, Dad taught us lessons that were clearly extensions of his Lions' values, and they have remained with us throughout our lives. Jerry followed more closely in Dad's footsteps, becoming president of the Simpsonville Lions at age 32. That role helped prepare him for a second career in public service as a member of the Louisville Metro Council. My career as an itinerant sports

executive prevented me from laying down such roots, but I served six years in the U.S. Army Reserve, achieving the same rank as my Dad. Over the years I have had the opportunity to speak to a number of community organizations including Lions clubs. I enjoy regaling Lions with stories of Dad's service, which I relate with great pride and conviction. The We Serve mission has always resonated in our family.

Sadly, the wheels of time caught up with my Mom and Dad. Mom died in 2002. Four years later, at age 84, Dad was declining physically. But his mind remained sharp, and he insisted on staying in the same house he had built nearly a half-century earlier.

Then one day he walked out to the road to check the mailbox, and his heart just gave out. He lasted a week, and Jerry and I were at his bedside, talking about the good memories. Sports were always a ready topic, and he could talk for hours about Kentucky basketball and the Red Sox. He reminded us that the best trip he ever took was when Jerry and I took him to Fenway Park to celebrate his 70th birthday.

Even in his final 48 hours, when he was coming in and out of consciousness, he somehow managed to ask us to update him on the sports news. “Did the Red Sox win?” he hoarsely inquired. Later, “Are they still in first place?” His final question to us was: “Who's pitching tonight?” I truly believe that after the Red Sox won the World Series in 2004, he was ready to go.

Dad outlived most of his old Lions mates. But they were with him in spirit. A photo montage at the funeral home included one of him with his buddies performing a skit at an annual fundraiser. As he lay in state, almost looking as though he could open his eyes and smile at us, he was surrounded by symbols of things he held dear. Beside his head lay two blue caps, one bearing a white “UK” and the other a red “B.” On his lapel he wore his Lions pin.

Speaking as a Lions' cub, I will always be grateful to the Lions for providing Dad with a rare break from family and work and for allowing him to do something extra for his community and for himself. Lions even gave the tough but loving veteran the courage to dress up as one of the Andrews Sisters in the name of service.

*Jim Miller is a former NFL executive and college athletic director living in New Orleans.*





# Convention Call

In compliance with Article VI, Section 2 of the International By-Laws, I hereby issue the Official Call for the 2014 International Convention. Our 97th International Convention will be held in Toronto, Canada. It begins at 10 a.m. July 4 and ends July 8. The purpose of the convention is to elect a president, first vice president, second vice president and 17 members of the International Board of Directors and to transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

The fourth-largest city in North America, Toronto takes a back seat to no city. It offers a bustling urban core, incredible ethnic diversity and innumerable cultural attractions, restaurants and shopping venues. Its cosmopolitan makeup, contemporary setting and innate vibrancy especially make it an ideal setting for our international gathering.

Convention Week is a splendid, unforgettable experience packed with fellowship, fun and learning. Lions will enjoy many longstanding traditions such as the stirring flag ceremony, the festive international parade and the lively, multi-cultural international show. The memorable plenary sessions include a keynote speech by entertainer Olivia Newton-John, a talk by Ruchira Gupta, the presentation of the 2014 Humanitarian Award to David Foster and the installation of the 2014-2015 international president and district governors.

The Lions of Canada will warmly welcome their visitors and ensure that this convention is absolutely outstanding in every regard. This year I have encouraged Lions worldwide to Follow Your Dream, and our convention in Toronto will be a showcase of the power and reality of dreams. I strongly encourage you to be a part of this special Lions event.

Signed by me at Oak Brook, Illinois, United States of America, this 19th day of May 2014.

Warmest regards,

Barry J. Palmer

Your Lions Clubs International President



# President's Hunch About **LUNCH** Pays Off

Clubs in New Zealand kicked it off with a lunch at noon, and then, like the rays of the sun racing across time zones, Lions around the world gathered for lunch, shared fellowship with prospective members and in some instances performed service. More than 2,200 clubs and nearly 200,000 people took part in the Lions World Lunch Relay on April 4. International President Barry Palmer of Australia established the project as part of his Family and Friends Month to promote membership and interest in Lions.

The formats for the gatherings were as diverse as the menus. Surabaya Kharisma Lions in Indonesia served heaps of food for 60 needy children. Celje and Celje Galerija Mozaik Lions from Slovenia and Zadar Lions from Croatia collected food from stores for the poor. Tustin Host Lions from California cleaned a beach and talked to beachgoers about Lions.

Clubs shared hundreds of photos on the LCI World Lunch Facebook page (clockwise from top left): Delhi Aishwarya Lions in India fed the hungry, Nagercoil Lions from India organized games, Sofia Saint Ivan Rilski Lions in Bulgaria ate outdoors, Wahiawa Lions in Hawaii spelled out a message, Chihuahua Fuerza Lions from Mexico played games, Port Harcourt Lions in Nigeria enjoyed fellowship, and Lima Lions from Peru cooked ethnic food.







India



Bulgaria



JUNE 2014 43

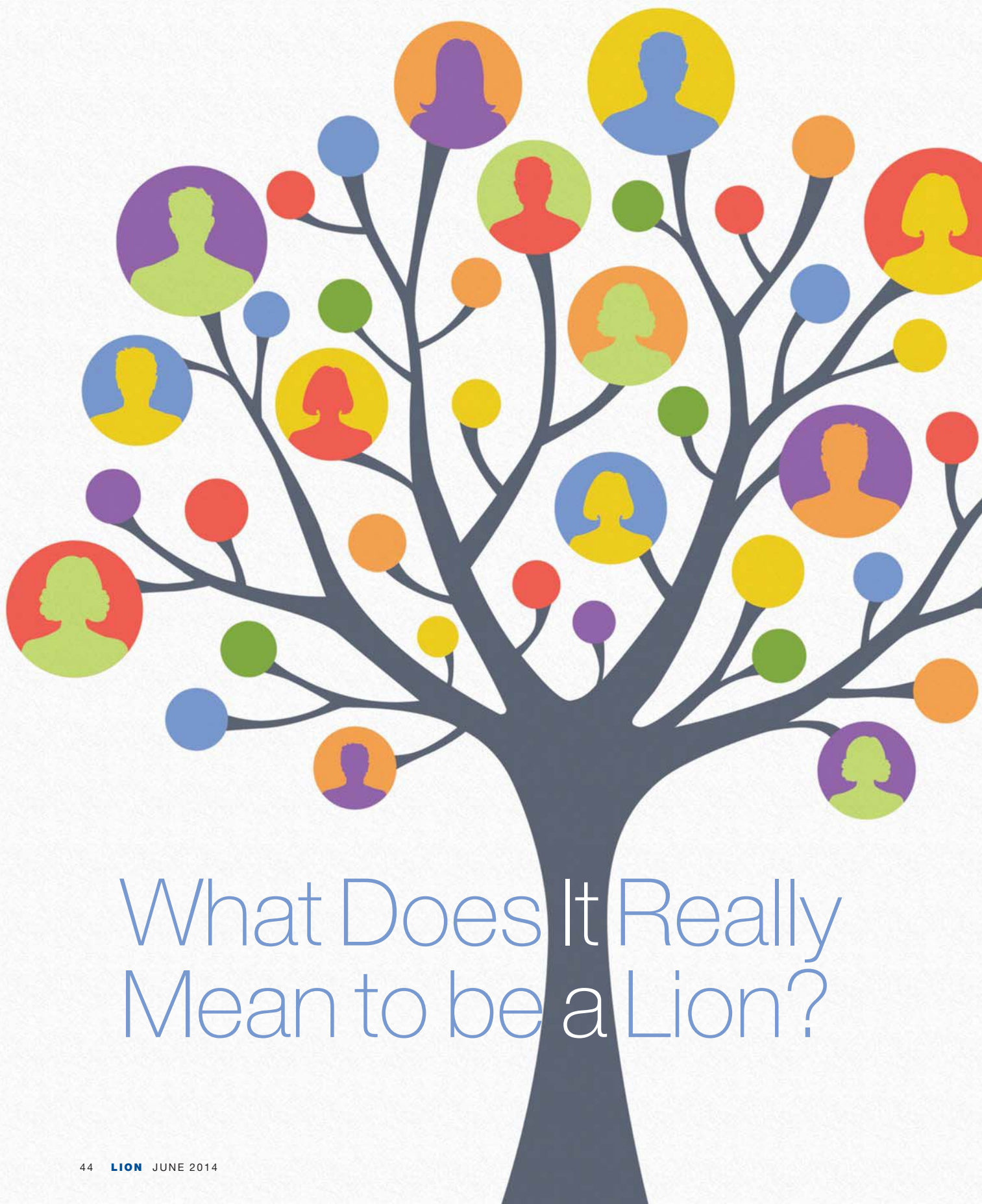


Nigeria



Mexico





# What Does It Really Mean to be a Lion?





Dear Lions,

I've been your managing editor for 13 years. I edit this magazine, but I have penned an article on only one other occasion. Please indulge me.

I read a story today. A woman at a grocery store with her three young children made her way to the cashier with a few, yet necessary, grocery items. She had some cheese, a package of noodles, bread, milk and a couple other things I frankly don't recall. Enough, though, to make a meager dinner that night for her family. Enough so her children would not go to bed hungry.

When the cashier rang everything up the total came to just over \$17. Not much for most of us, but too much for her. She was using her EBT card—today's version of what used to be called food stamps. In other words, welfare. But her card had no balance. The cashier explained the problem, and the woman was panicked. She rummaged through her purse hoping to find enough money to pay for at least one or two of the items, but discovered that like her EBT card, her purse was equally void of money. The embarrassment coupled with the thought of not being able to feed her children that night was too much. She was overcome with emotion.

Just then, a woman behind her—a perfect stranger—presented a \$20 bill to the cashier. With no promise of being paid back, this Good Samaritan, unselfishly and with nothing more than human compassion, paid for the groceries. It's a notion called "pay it forward."

I learned a few things from that article. I've often been behind someone at the grocery store in a similar situation. I probably shook my head in disapproval or narrow-mindedly thought to myself it was his or her fault for not planning properly. Worse, I might have thought "why don't they go out and get a job so they can take care of their family." Or, "if they can't afford to take care of their children, why did they HAVE children," never once, of course, offering to help. Never once mustering enough compassion to offer any assistance.

There is an old saying—one that I know I'll remember from now on—"walk a mile in someone else's shoes."

As it turns out, the woman in the story had been out of work for some time. So had her husband. They had been trying to find work but to no avail. They once lived comfortably, or at least had been able to provide for their family. But that was then, and this is now. They never thought this would happen to them. They never thought that all that would some day stand between them and putting dinner on the table would be an empty EBT card.

We're Lions. That's right, I'm a Lion too. A proud Lion. I participate in my club activities when I can. I always donate to club projects, with time, money or both. I claim to be compassionate. But I question my sincerity. I haven't had that "aha" moment as a Lion. You know—that moment when it really sinks in what being a Lion is all about. The moment when a Lion proclaims "I joined Lions in 1997, but I BECAME a Lion when ..." I hope I have that moment. But I know now that moment doesn't have to be connected to any club service project. I learned today that I'm not just a Lion when doing something with my club. I'm a Lion 24 hours a day—every day. We Serve. I Serve. Come to think of it, maybe this *is* my aha moment!

I pledge from this day forward to be a better person and to put others before myself. I won't always be able to offer to pay for someone's groceries, but I'll always be able to show kindness toward others, however small that act may be. That's really what being a Lion is all about. The single most important attribute in being a Lion or becoming a Lion is a willingness to serve others—through big or small acts of kindness.

And oh how we have served! Lions have been paying it forward since 1917. Changing lives, and, yes, making dreams come true. And now, beginning in 2014, I too will pay it forward and fulfill the oath I took when I joined the Chicago Windy City Lions Club.

Pay it forward. Just three small words, yet beautiful in their simplicity and profoundly life-changing.

Sincerely,  
Dane LaJoye, Managing Editor

# A Day of Soccer, Football and Inclusion

The CIVO Stadium in Lilongwe, Malawi, roared with excitement as the crowd waited for the kickoff of the African Leaders Forum on Disability. On tap were not only a football (soccer) match and music but also a high-level policy summit and health education talks.

The purpose of three-day forum in February, the first of its kind, was to support people with intellectual disabilities. The expanded “Mission: Inclusion” partnership between Special Olympics and Lions Clubs International (LCI) also was involved.

Since 2001, Special Olympics and LCI have screened the vision of more than 350,000 Special Olympics athletes and provided more than 110,000 athletes with prescription eyeglasses. “Mission: Inclusion” goes beyond vision screenings to create programs to support the acceptance and inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in their communities. This includes the integration of Leos into an inclusive sports model called Unified Sports®.

The African Leaders Forum on Disability was a historic event that drew attention to the plight of individuals with disabilities, namely intellectual and developmental disabilities. Her Excellency President Dr. Joyce Banda, a Lion, and the Republic of Malawi hosted the event.

Senior African government officials from 12 nations and representatives of top health and disability organizations attended the forum. As a global partner of Special Olympics, LCI served as a core convening partner with top Lions leaders attending.

“Lions Clubs International is very happy to be partnering with Special Olympics Malawi. It’s a win-win situation. It fits in with our global support of Special Olympics’ Opening Eyes initiative, and the partnership here in Malawi in particular is helping us expand the Lions clubs here,” says LCIF Chairperson Wayne Madden.

During the forum, Banda announced the formation of the African Leadership Alliance on Intellectual Disabilities, an organization dedicated to improving the lives of those with intellectual disabilities. In areas of limited resources, partnerships like “Mission: Inclusion” are integral in breaking



Photo by Fernando Cambeiro

**A boy with special needs takes part in the African Leaders Forum on Disability in Malawi.**

down barriers that make individuals with intellectual disabilities some of the most marginalized and discriminated-against community members.

“Before we can tackle the environmental barriers that block our children from school, before we can address the lack of training of doctors that block our children from hospitals, before we can strengthen the social policies that streamline family services, this stigma must become yesterday’s news,” says Banda.

In the spirit of international teamwork, Leos from Malawi and District 412 energetically suited up alongside Special Olympics athletes from Malawi, the Malawian Football Federation, government officials from Malawi and South Africa football greats such as Mark Fish, Phil Masinga and Desiree Ellis. It was the first time in Africa where Leos and Special Olympic athletes have participated side-by-side in inclusive sports.

In addition, an LCIF-sponsored Family Health Forum brought together more than 100 families of children with intellectual disabilities, nonprofit organizations and others to work with the local community on strategies to integrate this marginalized population into health, education and social initiatives across the country.

Special Olympics and LCI are working to bring the impact of “Mission: Inclusion” to the lives of children and adults with intellectual disabilities globally. The organizations speak with a united voice to an undeniable mission: SERVICE to those who need Lions most.



**Lions Clubs International  
FOUNDATION**



# Wisconsin Lions Bring Sight to Dominicans

by Eric Margules

When the Lions from Kenosha, Wisconsin, landed in the Dominican Republic, it was 100 degrees warmer than when they first boarded the icy plane in Chicago that morning. But Lions set their sights on something more important than a little time in the sun.

With support from the Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) and churches in the United States and the Dominican Republic, Lions from both countries came together to host a free vision clinic offering eye exams, prescription glasses, medication and eye surgeries for the residents of the small town of Sabana Yegua.

This was the second time the Kenosha Lions travelled to the Dominican Republic with the help of an International Assistance Grant from LCIF. This year, a \$30,000 grant, combined with funds raised by Lions and the St. Mary's and St. Anne's parishes in Wisconsin, made it possible for the group of nearly 30 Lions and community members from both countries to host the clinic.

Many people around the world including Sabana Yeguans are practically blind when it comes to reading. Says Dr. Peter Emer, a Lion and optometrist who helped organize the mission, "They don't even have access to a basic pair of reading glasses. Without reading glasses, you can be blind-handicapped—for any type of close visual task."

After just four days in the Dominican Republic Emer and his colleagues examined 1,200 people, handed out 900 prescription eye glasses and made an additional 200 orders for specialized prescriptions.

Lion surgeon Dr. Stephen Slana and two ophthalmological assistants were on hand to correct dangerous vision problems identified during the exams. In total, they performed 118 successful surgeries, correcting everything from cataracts and pterygium to problems with eye muscles.

This year marked the first time the Lions set up satellite clinics throughout the Dominican Republic to treat residents unable to make the trip to Sabana Yegua. These clinics included a trip to a nearby Haitian neighborhood, where Lions



Lion Peter Emer of Kenosha, Wisconsin, examines the eyes of a resident of Sabana Yegua in the Dominican Republic.

performed eye exams in an old church, and a trip to a local prison, where prisoners and guards alike were provided with sunglasses, eye drops and baseball caps to protect them from the sun.

The international cooperation between the Lions from Wisconsin and the Dominican Lions made the trip successful. From transporting patients to gathering patient information and arranging follow-up care, Dominican Lions were instrumental to the clinic.

Even after the success of this trip, the Lions are still looking for ways to improve on future missions. For their next trip, Lions are researching new clinic locations and looking for ways to further improve patient access to post-surgery follow-up care.

One thing is clear: the international partnership forged between Lions is a bond of commitment and service that transcends languages and borders. Just ask the thousands of Dominicans whose futures look brighter now than ever before.

# A Lions' Fountain of Youth

## Interclub Contest Brings Fun, Rejuvenation and Inspiration

Lions in Wisconsin have someone to thank for helping them break out of their club comfort zones, gain fresh ideas and find renewed vitality. He's been spotted crowd-surfing at concerts, providing companionship at chili dinners and even hanging out at LCI headquarters. Who is this Lions' cheerleader and ambassador, taking District 27 D1 by storm? He's known as Louie—Flat Louie, that is—but he's really more of a “what” than a “who.”

The Flat Louie project is based on a literacy activity called “Flat Stanley” that teachers have used as a learning tool for years. Students mail paper images of the children's book character Flat Stanley, along with stories they write about his adventures, to pen pals around the world. Children connect with each other and learn about the world while engaging in this fun activity.

When the District 27 D1 Global Membership and Leadership Teams were looking for a way to build club camaraderie and help Lions branch out beyond their own clubs, this seemed like an idea they could work with.

“We basically took the Flat Stanley idea and created the Flat Louie contest to help encourage Lions to get to know and help support other clubs, have some fun and bring new ideas and energy back to their clubs,” says Jodi Burmester, District 27 D1 GMT coordinator.

The contest is simple: each club receives its own personalized Flat Louie to take along to other clubs' events and projects over a designated time period. Lions track their visits on log sheets and take photos documenting Flat Louie's adventures. The clubs with the most events attended and most Flat Louie adventures shared by email or social media receive prizes during a ceremony at the district convention.

“Flat Louie is promoted at cabinet and zone meetings, via emails to club officers and on the district Facebook page,” explains Burmester. The Token Creek Lions embraced the contest, winning the award for most adventures shared online.

“We had fun bringing Louie with us and trying to get funny pictures of him. He danced at a blues fest and studied to be a good Lion at a training. Participating in this contest made you feel like a kid again,” says Token Creek Lion Tara Vraniak, who will turn 50 in August.



Token Creek Lion Mike Vraniak (right) and Sun Prairie Lion Bill Teft get in the spirit of the Flat Louie contest at the Sun Prairie Lions Bluesfest.

The Cuba City Lions also made the most of the contest, with Past District Governor Jerry Sherwin leading the club to win most events attended. “There is a whole Lionistic world out there that most Lions never see or experience. Flat Louie helped us expand our horizons and realize that being a Lion is more than just what we do within our individual clubs,” says Sherwin.

Contest organizers are hoping that as the program continues, more clubs will catch on and take part. “The biggest challenge has been getting all the clubs to recognize the contest's value. The determining factor for participation seems to be whether clubs have a member who takes ownership of promotion and tracking,” says Burmester. “We'll continue to get the word out, answer questions and help Lions use tools like Facebook to strengthen the program. We Lions need a chance to come together more, open our eyes to new ways of doing things, and, most importantly, celebrate the service of all Lions.”

*—Jennifer Gilbert Gebhardt*

Find a flyer with Flat Louie contest rules, a sample log sheet and contact information for questions.

Also, find some creative ideas from the past that Lions undertook to energize members:

- Colorado club uses a live duck to stimulate attendance (January 1950 LION).
- Chicago club invokes the past to build camaraderie (July 1950).



# Challengers Play On

Paul Lawless of Rockville Centre, New York, says there's no finer feeling than watching his 17-year-old son Connor play baseball. "He gets so excited when he puts that uniform on," Lawless explains. Connor is autistic and non-verbal, but he's like any typical teenager trying to wallop the ball when he's at bat. He's part of the Challenger League for special needs players that Rockville Centre Lions help support. "Lions and the whole community are really behind these kids," Lawless says.

When Lions learned two years ago that the local Little League Challenger Division was in danger of ending because of funding problems, they stepped up to the plate. Their support is giving a fun-filled playing experience to ballplayers who have cerebral palsy, autism or other conditions that preclude them playing on another team.

"Teams are set up according to abilities rather than age, and can include as many as 15 to 20 players," explains Lion Ed Asip. "Each player is assigned a middle or high school buddy to help them at bat and maneuver in the field. These kids get the whole game experience of having their names announced over the public address system when they come to bat or make a play in the field. It's fun for them and their parents."

Lions sponsor a team of 18 players and gave a \$5,000 donation to the Challengers last year. "They have happily informed us that the donation will keep the league afloat for the next three years," says Lion Patti McNally.

Lawless says that one of the best things about Connor playing in the league is the opportunity to socialize. "We knew when he was 5 or 6 that he was different, but the Challenger League lets him have fun. The buddies

who help out the players during the game are like friends. He doesn't have the opportunity to hang out with friends like his sister, who goes to movies and does other typical things with her group of friends. Parents get to socialize, too, with other parents who have the same experiences with their special needs kids."

Families aren't the only ones moved by watching the Challengers play. Asip says Lions voted to fund the league after watching a game. The donation

came from the proceeds of the club's annual Dinner in the Dark, which serves a dual purpose. Not only does it raise awareness by blindfolding guests during dinner to simulate the challenges the blind face daily, but it also raises money for service activities. In addition to the Challengers, the club gave another contribution to the Long Island Bombers, a Beep baseball team for blind adults.

*-Pamela Mohr*



Players triumphantly hoist their trophies in celebration with their families and Rockville Centre Lions, who gave the division an oversize \$5,000 check.

# Candidates for Second Vice President

As of press time, there were eight candidates for second international vice president. The election is scheduled for July 8 at the 97th International Convention in Toronto. The winner will serve as international president in 2016-17.



## **Naresh Aggarwal**

Naresh Aggarwal of Delhi, India, an international director from 1998 to 2000, is a businessman and chairman of the Railway Equipment Division of the Confederation of Indian Industry. A member of the Batala Smile Lions Club, he has been a board appointee and group leader three times. The recipient of the Ambassador of Goodwill Award and 20 Presidential medals, Aggarwal is a major lead gift donor and Humanitarian Partner of LCIF.



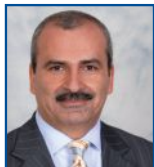
## **M. P. "Mike" Butler**

M. P. "Mike" Butler, a member of the Kerrville Host Lions Club in Texas, served on the international board of directors from 1984 to 1986 and as a board appointee from 2006 to 2007. He became a Lion in 1974 and has held many offices within the association. Butler is a Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow, area leadership and membership coordinator and served as the first global GMT chairperson.



## **Robert E. Corlew**

Robert E. Corlew of Milton, Tennessee, is a state chancellor [judge] and served on the international board of directors from 2011 to 2013. He has been a member of the Murfreesboro Lions Club since 1978 and is a Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow. In addition to his Lions responsibilities, Corlew is active in many civic and community organizations including the Murfreesboro City Council and Boy Scouts.



## **Salim Moussan**

Salim Moussan of Beirut, Lebanon, is a member of the Beirut St. Gabriel Lions Club and was an international director from 1997 to 1999. Twice a board appointee and group leader, he is the founder of the Lions Eye Center in Lebanon and a Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow. Moussan, the owner of a trading company, has chaired several forums and regional conferences and attended 25 international conventions.



## **Phil Nathan**

Past International Director Phil Nathan of Earls Colne, England, has been a Lion since 1982 and is a charter member of the South Woodham Ferrers Lions Club. He served on the international board of directors from 1999 to 2001. A stockbroker and director of a company, Nathan was president of the 2006 Europa Forum and is president of the 2014 Europa Forum. He has been recognized by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II with an MBE, Member of the British Empire, for his service achievements.



## **Steven D. Sherer**

Past International Director Steven D. Sherer of New Philadelphia, Ohio, has been a member of the Dover Lions Club since 1980. A licensed public accountant and the finance officer/CFO of New Philadelphia Public Schools, he is a Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow and has received numerous Lions and professional accolades. Sherer served as an international director from 2006 to 2008, and was a GMT area coordinator for four years.



## **Eugene M. Spiess**

Past International Director Eugene M. Spiess, Ed.D., of Moore, South Carolina, is a retired college administrator and instructor. A member of the Spartanburg Lions Club since 1981, he was elected to a two-year term on the international board of directors in 2010 at the association's 93rd international convention. The recipient of numerous Lions awards and professional honors, Spiess is also a Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow.



## **Rosane T. Jahnke Vailatti**

Rosane T. Jahnke Vailatti served on the international board of directors from 2008 to 2010. A member of the Jaraguá do Sol Lions Club in Brazil, she was a teacher and is a lawyer and hotel owner. Active in many community and professional groups, Vailatti is a Melvin Jones Fellow, a recipient of the Helen Keller Knight of Sight award and assists children with special needs.





## Official Notice

### 2014 International Convention, Toronto, Canada

The following proposed amendments to the International By-Laws will be reported to the delegates for vote at the 2014 International Convention. These amendments require a majority affirmative vote for adoption.

**ITEM 1: A RESOLUTION TO PROVIDE THE COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS WITH AUTHORITY TO REMOVE A COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON**

SHALL THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION BE ADOPTED?

BE IT RESOLVED, That Article VIII of the International By-Laws be amended by inserting the following new paragraph as Section 6 and re-numbering the remaining sections accordingly:

Section 6. **REMOVAL.** At the request of the majority of the council of governors, a special meeting of the council may be called for the purpose of removal of the council chairperson. Regardless of the manner in which the council chairperson is selected or elected, the council chairperson may be removed from the council for cause by an affirmative vote of 2/3 of the entire number of the council of governors.

**ITEM 2: A RESOLUTION TO ALLOW A CURRENT DISTRICT GOVERNOR OR PAST DISTRICT GOVERNOR TO SERVE AS COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON**

SHALL THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION BE ADOPTED?

BE IT RESOLVED, That Article VIII, Section 4 of the International By-Laws be amended by inserting the phrase "current or" before the phrase "past district governor" in line 5 and line 22 of the section.

**ITEM 3: A RESOLUTION TO REVISE THE DUTIES OF THE COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON**

SHALL THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION BE ADOPTED?

BE IT RESOLVED, That Article X, Section 1 of the International By-Laws be amended by deleting the existing language in its entirety and substituting the language as set forth below:

Section 1. **MULTIPLE DISTRICT COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON.** The multiple district council chairperson shall be the administrative facilitator of the multiple district. All actions are subject to the authority, direction and supervision of the multiple district council of governors.

In cooperation with the council of governors, the council chairperson shall:

- Further the Purposes of this association;
- Assist in communicating information regarding international and multiple district policies, programs and events;
- Document and make available the goals and long range plans for the multiple district as established by the council of governors;
- Convene meetings and facilitate discussion during council meetings;
- Facilitate the operations of the multiple district convention;
- Support efforts initiated by the International Board of Directors or the council of governors that are intended to create and foster harmony and unity among district governors;
- Submit reports and perform such duties as may be required by the multiple district constitution and by-laws;
- Perform such other administrative duties as may be assigned by the multiple district council of governors; and
- Facilitate, at the close of his/her term of office, the timely presentation of all multiple district accounts, funds, and records to his/her successor in office.

## CLUB BRIEFINGS

ACTIVITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A new directory of **Lions RV Parks and Campgrounds in Alberta, Canada**, is now available. Email [info@devonlionscampground.com](mailto:info@devonlionscampground.com) to request a copy.

In **Virginia**, the **Manassas Lioness Lions** volunteered twice a week for six weeks to tutor elementary school students in reading and math. The Lions also held a book drive, collecting and distributing 4,000 books to 16 schools.

The **Las Vegas Summerlin Lions** in **Nevada** drove rescue trucks and staff registration tables at the American Diabetes Association Las Vegas Tour de Cure cycling fundraising event.

Lions in **District 14 D** in **Pennsylvania** collected and delivered 4.5 tons of nonperishable food for victims of Superstorm Sandy.

## CALENDAR

2014 UPCOMING EVENTS

### JUNE

**June 1:**  
Helen Keller Day

**June 5:**  
World Environment Day

**June 15:**  
Deadline for submission of pre-certified delegate forms for voting at International Convention

**June 20:**  
Deadline for 2013-2014 Charter Applications

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

**June 29-July 3:**  
International Board of Directors Meeting  
(Toronto, Canada)

**June 30:**  
Close of Period 4 for the Dream Achiever Awards

# INFORMATION

## ANNIVERSARIES JUNE 2014

**95 Years:** Berkeley, Calif.; Hugo, Okla.

**90 Years:** Bristol Host, Va.; Chambersburg, Pa.; Fulton, Ky.; Garner, Iowa; Guthrie Center, Iowa; La Porte City, Iowa; Lebanon, Ore.; Rocky Mount, Va.; Steubenville, Ohio

**85 Years:** Brillion, Wis.; Buffalo Riverside, N.Y.; Burlingame, Calif.; Camden, Maine; Edmonton Host, AB, CAN; Kingsville, Texas; Manawa, Wis.; Redwood Falls, Minn.; Santa Cruz Host, Calif.; Talihina, Okla.; Whiting, Ind.

**80 Years:** Gainesville, Ga.; Iraan, Texas; Kona, Hawaii; Parkesburg, Pa.; Tilbury, ON, CAN

**75 Years:** Bradford, Ohio; Canal Winchester, Ohio; Franklin, N.C.; Hamilton, Ind.; Jasper, Ga.; Kutztown, Pa.; Leonia, N.J.; Meridian, Calif.; Oradell, N.J.; Rowland, N.C.; Sumiton Dora East Walker, Ala.; Three Oaks, Mich.; Tionesta, Pa.; Titusville, Pa.; Union City, Pa.; Winfield, Ala.; Wood Ridge, N.J.; Wrightstown, Wis.

**50 Years:** Alexandria MacArthur Drive, La.; Barre, Mass.; Big Horn, Wy.; Bolton, Mass.; Burgaw, N.C.; Cheyenne Frontier, Wy.; Coal Valley, Ill.; Cupar District, SK, CAN; Grand Forks South Forks, N.D.; Langlois, Ore.; Mackinaw, Ill.; Monterey Old Capitol, Calif.; Napoleon, Ohio; North Platte Cody, Neb.; Remington, Va.; Robinson, Texas; San Diego Rancho Bernardo, Calif.; Stittsville District, ON, CAN

**25 Years:** Ferris, Texas; Harrodsburg, Ind.; Palmyra, Ind.; Port Allegany, Pa.; Round Rock Noon, Texas; St. Laurent, QC, CAN; Tunkhannock, Pa.

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 FEBRUARY 2014

### Key Of State (75 Members)

- Lion Andrei Kozma, Bucharest Tarabostes, Romania

### Grand Master Key (50 Members)

- Lion Bonnie Stoddard, Dubois, Idaho
- Lion Deepak Bhattacharjee, Secunderabad Vivekanandapuram, India
- Lion K. Vijay Anand, Hyderabad Greater Anand, India
- Lion Vikram Sharma, New Delhi Gitanjali, India
- Lion Santosh Ramanna Shetty, Bombay Seven Bungalows, India
- Lion M.K.G. Anandakumar, Pollachi Liberty, India
- Lion V. R. Kanna Kumar, Pannimadai, India
- Lion M. Muthusamy, Coimbatore Galaxy, India
- Lion P. Prabhu, Pollachi Liberty, India
- Lion P. Sasikumar, Coimbatore Tex City, India

### Senior Master Key (25 Members)

- Lion Randy Renshaw, Kilgore, Texas
- Lion James Cherubini, South Greensburg, Pennsylvania
- Lion Walter Schwenger, Exeter Township, Pennsylvania
- Lion William Falco, Tuckahoe Eastchester, New York
- Lion Guy Lebel, Coaticook, Quebec, Canada
- Lion Katukoori Satyanarayana, Bellampalli, India

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New Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Change \_\_\_\_\_

Club \_\_\_\_\_



## INFORMATION

- Lion Amarnath Rao, Sid-dipet, India
- Lion Thatikonda Satya-narayana, Nizamabad Shri Kalyani, India
- Lion Ganesh Dass Nagpal, Ambala Vision, India
- Lion Harsh Bansal, Delhi Deepali, India
- Lion Vikram Sharma, New Delhi Gitanjali, India
- Lion Rakesh Agarwal, Lucknow Rajdhani Anind, India
- Lion Navneet Agarwal, Hapur Central, India
- Lion Suresh Gupta, Mandi Gobindgarh, India
- Lion Vinod Sharma, Ludhiana Milan, India
- Lion Sudhir Ghosh, Bidhan-nagar, India
- Lion Kishore Godse, Pune South East, India
- Lion Richa Wadhvani, Indore Ahilya, India
- Lion K. Rao, Madras Swagatham, India
- Lion S. Rasikumar, Padalur Heaven, India
- Lion M. K. G. Anandakumar, Pollachi Liberty, India
- Lion V. R. Kanna Kumar, Pannimadai, India
- Lion R. Nandabalan, Coimbatore Mid Town, India
- Lion P. Prabhu, Pollachi Liberty, India
- Lion M. Rajagopal, Udu-malpet, India
- Lion A. P. Rajashekar, Erode Mid Town, India
- Lion Emam El Refaie, Guiza Cosmopolitan, Arab Rep. of Egypt

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

## WHERE DO LIONS READ THE LION?

Yes, that's a real lion taking a gander at the LION (clockwise from top left). Bonny Briggs of the Independence Host Lions Club in Missouri asked a keeper at the National Tiger Sanctuary in Chestnutbridge, Missouri, to let a lion chew on some Lion information. Sajee Singh, president of the Bhopal Fiza Lions Club in India, reads the LION at her home. Why bring a cheesy novel to the beach when you can read the LION!

Christopher and Past President Kristen Molinaro Bodnar of the Hazleton Lions Club in Pennsylvania honeymooned in Maui, Hawaii, and didn't forget to pack the LION. Rina Shnabel, past president of the Petach-Tikva Avuka Lions Club in Israel, catches up on Lions news in Eilat, Israel, located on the Red Sea. Judy Decker of the Carbondale Lions Club in Illinois has been house caring around the world with her husband, Tom. Here she overlooks Akaroa Harbour in New Zealand. Their next stop was Australia.



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

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# INFORMATION

## IN MEMORIAM

**Luis Guerrero Carrasco**, elected to serve on the international board of directors from 2005 to 2007, has died. He was a recipient of the National Congress of Ecuador Medal and a Melvin Jones Fellow. A Lion for 42 years, he was a member of the Guayaquil Albonoreste Lions Club.

**Fernando Vildosola Teran**, who served on the international board of directors from 1986 to 1988, has died. A member of the Agua Prieta Lions Club in Sonora, Mexico, he also served his community as a counselor for the Red Cross and as a member of the Agua Prieta Chamber of Commerce.

**Georgios J. Nicolaidis**, who served on the international board of directors from 2006 to 2008, has died. A Lions since 1963, he was a member of the Nicosia Lions Club, served as editor of LION Magazine in Greek and wrote a book about Lions.

**Rafael Guerra**, a 47-year member of the Maracay Lions Club of Venezuela, has died. He was elected to serve on the international board of directors from 1995 to 1997. He was active in numerous civic organizations and served as a speaker at many Latin America and Caribbean forums.

## FORTH THE RECORD

As of March 31, Lions Clubs International had 1,380,751 members in 46,430 clubs and 757 districts in 208 countries and geographic areas. Also as of that date, there were 361,169 Melvin Jones Fellow and 68,518 Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow recipients.



# THANK YOU

THE LIONS CHANGED MY LIFE

## A Happy Boy Emerges

Jurmel Mitchell is an inquisitive 4-year-old who loves to ride his bike, play at the park and learn all about the world around him. But not too long ago, Jurmel—known as MJ—was often uncommunicative and prone to temper tantrums. When MJ was 1 ½ years old, his mother, Toni Cannon-Mitchell, discovered the underlying reason for this: he was deaf. Cannon-Mitchell's experience of locating services to help MJ was like "finding a needle in a haystack"—until she found the Lions Hearing Center of Michigan (LHC), which is supported by District 11A 1 and 11A 2 Lions. As participants in the LHC's Deaf Children and Families Program, the Cannon-Mitchells have received a host of services including parent trainings, American Sign Language (ASL) tutoring and family retreats. MJ is now happily communicating, learning and growing, and making his mom a lot happier too.

MJ Mitchell frolics at a playground. MJ is a happier child with a brighter future thanks to the Lions Hearing Center of Michigan.

## Q&A: Toni Cannon-Mitchell

**LION Magazine:** How did you feel when you discovered MJ was deaf?

**Toni Cannon-Mitchell:** I grieved for all the time that had passed without MJ receiving the treatment and educational assistance he needed. I was angry with myself for not knowing this for so long. And I had no clue how to raise a deaf child.

**LM:** You had a hard time finding resources to help MJ?

**TCM:** Yes, especially services like ASL classes and parent support groups. Fortunately, soon after I found the Lions Hearing Center of Michigan we took part in the six-week workshop for children and families.

**LM:** How was that experience?

**TCM:** I was so relieved to be connected with other parents going through the same journey, and MJ was able to meet other hearing-impaired children. I received guidance on how to get MJ the education he needs. I learned how to be an advocate for my son and how to teach him to be an advocate for himself.

**LM:** It sounds like that was a big turning point.

**TCM:** Since then, the LHC has continued to have such a major impact on our lives and connected us with resources that will last a lifetime. If it wasn't for the free services the center has provided, MJ would not have made as much progress as he has and he might not have the bright future he has now.

**LM:** How is MJ doing now?

**TCM:** He's a happy boy who is active, independent and smart. He was officially enrolled in a classroom for hearing-impaired students in January. He can communicate his numbers, colors, the alphabet and most animals. His face lights up when he signs or speaks and you understand what he's saying. That feeling, for me, is priceless.

To learn more about the Lions Hearing Center of Michigan, visit [www.lhcmi.org](http://www.lhcmi.org).



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

# LAST ROAR



Photo courtesy of Mary Schwalm/The Eagle-Tribune, North Andover, Mass.

## CREATURE COMFORT

Brady Moran, 9, shows his affection for Rocky, his service dog, at his home in Salem, New Hampshire. Rocky was a gift of the Salem Lions Club. Brady is autistic and legally blind. Rocky, 2, is a "calm, comforting friend" to Brady, who wants to be a meteorologist or banker, according to the Eagle-Tribune.



# What if Lions could...



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...**bring** parents and communities  
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...**help** children develop the skills  
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## Tri-Level Comfort® INSOLES

EVA contributes  
to energy return

Fabric aids in  
moisture control

Latex padding  
helps with  
shock reduction

Perfs at the  
forepart promote  
better air circulation

EVA inserts  
in heel and forepart  
for added shock  
absorption

Heel cup  
enhances foot  
positioning

TPR outsole  
for lightweight,  
flexible comfort

**Order Now!**

**LAST CHANCE** at this **LOW PRICE**  
and **FREE SHIPPING** to boot!

*Haband!*

**D & EEE  
Widths!**

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Pewter  
Grey

Tan



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**29<sup>99</sup>\*** per pair

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<b>76E-42J99</b>			
<b>D6 COPPER BROWN</b>			
<b>01 BLACK</b>			
<b>6B PEWTER GREY</b>			
<b>02 TAN</b>			

**Men's D Widths:**  
7 7½ 8 8½ 9 9½ 10 10½ 11 12 13

**Men's \*EEE Widths**  
(\$4 more per pair):  
8 8½ 9 9½ 10 10½ 11 12 13

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