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Athletes from Samoa take part in ceremonies at the recent 2015 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Los Angeles.

Photo by Cory Hansen

November 2015

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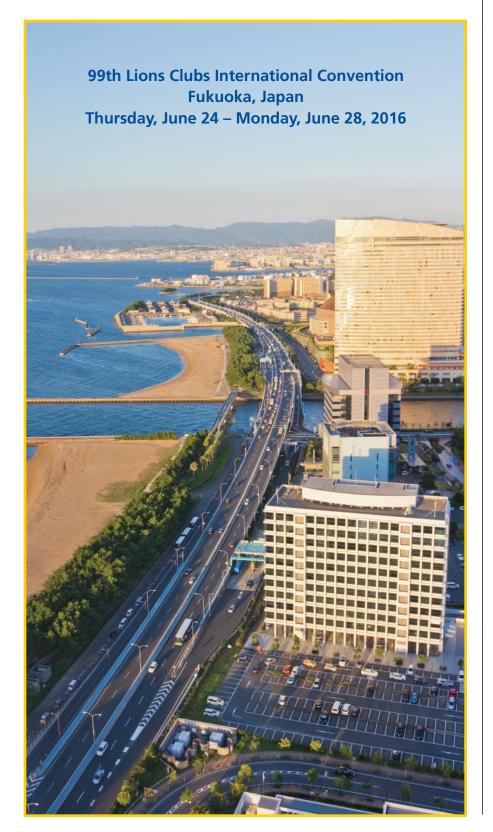
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Helping Children Is Our Most Urgent Task

Courage, strength and wisdom can come from the most unlikely sources. Malala Yousafzai stands five feet tall—tall enough to stand up to the Taliban. As a young girl in Pakistan, she demanded that girls receive an education. A Taliban gunman shot her in the head in 2012, but she survived and received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 for continuing to advocate for girls' education.

In accepting the Nobel, she knew she stood for so many others. "I am also Shazia. I am Kainat [two girls who also were shot]," she said in her powerful speech. "I am Mezon [a Syrian refugee]. I am Amina [threatened by Boko Haram in Nigeria]. I am those 66 million girls who are deprived of education. And today I am not raising my voice. It is the voice of those 66 million girls."

My presidential theme revolves around "dignity, harmony and humanity." I believe that our essential mission as Lions is to perform service that enables people to live with dignity. We especially need to aid children, our future. We need to help children who are fighting disease, children who are in refugee camps, children who are suffering from hunger. We need to help children escape the vicious cycle of poverty. We need to provide children with education and literacy through the Reading Action Program. We need to do so much more.

Now is the time for each Lion to take action to serve children in need around the world. Our future depends on it. Malala's passionate call to action to help youths must ring true to Lions today in the same way as Helen Keller's plea to help the blind resonated with Lions 90 years ago. As Malala said, "We have already taken many steps. Now is the time to take a leap. ... We must work, not wait. Not just the politicians and world leaders, we all need to contribute. Me. You. We. It is our duty."





Dr. Jitsuhiro Yamada Lions Clubs International President



Einar Lyngar of Norway aids a child at a camp for Syrian war refugees in Lebanon. Lions of Lebanon and Norway have brought clothes and other goods to the camps in Lebanon near the Syrian border that hold 120,000 refugees.



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Paul Fredrick

The Big Picture



Medals, Memories and Eyeglasses

Photos courtesy of Special Olympics



Athletes from around the world paddled kayaks, spiked volleyballs and hit home runs at the 2015 Special Olympics World Games in Los Angeles this summer. Many returned home with more than medals and memories. They could see clearly for the first time in years after a screening and free eyeglasses. Or they could finally hear for the very first time after an exam and free hearing device. The Healthy Athletes \blacktriangleright

The Big Picture







program of Special Olympics screened nearly 80 percent of the 6,500 athletes. Lions helped staff the vision and hearing clinics at the University of Southern California. Many people with intellectual disabilities receive poor health care or no care, and Lions have partnered with Special Olympics for 15 years through the Opening Eyes program. The screenings at the Games led to magical moments that

Read about how Lions in California also helped with the lodging and transportation of Special Olympics athletes at the Games as well as organizing activities for them (June 2015 LION).



dwarfed in significance what happened in the pool or on the track. Six players on the Nigerian basketball team had never heard discernible sound, according to ESPN. They received hearing aids. When a 19-year-old center turned on her hearing aid for the first time, she smiled, laughed and then signed, "I hear sounds."

First Roar

LIONS URGED TO HELP REFUGEES

International President Dr. Jitsuhiro Yamada of Japan has urged Lions to assist the hundreds of thousands of migrants and refugees fleeing war-torn Syria and Iraq. "I challenge Lions in all countries that have taken in refugees to contact your local and federal government to offer your assistance. Your government can tell you where the need is and how best to help," he blogged in September on the website of Lions Clubs International. "I also challenge Lions in other nations to contact Lions in the countries hosting refugees. There may be



opportunities to provide support." Lions Clubs International Foundation has awarded grants for Lions-led relief efforts in refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon. "Please consider making a donation today so that LCIF and Lions can continue providing humanitarian aid and promoting harmony around the world," Yamada added.

Headed to Austria, a weary group of refugees walks on a highway in September in Budapest, the Hungarian capital. Refugees arrived in Europe following exhausting journeys from Syria and other troubled countries. Kyodo via AP Images

Read inspiring stories about how Lions ease suffering of war refugees.

June 2015 LION

Sept. 2014 LION.

ARTIFICIAL CORNEA BACKED BY LIONS

The Indiana Lions Eye Bank is supporting the development of a bioengineered cornea. The bioengineered cornea, whose cost is estimated to be less than one-third of a human donor cornea, will reduce the critical shortage of donor corneas in most nations. The eye bank invested \$500,000 toward the development of the bioengineered cornea by LinCor Biosciences in Singapore. Expected to be available soon, the artificial cornea was developed over the last dozen years at the University of Ottawa in Canada and Linköping University in Sweden. Patients in Sweden in clinical trials who received the artificial cornea showed marked improvements in their vision. Only about 150,000 corneal transplants are done annually even though the number of people estimated to be blind from corneal disease or injury exceeds 10 million. U.S. eye banks shared 29,000 corneas with other nations in 2014.

KELLER ARCHIVES TO BE DIGITIZED

Helen Keller's most prized possessions—letters from Mark Twain and Franklin D. Roosevelt, photographs with John F. Kennedy and Charlie Chaplin, her honorary Oscar and Presidential Medal of Freedom—will be available online. The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) received a \$275,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to digitize its Keller archives. AFB has more than 80,000 items in its Keller archives. She worked for the New York-based group for more than 40 years. The material will be accessible to those with vision impairments. Keller had a special relationship with Lions: she gave them their original mission by challenging them in 1925 to become "Knights of the Blind."

> Helen Keller has been an inspiration for Lions and a frequent profile subject in the LION.

Watch rare newsreel footage of Keller and Anne Sullivan (May 2013 LION).

Keller talks about her greatest disappointment (May 2013).

Discover sites and landmarks related to Keller (May 2013).

Keller relative follows in her footsteps (May 2013).

A graphic novel shows the trials of young Helen and her teacher (October 2013).

Lions keep Keller's memory alive (September 2009).

Do people still know who Keller was (June 2008)?

The story behind Keller's challenge to Lions (January 2007).

By the Numbers

 $\frac{2}{2}$

Perfect games bowled at a fundraiser held by Kimball Lions in Nebraska. 312,905

People who received vision screenings from District 25 F Lions in Indiana since 2004.

763

3,321

Estimated lives saved by the 1,107 units of blood collected by Ubly Lions in Michigan.

Tulip bouquets recently sold by Mount Angel Lions in Oregon to support the club's scholarship program.

500

Packets of pumpkin seeds given to families by Sycamore Lions in Illinois at an Easter egg hunt held by the local police.



Cups of coffee brewed by the new coffee maker given to firefighters by Harker Heights Lions in

Texas, an upgrade from their aging, 10-cup coffee maker.

Students
who
received
winter
coats
earlier
this year from
Park Hills Lions in Missouri.

18, 666 +

Doughnuts sold in one year during the Pekin Marigold Festival by Pekin Lions in Illinois.

First Roar

PUT YOUR TWO CENTS IN FOR THE NEW \$10 BILL

Eleanor Roosevelt is the clear leader followed by Harriet Tubman, Sacagawea (the Native American guide for Lewis and Clark), women's suffrage activist Susan B. Anthony and pilot Amelia Earhart, Helen Keller has received support as well. The U.S. Treasury announced in June a woman will appear on the \$10 bill when it is redesigned for 2020, the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. A McClatchy-Marist poll showed that 29 percent favored the country's longest-serving first lady. The Treasury is soliciting votes of support at https://thenew10.treasury.gov/ share-your-ideas/submit.



Helen Keller, who inspired Lions to become Knights of the Blind, receives the Humanitarian Award from Lions in Washington, D.C., in 1961.



Lions have championed the blind for much of our history. In 1961, TV personality Art Linkletter, national chairman of White Cane Days, and a 9-year-old blind boy from Los Angeles clutch a symbol of Lions' annual White Cane Days.

VIDEO MAGAZINE SHOWCASES SIGHT ROLE

Lions became Knights of the Blind early in our history. Learn how that started and discover how Lions fulfilled that role through the decades in the current edition of LQ, the Lions Quarterly Video Magazine. The video magazine also shows how Lions champion children to become heroes for peace through the Peace Poster Contest, how a Belgium club has served people with intellectual disabilities for more than 50 years and how a Leo club in Illinois organizes an annual senior prom, the "Moonlight Senior Citizen Dance." Be sure to "like" and share LQ on social media. LQ is available on the LCI website, YouTube, iTunes and DVD.

Watch the latest LQ.

AUDIO VERSION OF THE LION AVAILABLE

LION Magazine is now part of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) NEWSLINE, a free touch-tone telephone service that provides audio versions of more than 300 print newspapers and magazines. Dial 1-888-882-1629, or use a local number, which can be located by inputting the caller's area code on the NFB website. Access LION Magazine by pressing "7" off the main menu for "Magazines" and then press "6" for "General Interest." More information is at nfb.org/audio-newspaperservice. An audio version of the LION also is available at lionmagazine.org. A CD of the LION is available as well; visit lionmagazine.org.



Overheard

"I never knew I could have raised that much. This is the best day I have ever had, the very best day."

—a weeping Nicole Wheeler, who raised \$4,520 for the Seymour Noon Lions Club, which gave the money to the Indiana Lions Speech and Hearing Inc. Wheeler, who underwent cochlear implant surgery when she was 2, raised the funds as part of her high school senior project.

"Very seldom do we get anybody to pay it forward like she has today."

—Steve Winegardner, speech and hearing chairman for the Indiana Lions Speech and Hearing Inc. From the Seymour Tribune.

"I came along, and he needed one to two nights a week of peace and quiet."

—Norman Haggard, 55, about his father, Elmo Haggard, and his decision in 1959 to join the Ivanhoe Lions Club in California, to which he still belongs. From the Visalia Times-Delta.

"Lots of duct tape."

—Selena Kesidis, 12, on the secret of her handmade Halloween costume of a character from the movie "Monsters, Inc." Selena competed for a prize in a holiday contest sponsored by the State College Lions Club in Pennsylvania. From the Centre Daily Times.

FEE WAIVER FOR VETERANS

A waiver of the charter or entrance fee for U.S. veterans of all ages has been extended by Lions Clubs International to June 30, 2016. The \$30 charter or \$25 entrance fee is waived for any qualifying veteran who joins a new or existing Lions club. Eligible veterans include retired U.S. military personnel or honorably-discharged



members of the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard Services, Marines, National Guard, Navy or Reserves. For information, email memberprog@lionsclubs.org.

85 Years Ago in the LION



NOVEMBER 1930

Lions of New York give 69 rebuilt typewriters and 100 radios to the blind as well as donate books in Braille to libraries.

Read the complete story.

One of Us

Hanna Elshoff

Chatfield Lions Club, Minnesota

Growing up in a small German village, Hanna Elshoff dreamed of coming to America. Now, the 72-year-old grandmother is living her dream of riding a bike around the United States, including a stop to fulfill yet another dream—meeting a former U.S. president (and Lion) who inspired her to become a citizen.

Was a nanny for 16 years

Owns a farm in Minnesota

Rides the solar- and pedal-hybrid "ELF" bike



Elshoff stops at International Headquarters on her ELF bike.

A Free Spirit

I always felt that I needed more elbow room than my small community in Germany allowed. I arrived here speaking no English at 18. I rode my bike everywhere, and I wanted to ride through the U.S. But I knew I had to be footloose and fancy-free before I could do it.

Living Courageously

I had a stroke six years ago while giving a speech at a Toastmasters competition. I remember thinking I was going to die, and I was at peace with it. Ten days later I walked out of the hospital. I thought, I wasn't kept alive for nothing. I became determined to go on this ride fearlessly.

Pedaling with Gratitude

Along with raising funds for Leader Dogs, meeting Lions and sharing my

passion for Toastmasters, my mission on this ride is to thank veterans. My family found out after World War II that a neighbor was SS and had orders to send us away because we were members of the Free Lutheran Church. If the Americans hadn't come ... they saved our lives.

Journey to Georgia

Years ago, I saw a guy on TV saying he was a farmer and was running for president. My family were farmers and I thought, only in America could a farmer run for president. I became a citizen so I could vote for him. I didn't quite make it, but President Jimmy Carter has always held a special place in my heart. I have my letter welcoming me as a citizen—signed by President Gerald Ford—with me. I'm heading to Plains, Georgia, to try to get Carter to add his signature.

No Regrets

I was told my dream of this ride was quixotic. Thankfully I received the extra push I needed at the international convention in Hamburg, when International President Barry Palmer announced his theme, "Follow Your Dream." I'm riding with a purpose, meeting beautiful people everywhere and touching lives with my story. Every day I say, it can't get any better.

Follow Elshoff's ride, invite her to visit your club and find out if she fulfills her dream of getting Carter's autograph at "Hanna's Dream Ride" on Facebook.

Watch a video about Elshoff's ride.

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

Remembering the Lost

Canso, perched on a peninsula jutting out into the Atlantic Ocean, has been a maritime community since the 1600s. Lighthouses dot the rocky terrain along Nova Scotia's shoreline. In this small fishing community, many residents rely solely on the sea for their livelihood. But they know the waters that surround them can take as much as they give. "We know the human costs associated with fishing," says Canso Lion Ray White. Lions keenly recognize its power. Several of them are commercial fishermen or have family members involved in the industry.

"We've all had friends or relatives who've been lost at sea," White explains. Canso Lions constructed a \$10,000 Seamen's Memorial in 1976 to honor those who've died in the water, but they wanted to do more. In 1989, Lions waged a successful campaign in the province to declare the second Sunday of each August as Sea-



A flotilla of 20 fishing boats take floral wreaths out to sea after Seamen's Memorial Day.

men's Memorial Day. White works with clergy and fishing groups to identify those lost at sea, and their names are read during an annual interfaith memorial service Lions host that attracts hundreds. Two weeks later, a flotilla of boats takes the numerous donated floral wreaths out to sea to mark the lost lives. "The service is a link with our marine heritage. It's also a reminder of Lions' link to our community," says White.

Lions not only built the shipshaped memorial, they also still maintain it and the flower gardens planted at the peaceful site. When the memorial needed recent work, Lions spent \$10,500 for its restoration. The club recouped all the costs from grants and from the community including \$400 from a fisherman who sold his haul of shrimp to make a donation.



A boy has his eye on the pie as he passes through the serving line.

It all started with six turkeys. A Wasilla Lion in Alaska was given the turkeys and didn't know what to do with them. He asked the owner of a restaurant where the club met if he'd cook and serve them to people who had nowhere to go for a Christmas holiday meal. More than 60 people showed up for that first dinner 23 years ago at a senior center.

Last year, members of the Houston and Wasilla Lions clubs and other volunteers served 2,900 people at the Lions Christmas Friendship Dinner. It's currently held in a huge city-owned sports center in Wasilla with a commercial

Where Dinner is More than a Meal

kitchen, says Elsie O'Bryan, a Houston Lion who joined the club after volunteering for years at the dinner, now grown so large that it's sponsored by Lions, the city and another agency.

While the dinner is free, O'Bryan points out that all diners aren't poor. "Some are just lonely. One time we had a father and his twin teenage boys volunteer. They washed dishes all day. We later learned that the man's wife had passed away just a few days before Christmas. They couldn't bear to be home and they were too sad to be in the middle of all the festivities. They found comfort just washing dishes together," O'Bryan recalls.

"Last year, we had helpers from the age of 4 to 97," she says. Around 400 people helped Lions prepare literally tons of food including 700 turkeys, 500 hams, 300 pies and 2,000 cookies. Volunteers have included politician Sarah Palin and members of her family. "Even the Rotarians pitch in to clean up," O'Bryan cheerfully points out.

Service

Pancakes— with a Side of Pickled Cabbage, Please

Mel Fernandez says Lions don't slip a "magic potion" into the eggs or pancake batter every year at their breakfast fundraiser. Seattle First Hill Lions in Washington do, however, know their ethnically diverse community. They should. Club members have been flipping pancakes for 60 years. "People keep coming back year after year. Publicity is mostly word-of mouth," he says. Along with the usual pancakes and eggs, Lions serve rice, tsukimono (Japanese pickled cabbage), and Portuguese sausage to please the area's Asian, Latino and Portuguese residents.

Chartered in 1954, the club is composed primarily of second- and



Lions Victor Mizumori (left) and Ed Yakushijn are precision pancake flippers during the Seattle First Hill Lions Club's annual pancake breakfast in Washington.

town/International District and First Hill neighborhoods. The district's original residents were predominantly Japanese, Filipino and Chinese immigrants. Following the Vietnam War, refugees from Southeast Asia assimilated into the district, says Fernandez. "We flipped about 2,000 pancakes, served 1,200 cups of coffee,

nese members who serve the China-

"We flipped about 2,000 pancakes, served 1,200 cups of coffee, 225 dozen eggs, 75 pounds of ham and went through 14 cases of sausage last year," says Fernandez. The club raised nearly \$11,000, divided between a nursing home and the Kawabe Memorial House for low-income seniors. Additionally, a bake

sale was held in conjunction with the breakfast and that raised another \$3,400. Bake sale proceeds helped provide eyeglasses and hearing aids to community members in need. "We try to improve the living conditions in the district and improve the quality of life for people. We have an elderly population and many widows and widowers who can't afford to move away, so we support a senior nutrition program and a food bank. We do what we can for them."



In Michigan, Fruitport Leos Cameron LaNore (left) and Cassy Landes become acquainted with power tools as part of a team of Leos and Lions who built a wheelchair ramp. Lion Bruce Gaultney Jr. supplied the tools and gave Leos a lesson on how to safely use them.

Leos Ramp Up Service

Fruitport Leos in Michigan learned that resident Brenda Hosington was home-bound because of multiple sclerosis. She had no funds to pay for a wheelchair ramp for her home. The club immediately organized recycling drives to raise money for materials and an anonymous donor gave funds. Leos surprised Hosington at home during the Christmas holidays by caroling at her door and giving her a card that detailed how they planned to build a ramp so that she could regain some mobility.

Spring arrived, and 10 Leos and eight Lions worked together to build the ramp with discounted lumber. Leos also pitched in to rake and clean her yard of debris, which she hadn't been able to do for several years. Fruitport Leos now plan to build one ramp a year for homebound residents of their community.

Adviser Lion Heidi Tice says that Leos in the year-old club have opened her eyes to service possibilities. She says she originally thought students would join the Leo club in order to receive recognition when applying for colleges. "What I found is that all the kids have very different and very personal reasons for wanting to join. This first year has been amazing for me," Tice points out.

Colorful Competition **Brings in Cash**

Cars—stock, custom, modified, chopped, flamed, tubed and shaved—helped the 40member Spring Branch Bulverde Lions Club in Texas raise \$17,000 from its second Roar for Kids car show. "Part of the show's draw is that we make it a family event," says President Larry Sunn of the event held in a church parking lot. All show profits go to projects that benefit children including the Texas Lions Camp and St. Jude's Ranch for children.

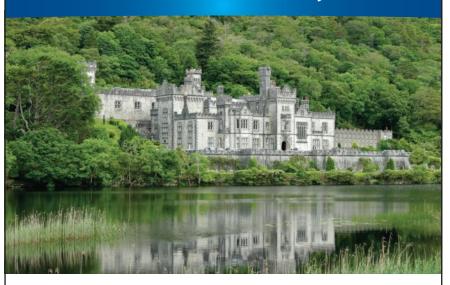


Spring Branch Bulverde Lion Jeanlyn Valdez checks in David May's 1937 Ford coupe before the opening of the car show. May later won the Lions Pride trophy for his gleaming vintage ride.

A Cub Scout Pinewood Invitational Derby draws a big crowd in the church auditorium while another 1,000 or so people check out cars. Lions provide 75 pinewood car kits for kids who aren't Scouts to build onsite and race later that day. "We let any former pinewood derby car builder come race their cars in a 'vintage' open class. We've had racers who bring in their cars in an old beat-up shoebox, a car they probably built 40 years ago," Sunn says.

"It looked like a rainbow out there," Sunn says of the exhibition. "We had blues, reds, purples, blacks, greens, golds, yellows and pinks. We even had a 1946 Chevy painted to look like rust." says Sunn. Trophies are designed by Lion Patti Dawson, whose husband, Lion Gary, is a skilled woodworker. He builds and welds small metal car parts to create spectacular trophies. Sunn's wife, Margie, is another awards crafter. "One thing about gearheads is that they love showing treasures on their mantles," Sunn points out. "We're on the lookout for old auto parts all year long to build these trophies."

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Service Abroad

JAPAN

Foster Children Not Left Out

Shichi-go-san means "seven-five-three" in Japan. A traditional rite of passage for children of that age, the Shichi-go-san celebration is held on Nov. 15. The Takasaki Lions Club has made sure for 17 years that foster children take part in the cultural staple.

Lions arrange for children to be dressed in kimonos, tuxedos or dresses and then have their portraits taken. Last year 32 children from eight facilities in the Gunma Prefecture took part.

Lion Hisao Yanai, who ran a bridal dress and makeup company, started the project. His wife, Lion Yayoi, currently heads the company. Another member, Kunio Totsuka, works at a banquet hall where the event is held.

"The children's attire was truly gorgeous," according to a story in the Japanese LION. "The teachers from the facility and parents in attendance were moved to tears."



A child is dressed for Shichi-go-san.

UKRAINE

Expatriates at Ease with Local Culture

When in Ukraine, do as the Kozaks do.

The Kyiv Lions Club, whose members include Americans, Spaniards, Germans and other expatriates working in Ukraine, hold a colorful Kozak Day. Kozak horsemen display their riding skills. Performers sing Ukrainian folk songs. Vendors sell crockery, clothing, metal work and salo (salted pig fat).

"The Kozaks represent the soul of the Ukrainian nation with their horsemanship, slightly rowdy behavior and valor combined with the ability to ride forever on only a piece of salo," says Terry Pickard, a member from England.

The event raised \$100,000 last year. "In our best year, our charitable events raised as much as \$300,000. In 10 years, we've given in excess of \$1 million to Ukrainian organizations," says Pickard.

Lions also have cleaned up beaches, painted and rehabbed orphanages and helped residents of "woefully inadequate nursing homes," says Pickard. The different nationalities of the club, which includes many Ukrainians, have numbered as many as 14. Meetings are in English.

Riders show off their horseback riding skills during Kozak Day in Ukraine.

MULTIPLE DISTRICT 300 TAIWAN

Blind Students Finish Triathlon

Three grade school students in Multiple District 300 Taiwan completed a Lions club's triathlon despite being blind.

Co-sponsored by the Taichung Hsien Shan Cheng Lions Club, the triathlon consisted of a 5-kilometer cycling race, a 1.3-kilometer run and a swimming race that ranged from 50 meters to 15 meters, depending on the competitor's age.

The blind children completed the running and cycling on machines affixed to the ground. The blind athletes were Yang Tzu-ling, 12; Lin Ssu-chia, 10; and Liang Yu-han, 7. "Running and riding a bicycle feels like taking an airplane," Lin told the China Times. More than 200 children took part in the Little Ironman Triathlon.



FINLAND

The Fairest of Them All at an Ancient Fair



Journalist Sirkka Haverinen (number 5) won the title of Miss Anianneito.

Author Aleksis Kivi, who wrote the first significant novel in Finnish in the 18th century, knew and appreciated the fair held at Anianpelto. He wrote a poem about it: "Music was played and horse carriages drawn. Stallions proudly neighed./It was then that I saw this beautiful maiden, the young daughter of the county."

The fair was defunct for many years before the Asikkala Lions Club started it up again in 1970. Thousands come each summer for traditional food, goods sold by vendors, Finnish pastimes and activities such as a sauna and a wood chopping contest and, a highlight, the Miss Anianneito competition.

The theme for last year's fair was Exercising to Health. Runners competed in a race. Blood pressure testing was available. Advocates for the local food movement bicycled to the fair to talk about their cause. Those in need were not forgotten: Lions donated the chopped wood for the competition to war veterans.



FINLAND

Popular Artist Aids Lions

Maikki Parkkila is a popular watercolor painter in Finland whose career was launched in 2002 when she won a contest for a charity called "The Most Beautiful Christmas Card." She is one of several artists in Finland who create Christmas cards for Lions clubs to sell. The proceeds benefit children. She titled a card she did for Lions (photo) "Sleigh Ride on Christmas Morning."

Capital Idea

Clubs capitalize on popular events, attractions and places to raise funds.

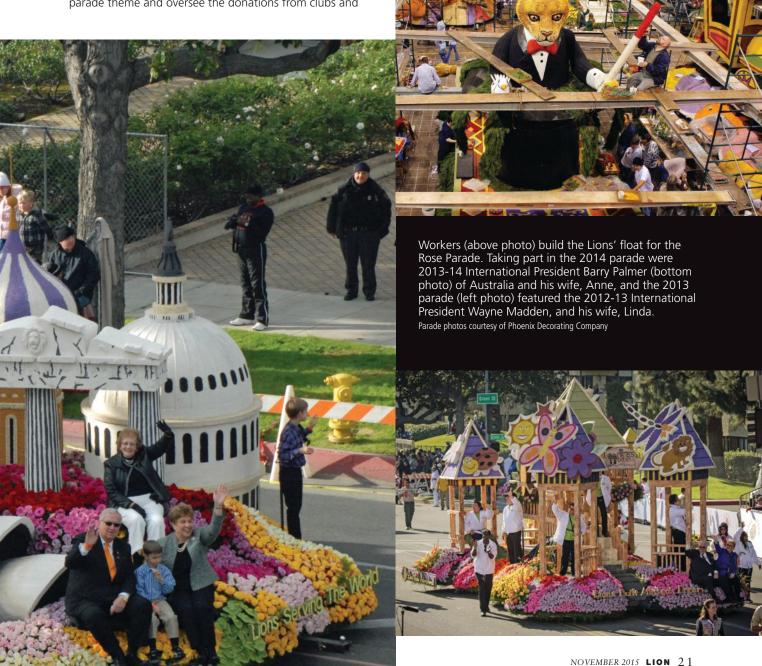
BY JAY COPP



Parading Our Pride in Service

Everyone loves a parade—at least 400 million people do. That's the typical worldwide viewing audience for the enchanting Rose Parade on New Year's Day in Pasadena, California. The Lions Clubs International float, a parade staple since 1992, gets about 30 seconds of air time. Lions write the copy for the parade TV hosts, who usually stick closely to the script. "It's a fantastic public relations program for Lions," says Past District Governor Ross Adams, who has served on the Lions Float committee since 1995. The committee's two dozen or so Lions from seven districts select a float theme to match the overall parade theme and oversee the donations from clubs and

selling of shirts, pins, patches and even seats on the float to pay for the building of the 35-foot float. It's no small task. Parade rules require that "every inch of the float must be covered with flowers or other natural materials such as leaves, seeds or bark." California Lions and even visiting Lions begin constructing the float the first Saturday in December, and fresh flowers, kept in vials of water, are added after Christmas.



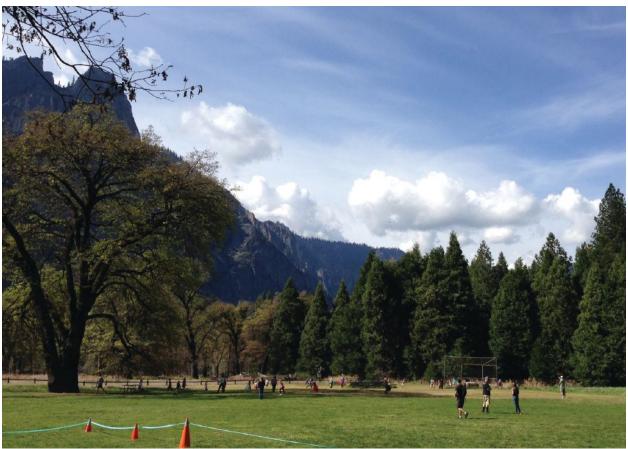


Glories of Nature

Legendary conservationist John Muir once described Yosemite as "by far the grandest of all the special temples of Nature I was ever permitted to enter." Today it's the frequent playground of the Yosemite Lions Club, which holds activities in majestic Yosemite National Park. The backdrop to the club's Easter egg hunt is a thundering—and world-famous—waterfall. "It's pretty special to be here—in the shadow of the Yosemite Falls," says Brett Archer, a past president and general manager of the Ahwahnee Hotel in the park. Many of the club's 20 members work for the National Park Service or at a venue within the park. "Yosemite is a community. We're a community in a national park," says Archer. The members are local, but the club's projects, especially its golf tournament/ pancake breakfast, draw Californians from hours away—for good reason. The Wawona Golf Course, the first and for years only golf course in a national park, blends seamlessly into the spectacular landscape. The club pulls in a good chunk of the Yosemite community with its annual barbecue. The late summer gathering is known as the Mosquito Festival, a celebration of the end of the mosquito season.







The Yosemite Lions Club (from top to bottom) holds a blood drive, golf tournament and Easter egg hunt amid the park's majestic setting.

Super Pancakes

Last year was Super Bowl XLIX, and this year it will be Super Bowl 50. Faribault Lions in Minnesota won't label their annual flapjack event in early February 2016 as Pancake and Sausage Breakfast 50. But they well could. And they could have designated their event last year on Feb. 1 as Pancake and Sausage Breakfast XLIX. For 49 years the club has held its breakfast on the same day as Super Bowl Sunday. The first year was pure coincidence. Then the club realized having a game day tradition makes it easy for people to remember it and incorporate it into their Super Bowl Sunday schedule. Lions typically serve 5,000 sausages and many more pancakes to 900 people and raise close to \$5,000, says Past International Director Deb Wasserman, a member. Until last year, when he decided to pass the spatula, Ray Sanders, 87, chaired the fundraiser. So call him XLIIX Chair Ray.





Steve Morgan (from left), Lori Klein and Sally Kramer work the serving line at the pancake breakfast, and Lee Nordmeyer sells nuts to provide weekend meals for needy students.



A Tradition Unlike Any Other

Drive for show. Park for dough. You've probably know about the green jacket, the azaleas and Amen Corner. The Masters Golf Tournament is all about hallowed traditions. You can add Lions to that mix. For a quarter century the National Hills Lions Club has parked cars and buses for the Masters in April in Georgia. For \$20, golf fans get to park in a lot a chip shot from the course. A Pep Boys and Jiffy Lube donate their lots to the club. In return, Lions monitor the lot for the businesses. Last year the club brought in \$14,000, designated for a camp for the blind, guide and leader dogs and other causes, says Past District Governor Cecil Geddings.

John Goodin, 2014-15 president of the National Hills Lions Club, directs a parker while Dr. Joe Griffin shows the price.



A Long Day at a Long Run

Taking part in the New York City Marathon requires endurance and stamina for hour after hour. And that's just if you are handing out water and Gatorade—as Hollis Lions and Leos have done since 2009. Last November they served about 15,000 runners at mile eight in Brooklyn. Needing to quickly serve wave after wave of competitors, the Lions furiously filled cups as Leos, supple arms outstretched, handed them out to runners dashing by. Race day is a long one. Volunteers arrive at 5:30 a.m. for setup and don't leave until around 2 p.m. after sweeping up discarded cups.









Fuel for the Ride

To describe the Ragbrai as a bike ride is to refer to the Super Bowl as a football game. The seven-day ride across lowa, the world's largest bike touring event, is a rolling celebration of two-wheeled fellowship. This past July the Ackley Geneva and Webster City Lions cooked pancakes for riders as they cycled through their towns. Cyclists often ride a bit before eating breakfast, and Ackley was the second town riders passed through one morning. "One guy ate four pancakes. Then he had three more," says Ackley Geneva Lion Ken Reed. "These are nice-sized pancakes. I saw him later and asked if he wanted more. He said he already had five more." Photo (top) courtesy of the Des Moines Register







Off to the Races in Michigan

Six hundred miles separate Louisville, Kentucky, and Bark River, Michigan, but the excitement level reaches a fever pitch at the latter when the thoroughbreds rumble down the track in May at the Kentucky Derby in Churchill Downs. The Delta Menominee County Heart of the North Lions Club has thrown a lavish Kentucky Derby party for the last three years that includes dinner, dancing, mint juleps and a race raffle. Tickets are placed in a bucket with horses' names. The all-women's club with 38 members also holds a delightful hat contest. If the race doesn't thrill you, chances are the hats will.



Crowd Funding in New York

How do you get to Carnegie Hall? Fundraise, fundraise, fundraise. The New York Japanese American Lions Club solicited donations at the famed concert venue for victims of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2011. Nearly 20 Lions and volunteers raised about \$3,500 at the New York Chorus Festival. The club also shrewdly took advantage of the masses of people by having artists painting and selling works of art in Times Square; the artists donated their time and talents. Lions with donation boxes solicited funds as well.







Everyone Loves This Parade

When in or near New Orleans, do as everyone else does and hold a parade to celebrate Mardi Gras. The Pearl River Lions Club Parade has been a cherished tradition for more than 20 years. There are beads and bands, costumes and characters, a rolling, roaring river of good times, courtesy of the club and its 23 members.







APART BUTALIKE

A breed apart, Sanibel Island Lions find service and island life quite compatible.

BY CLIFF TERRY

Located three miles from Fort Myers on the mainland, Sanibel Island in Florida is an ideal catching ground for all sorts of fantastic shells. With folks carrying bags and buckets and bending over, the posture is popularly known as "The Sanibel Stoop."

The island also stands out for its "old Florida" appeal. New, intrusive condos are a rare species. Even the islands' scattered "starter mansions" are shielded by native foliage. About 72 percent of Sanibel land is on conservation status, areas that can't be developed, through acquisitions by the city, the nonprofit Conservation Foundation and the influential J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge.

Sanibel is a world apart. And so is its thriving Lions club—at least in a few ways. The Sanibel-Captiva Lions Club is dedicated to usual Lions' projects such as vision screenings. But it's also a club that reflects its peculiar location and adapts to members' particular concerns. The Lions' service model has found a cozy home even on islands set apart from the mainland.

Sanibel Island is flat, long and narrow—12 miles long and three miles at its widest. About 6,700 people live here. Sanibel, as well as its adjacent Florida barrier island Captiva, have long been delightful destinations for tired-of-shoveling Northerners and in-the-know Floridians who love the surf, laid-back pace of life and those late-afternoon moments when, as novelist Richard Ford has written, "the sun turns the sea to sequined fires."

You overhear conversations on Sanibel you don't hear anywhere else. In a seashell-cleaning hut at a motel, a husband said to his wife, "It's all about the shells, isn't it? That's why we come here."

"Well, actually," she replied, somewhat sheepishly, "we came here to get away from the kids."

Many of the 70 members of the Sanibel-Captiva Lions Club are winter-only residents (the legendary "snowbirds") who escape to Sanibel for six or so months. About 30 club members live on Sanibel year-round, and the rest belong to other Lions clubs in their home area. About 70 percent are retired. (No members currently live on Captiva, population 500.)

The snowbird Lions, like other residents, donate their time to preserve the charm of the island. "Some of our members are involved with our well-known environment, working on nature carpentry projects," says Lion Leslie Forney, a retired Army brigadier general, city manager and law firm administrator. "For eight years I was a 'Hammerhead'—volunteers doing construction work, renovation, things like that—for the Sanibel Captiva Conservation Foundation. Many of the Hammerheads have been Lions."

The Conservation Foundation has fought such development proposals as a huge trailer park and golf and tennis club, and campaigned for measures ranging from protection for alligators to eliminating junked cars.

Sanibel bases its land-development code on the preservation of natural resources. With few exceptions, the buildings are restricted to a height of three stories, and on both Sanibel and Captiva from May through October (the nesting season for sea turtles) residents must keep lights near the beaches off or shielded. (Islanders have been longtime battlers. One elderly Sanibel couple in the 1960s fought putting a road through their property—standing off a bulldozer with a crossbow.)

Undoubtedly, the crown jewel of the islands is the "Ding" Darling refuge, run by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and named after a pioneer conservationist who was also, of all things, a Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist. The refuge contains more than 7,000 acres of magnificent habitat for all kinds of birds, mammals and fish. More than 800,000 people visit it annually, many never getting out of their cars as they traverse the five-mile Wildlife Drive. Over 220 bird species have been spotted here, from pied-billed grebes and white and brown pelicans and ospreys to brilliant roseate spoonbills and the curiously-dancing reddish egrets.

Lion Cliff Nolan, a retired account manager for a floor covering company, observes that Sanibel is unusual in



When in Florida, Do as Floridians Do

Held in late winter (or what passes for winter in Florida), the Strawberry Festival in Plant City is enormously popular. Attendance is more than 800,000 for the 11 days. "It's No. 2 in the state, next to Disney World," says Lion Gail Lyons, co-chair of the pageant committee. "I asked one woman if she attended the state fair and she said, 'We used to. Not anymore. We like the Strawberry Festival better.'"

Chartered in 1929, the Plant City Lions Club helped start the festival, and today it operates a food booth and hosts the Strawberry Festival Queen's Scholarship Pageant. Lions in Florida roar with shrewdness—capitalizing on successful ventures in a state crawling with tourists and home to thriving industries such as fishing.

Lions take no chances in attracting crowds to its food booth at the Strawberry Festival. A sign proclaims "Best Prices at the Festival!" Customers who buy a cheeseburger or bowl of chili also are treated to a roar—provided they make a \$1 donation to the Plant City Lions Club. A Lion or Leo wearing a "Hear us Roar" T-shirt duly complies as promised. Some Leos roar with perhaps a little less gusto. "These girls are teenagers, and, of course, are somewhat embarrassed to be giving a roar," confides one adult volunteer.

The club's food booth grosses more than \$3,500 a day. The strawberry queen pageant produces ample revenue each year from the \$15 pageant tickets and sponsorship ads in the festival program book. The club also runs a golf tournament in October.

The pageant had 15 contestants this year. "Any of those 15 could have worn that crown," says Lyons. "They have to have a GPA of 3.0 or above, and have to be 16 and not older than 20 by March 1. Our judging criteria is poise and stage presence, and she must really be well versed in speaking ability because as queen you are put on the spot at the drop of a hat. For those 11 days and even a year, she and her court have to make personal appearances."

"They're articulate and smart," adds Tony Lee, a State Farm insurance agent who's a long way from his native Vietnam. "These are future leaders."

"We have 55 members in our club, and maybe a third are retirees," says Lee, club president. "And we have a lot of Leos helping us."

The club donates to a whole list of charities, from Meals on Wheels to Southeastern Guide Dogs, and sponsors an annual eye-screening event for children.

In another part of the state, the Fort Myers Beach Lions Club Shrimp Festival this year drew nearly 20,000 people, who consumed 1,378 pounds of shrimp. "It's Gulf Pink Shrimp, a.k.a.'Pink Gold.'" says Darby Doerzbacher, a Lion since 1987 and the first woman club president in 1992-93. Doerzbacher works in the Fort Myers Beach shrimp business in fleet operations. "I inherited the job of Shrimp Festival chairman from my predecessor—who did not tell me it was an assignment for life!"

The shrimp dinners come with slaw, crackers and a secret cocktail sauce made on site with ketchup and horseradish as well as secret ingredients. The winner of the Shrimp Eating Contest ate 1.4 pounds of shrimp in three minutes.

But it's not all about eating. The 5K Shrimp Run drew 371 runners. More than 100 arts

and craft vendors sold wares. The festival also includes a parade and a queen's pageant.

The Fort Myers Beach Lions Foundation nets more than \$50,000 for the two-day event. "This is an extensive endeavor for a club with 33 members. About 95 percent turned out to help," says Doerzbacher. Many non-Lions help work the festival, too. "We could not do it without them," she adds.

- By Cliff Terry





Lions in Florida capitalize on the popularity of strawberries and shrimp.

(Opposite) Cochrane says the diversity of the club's membership results in a broad range of service.

another respect. Someone once told him there are more registered non-profits in the zip code (33957) than any other in the country. "It does give you an indication that there is a lot of charity work done around here, and a lot of competition for dollars from generous people," he says.

'We're small, so we branch out,' Cochrane says.
'Members will come in from other clubs and remark, "Hey, this is something we might adopt here." It's kind of nice.'

Lion Jim Graham, who owned a manufacturing company in Fort Myers before retiring, says his fellow members are probably more dedicated to charities than most clubs. Members are from so many diverse places that they pay more attention to other things besides their immediate Sanibel community, according to Bruce Cochrane, 2014-15 club president and a Realtor. For example, they leave the island and travel to places such as Immokalee to distribute eveglasses. "We're small, so we branch out," he says. "Members will come in from other clubs and remark, 'Hey, this is something we might adopt here.' It's kind of nice."

The major fundraiser is the threeday Arts and Crafts Show held in March on Sanibel. A contingent of artists sell a variety of wares, and the club gets a percentage of their sales. In the three days, they generally raise about \$40,000, so it's not an insignificant event.

The club also donates time and money for a camp for people of all ages with disabilities on the Caloosahatchee River just outside of Fort Myers. It runs an \$180,000 college scholarship program. Members also conduct health screenings at the local recreation center for glaucoma, blood pressure and diabetes. There are two or three retired physicians in the group.



Another event is the newly-established Eye Ball, a dance held last November. The goal was to raise money for a small \$6,000 camera to screen children aged 4 to 8. As it turned out, the Eye Ball made twice as much money as needed. "We were all real excited," says Cochrane. "We feel that kids' vision is just as important as our screenings, which mostly end up getting older people."

Not everything, of course, is blue skies and roseate spoonbills. Lions are well aware of the numbing bumperto-bumper traffic, which is why some vacationers shun 'Florida retirement,' but it probably sets the *leadership* role. However, I think a lot of clubs are like that. The world is changing."

To help recruiting, the club sends members to a meetand-greet session for new property owners at the Sanibel Community Center.

With such a diverse community of folks from all over the country, it's not surprising to find an occasional standout character. One was a founding member of the club, Francis Bailey Jr., who owned the local grocery store and



Lions share Sanibel Island with crocodiles—this one was lounging at the J.N. Darling National Wildlife Refuge.

these islands. The traffic jam is usually between 3 and 6 p.m., when workers and day-tripping tourists head back to the Fort Meyers mainland. But there are back routes, which avoid the mess, as the Lions know how to do.

Then there are challenges specific to the club. Perhaps not surprisingly, there isn't a Leo organization. The school on Sanibel goes through only eighth grade, so the students have to go to South Fort Myers High School, where they tend to stick around after school for sports and activities. A lot of families consequently sell their homes on Sanibel and move for the high school.

Plus, it's an affluent community. One Realtor says if you can find a house on Sanibel for under \$500,000, you're doing well. Very few condos go for under \$400,000, and Captiva prices are even higher.

"Attracting young members is a real problem," says Nolan. "We have one member who's not even 30, but he's probably the only one under 40. Sanibel not only *typifies*

was a onetime mayor. He died in 2013 at age 92. He and his brother were known for many things, including playing softball, as one person put it, "forever."

"Francis was an unusual person in his own right—generous before it was in fashion," says Nolan. "He loved this island tremendously and loved all the people who shared his enthusiasm. Our club is experiencing the same loss as the rest of the island. If Francis met you *once*, he remembered you. And if you came back three years later, and you walked into his store, he'd remember your name. He was everybody's friend. It's hard to describe him. He wrote his own thing, you know?"

The same can be said for the Sanibel-Captiva Lions Club.

Join the Lions Worldwide Week of Service to Fight Hunger and Poverty

January 10–16

Join Lions around the world for a special Worldwide Week of Service dedicated to helping the nearly 800 million people facing hunger and poverty every day.

Together, we can bring dignity to others and reach our Centennial Service Challenge goal of benefitting 100 million people.

Getting involved is easy!

- ✓ Host a project that impacts hunger and poverty in your community during the week
 of January 10–16
- ✔ Promote your project to your community to showcase your club
- ✔ Report your project on MyLCI Service Activity Report and earn a Centennial Banner Patch for your club







Start planning your Worldwide Week of Service project today!



A flexible, welcoming and supportive club culture is helping Lions in Minnesota attract and retain younger members.

BY MARLA J. HOLT | PHOTOS BRIAN KRENZ

As you enter La Crescent, a narrow strip of a town in far southeastern Minnesota bordered by the rolling Mississippi River to the east and bluffs filled with dense apple orchards to the west, not much distinguishes it from most small towns in the state, particularly on a cool, gray early morning when the trees haven't yet leafed out and the water isn't sparkling in the sun. But these first observations belie the warmth of the community there. After just a few hours in La Crescent, the pride of its residents in the surrounding natural beauty and the town's neighborliness is evident.

Known for Applefest, the annual festival that brings nearly 10,000 visitors to the area each September to celebrate the harvest, La Crescent, with a population of about 4,900, is the designated Apple Capital of Minnesota. In the mid-1800s, it was home to John Harris, a successful orchardist who developed trees that could withstand Minnesota's harsh winters. He planted the seeds that led to apple growing becoming La Crescent's longest-standing industry. Today, about 80 percent of the varieties grown here are sold in Minnesota.

Indeed, mention La Crescent to most anyone in the region and you'll hear, "They have good apples there." The apples give the community a strong sense of identity—streets are named after varieties like McIntosh, Fireside and Haralson, and you can drive the Hiawatha Apple Blossom Scenic Byway along the bluffs to take in commanding views of the Mississippi River valley.

But good apples could refer to La Crescent's residents as much as to the fruit, as this is a town with a penchant for being good neighbors—evidenced by its thriving Lions club. Until recently, the La Crescent Lions Club struggled a bit with an aging membership made up of mostly retirees. In the past few years, however, the club has successfully grown its ranks, mostly simply by personally inviting friends and neighbors to join and also by flexibly adapting the club to the needs of the next generation. Its current roster of 54 Lions includes 23 women and at least a dozen members under the age of 45.

"I don't know that younger people have the mindset of 'I'm looking to join a service club,' per se," says Eileen Krenz, a past club president and current president of La Crescent's Chamber of Commerce. "If you ask people to do a particular task together with friends, like planting trees, or cleaning up the highway, or flipping pancakes at a fundraiser, and they have fun and see how it benefits their town, they're more likely to join because of that personal connection."



The influx of new members is a welcome change for the club's more senior members, says past club president Larry Stryker, 68, a retired vice president of engineering. "The new members are bringing enthusiasm and energy," he says, noting that the multigenerational mix in the club is proving beneficial, as longtime members mentor those with less experience and encourage them to take on leadership roles. Those in line to assume the club's presidency in the next several years are all newer members, having joined the club within the past five years.

Although he may not have known it at the time, Stryker was instrumental in sparking the increase in his club's membership. He is the district coordinator of the Lions Global Leadership Team, which deals with member recruitment and retention, among other issues. He and other Lions in the district gathered younger members to provide feedback on why they joined the organization and what might be preventing others from joining. At that initial meeting, four of the seven attendees were from La Crescent including Summer Thorson, 36, first vice president of

La Crescent is apple country, and its Lions including (from left) Ryan Henry, Scott Stuber and Eileen Krenz are the apple of the small town's eye.





'WE'RE SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE WE HAVE A SUPPORTIVE AND WELCOMING LEADERSHIP TEAM.'

the club and a member since 2010. Thorson, the owner of Thorson Graphics, and Stacie Salo, a Lion from Rochester, went on to present their findings at the regional Lions Fall Forum in 2013. They caught the attention of Past International Director Brian Sheehan of Minnesota, which led to an invitation to speak about how to recruit and retain younger members at the USA/Canada Lions Leadership Forum in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in September 2014.

"The forum was so inspiring," says Thorson, who also heads up La Crescent's active Leo club, which currently boasts 20 members in grades 7-12. "The positive response we got from the audience at our talk really helped us see that we're on the right path here in La Crescent."

Many in the club note Thorson's efforts in recruiting new members as a turning point for the club. "She really has a way with gently prompting others to join, inviting them to get involved in projects and setting an example as a leader in our community," Stryker says.

The club is discovering that recruitment can have a domino effect, says Chad Ready, who joined in 2014 at Thorson's invitation and who has since invited others in his social circle to become Lions. "Our friends, or others in our age range, need to see us out and about volunteering in the community," says Ready, 35, a court safety supervisor for the Winona County Courthouse. "When you bring in someone new, you're not only gaining access to that person, but also to their network."

The club has embraced different ways of communicating with its members, using texting, social media, newsletters, and phone calls to keep people apprised of what's going on. The club also is flexible about participation requirements.

"We want people to be a part of our club because it's fun, not because we have rigid rules about the hours you have to put in," says 2014-15 President Gale Bruessel, 55, the assistant to the executive director of a healthcare provider for seniors. "We encourage spouses and kids to help at work projects and fundraisers, but we also understand that family or career obligations often come first."

In Puerto Rico, Thorson and Salo stressed that to sustain Lions clubs, it's important to keep current traditions going (with older members sharing their knowledge and expertise) while creating new traditions. Also key is respecting the concerns and ideas of younger Lions, who, while joining the club out of a desire to serve their community, also see it as a way to network with other business professionals and to become part of a larger social group.

"Younger people don't always want to come to a long meeting at the Legion Hall, especially after a day at work," Thorson says. "So why not mix it up a bit? Invite people out for drinks, to a golf outing or to a picnic."

The La Crescent Lions Club has taken this advice to heart, encouraging its newest members (and becoming more attractive to potential members in the meantime) through its willingness to ditch projects that don't necessarily appeal to younger members and to try out new fundraising ideas and service projects that increase its visibility in the community.

"Our goal is to get younger Lions involved right away to make them feel a part of the club," Stryker says. "Membership isn't just about having the numbers; it's about inviting people to the table. If you are closed-off with a 'this is the way we've always done it' mentality, people don't want to stick around."

The La Crescent club definitely doesn't have that feel, says Scott Stuber, 42, who joined in 2014. "This is a great group of people," says Stuber, who works in customer service and sales for CenturyLink. "We're successful because we have a supportive and welcoming leadership team."

As interests ebb and flow, it's critical to keep projects fresh, says Ryan Henry, who joined Lions in his 20s in 2007. "We used to sell calendars as a way to raise money, but when enough people in our club said we weren't interested in doing that anymore, our leadership team listened and phased that project out," says Henry, 33, editor of the Houston County News.

Born of those conversations was the idea to host an annual family-friendly softball tournament to replace the lost income stream. Younger Lions took the reins and organized the first Big Wood Softball Tournament in May 2014, featuring six local teams playing with wooden bats donated by Miken Sports in nearby Caledonia. The event, attended by an estimated 100 people, raised almost \$2,000 for the Lions. The club is hoping to attract 8 to 12 teams to this year's tournament, with a fundraising goal of \$2,500.

Bruessel, who says she had no idea how to run a softball tournament when the event was proposed, had no trouble agreeing to it, given the enthusiasm of newer members. "It's been wonderful to see them taking the lead," she says. "They have new perspectives, and it gives us confidence in the future of our club."

It's easy to see the Lions' influence around town. The club, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, has planted more than 2,200 trees in La Crescent. They also helped finance a new park shelter at Old Hickory Park. It's an attractive, sturdy structure with picnic areas and restrooms in a park that is used by the community for everything from soccer matches to graduation parties.

"I joined Lions to get my hands dirty locally and to see the benefits for our community," says First Vice President Angel Klankowski, 38, who joined in 2011. "We're making our home a better place, and who wouldn't want to be a part of carrying on that tradition?"

Thorson agrees. "I'm hoping they wheel me in to help out when I'm 96," she says.



PUPPYLOVE

BY KATHY SAUNDERS

My daughter asked her father and me if she could raise a puppy, as its first steps toward becoming a guide dog for the blind. This was to be Julia's eighth-grade project, required of every student at her school in Florida. So we picked up Sarah, a 16-weekold, black Labrador retriever, the same time our son, Joey, was headed off to college. For the first month, we called Sarah the "New Joey."

Yes, Joey was a typical boy—hardly a model of cleanliness and grooming. But he didn't shed hair. Or leave puppy poop in the backyard. Or try to swallow whole a live lizard.

Southeastern Guide Dogs, which is amply supported by Lions, matched our family with Sarah in the summer of 2012. I'm not sure what we were thinking when we agreed to Julia's plea. I'm 54 now, a food writer for

the Tampa Bay Times and a neat freak. I don't go to bed at night with dishes in the sink. I wipe any lingering streaks, however faint, from the kitchen counters after an initial swipe. If Joe, my husband, happens to get up from the dinner table, he'll quickly warn me, "Don't clear my plate—I'm just refilling my drink."

It's not as if we didn't have an experience or two with critters at home. We hosted Piglet and Oscar, two guinea pigs, for the summer when Joey was in grade school. We've flushed plenty of goldfish after their demise. We even rescued a miniature poodle and had her as our pet—but Brandy did not shed.

Before receiving Sarah, we spent the summer attending classes with the West Pinellas Puppy Raisers to learn how to handle a future guide dog. After passing a home visit and background check, we drove to the Southeastern campus in Palmetto about 15 minutes away. Sarah was waiting in the arms of a kennel worker. We snapped on a pink and lime green designer leash from Lily Pulitzer and signed paperwork agreeing to return her to the kennel when she was recalled for formal training. We had no idea at that time how hard that would be.

On the car ride home, Sarah sat in the well of the front passenger seat, nudging up against Julia's legs. She looked at us in fear, and we looked back with the same trepidation. We didn't know a thing about raising a puppy.

We had a crate ready next to Julia's bed, according to Southeastern's guidelines, and we stocked a box with permitted toys. The first weeks went





Sarah accompanies Katherine Saunders and Julia around town (left photo) and travels with Julia to school.

smoothly, but little puppies, after bouts of frenetic activity, sleep a lot. And like other newborns, it's important to rest or nap when they do. So Julia and I spent time sitting and napping on the floor, as Southeastern puppies are not permitted on furniture.

Sarah was a spunky girl who loved food and any yard debris that she could get away with ingesting. We became comfortable reaching into her

mouth to retrieve sticks, rocks and a variety of leaves. When she captured a lizard, I had to pry her mouth open to get it out.

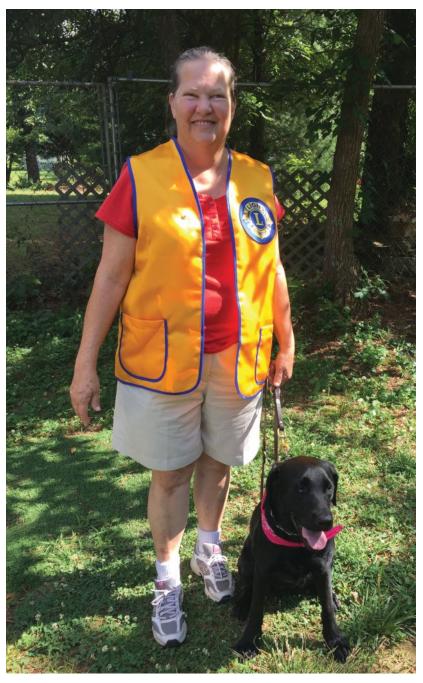
My obsession with cleanliness meant a new round of duties. We spent our days vacuuming black hair and picking up puppy poop in the yard. The extra work was fine. The more we fell in love with Sarah, the more we didn't seem to care about the chaos I had dreaded. We even got used to wiping the huge puddle of drool she left while waiting patiently for us to give the command to eat.

The 240 or so puppy raisers for Southeastern have a Facebook page for sharing their triumphs and tribulations. Through social media, Julia contacted the raisers of Sarah's six litter mates, scattered around the state of Florida. On their first birthday, all but two of the Abigail/Sparky pups gathered at our home for a party. Without leashes or capes, it was difficult to tell them apart, except for Porter, the only yellow Lab in the litter. Julia arranged frequent play dates with sisters Tangerine and Zelda and brothers Hiram and Porter. Laslo and Melvin lived in South Florida, but Laslo made it up for one visit. I was back to having birthday parties for kids. These were just furry ones.

Iulia also took Sarah with her once a week to classes at her school. I dropped both of them off in the carpool line every Thursday morning and picked them up after school. Sarah knew that when she was wearing her blue "Guide Dog Puppy in Training" cape she was supposed to be on her best behavior. During the school day, Sarah sat quietly under Julia's desk, until she would fall asleep and start snoring. Julia taught her classmates how to interact with Sarah and to leave her alone when she was "working." She often participated in physical education classes, running laps on the track or walking beside Julia between workout machines in the gym.

Sarah went to dozens of Julia's softball games, racing along the fence line when Julia was up to bat. She also liked baseball games. We have season tickets just behind the dugout of the Tampa Bay Rays. All of the ushers in our section knew Sarah and enjoyed seeing us walk her from the top of the stadium down the long stairway to our seats at Tropicana Field. We would often joke that she was there for the umpires.

Like all of the Southeastern puppies, Sarah left us for two weeks during the year to attend "puppy camp" in the home of another raiser. It's meant to expose the puppies to different environments and different han-



Sarah was paired with Lion Dottie Langham.

dlers. Sarah went to the home of Rick and Kerry Kriseman in the middle of Rick's campaign for mayor of St. Petersburg. Sarah was featured with the Krisemans and their two children in all of the campaign television ads. We still say she was a key factor in his election victory.

That July, when Sarah was 15 months old, we got a letter saying she was to report to the freshman dorm at Guide Dog University on Aug. 31, 2013. Although we were heartbroken, Sarah seemed ready. We could tell she was getting bored. She barked more, she whined a bit and she never seemed to get tired. We went early for her "In For Training Day" to take a picture of the whole litter. Then, with "Gonna Fly Now," the theme from the Rocky movie, playing in the background, Sarah and her litter mates were called up individually to be escorted to the kennel by a trainer. They all went willingly, excited to play with the other dogs in the assessment center.

For 11 months afterward, we received monthly reports about Sarah's progress, along with a few photos from the kennel. We stalked the Southeastern Twitter feed for photos of her as well. As her siblings were being matched with students from the school, Sarah remained in the kennel. Trainers told us she was "soft," and likely wouldn't be a guide for a handler who lived in a big city. Yet they said she still had the qualities to be a guide. We sent dog cookies to the kennel for her second birthday.

Finally, in July 2014, Sarah was matched with Dottie Langham, a blind woman from a rural area in northern Georgia. After the pair trained together for a month, we were invited to Puppy Raiser Day to meet Dottie and see Sarah again for the first time since we had returned her to school. We watched from afar as they worked as a team and then introduced ourselves to Dottie and asked permission to greet her dog. Sarah was jumping two feet off the ground with excitement. She was so happy to see us. We got puppy kisses and puppy hugs, along with lots of slobber. But within in a few minutes, Sarah was back at Dottie's feet, keeping close to her side—at her service. We left campus that day feeling a huge weight had been lifted off our shoulders. We couldn't be sad when we saw how much Dottie loved and needed Sarah. We had experienced the mission firsthand.

After a 90-day waiting period, Dottie was able to contact us. We have stayed in touch and enjoyed sharing stories of Sarah and her antics. Dottie and Sarah visited us to participate in a walkathon for Southeastern Guide Dogs. Sarah loved being back in her first home and running in the yard, but she remained within Dottie's reach. We recently visited Dottie's home in Georgia, and received the same excited welcome from Sarah. She proudly showed off her new home and her toys.

Currently, we are raising a yellow Labrador retriever named Hannah. She's our fifth puppy from Southeastern. One is in training and two others were "career-changed" for food allergies and fears developed in the kennel. I am now the area coordi-

nator for our puppy raiser group, providing guidance, advice and support to 15 families currently raising dogs. Giving up each puppy is still as hard as it was the day we said goodbye to Sarah. But because of Dottie and Sarah, we know when we send our dogs off to training, we have to go straight to the puppy kennel and pick up another.

As for my home, it's now headquarters for the West Pinellas Puppy Raiser group. We have chaotic meetings with all of the puppies running inside and outside of the house, often after they have splashed in the pool. I host Puppy Kindergarten in my family room for the newly matched dogs under the age of 6 months. My housekeeping goals are still high, but my priorities have shifted. I'd rather raise super hero puppies than have a super clean house.



Sarah jumps for joy upon seeing the Saunders again.

Photo courtesy of Christy Clark of Kiki Mac Photograph

Older Lions Still Roar

Long-serving members have built our Lions world.

BY JENNIFER MARTIN

Robert Maxwell, 88 Lion since 1952 Atmore Lions Club, Alabama

You might say the Atmore Lions Club is a family tradition for Robert Maxwell. His father, Randolph, joined the club in the Roaring Twenties, about a year after it formed. Robert joined in 1952; his son, Richard, joined in 1977; and his grandson, Chapman, joined in 2010. Robert's two brothers also were members, and Robert Maxwell served as tailtwister in between other civic posts, including vice president of the Atmore Jaycees. "He's been a volunteer all of his life, which is why I'm neck-deep in it," his son, Richard, says with a laugh.

Service has always been important to Maxwell. Shortly after World War II began, he tried to join the U.S. Marine Corps at age 16. He was turned down. Undaunted, he tried again at 17. This time, his mother gave her consent, and Maxwell was a soldier.

"I was very anxious to get into the service. I did enjoy the Marine Corps, but it was not all that glorious," he adds with a laugh. Sent first to Guam, he spent two years in China before returning to the United States. After exiting the military, he earned a law degree and followed his father into the Lions.

A church choir member, Maxwell was a natural as song leader for the Lions. He still likes to nudge his fellow members into singing "Grandfather's Clock." His son, Richard, jokes: "We object to it because as a club, we can't carry a tune. Nobody else can sing it except for him."



Robert Maxwell, a Melvin Jones Fellow, has watched proudly as first his son, then grandson, served as club president. "I like the club because of the fellowship, the camaraderie and the chance to do some civic service," he says. "I'm quite proud of the opportunities I had."

Earl McKee, 84 Lion since 1950

Vernon Dixon, 89 Lion since 1954 Three Rivers Lions Club, California

"The old days in the Lions Club were pretty wild," remembers Earl McKee, who joined at age 19 and was president of his club by age 27. "Cutting neckties off people, dumping pitchers of water on them. We poured so much water that the oak floor was starting to curl up."

Before women joined Lions clubs in 1987—a change McKee favored—the "men-only" environment created a somewhat raucous "vibe," he says. He recalls a prank two members played with a starter pistol (the kind used at races). "He said, 'Listen, you [expletive], I've heard all that I'm going to hear.' And he fired the pistol at the other guy," McKee recounts. "And the guy fell over. It was all planned. But good Lord, half the Lions ran out of the room. One guy had heart trouble, and he quit the club. We had to try like hell to get him back."

McKee's sense of humor has softened the harder times including the sudden loss of his 56-year-old father to an aneurysm. Then only 16, McKee started running his father's cattle ranch with his mother. While he grieved his father's loss, he never doubted his ability.

"I was born into that life," he says. "I knew I wanted to be a cowboy all my life; I still raise a lot of American quarter horses."

McKee also is an accomplished musician, playing the tuba, sousaphone, string bass and guitar. With his jazz group, the High Sierra Jazz Band, he performs at venues nationwide including JazzAffair, an annual fundraiser for the Three Rivers Lions Club. Dixieland bands from throughout the United States converge on

this tiny mountain town to serenade jazz lovers from three stages. "It's a great event," McKee says proudly.

In July, McKee returned from a tour in Hawaii with his jazz band. The Lions help keep him young. "Over the years, we've had a lot of fun. I've got a goofy sense of humor," he says. "If I can't have fun, I'm not going to do it."

Not long after Vernon Dixon joined the Lions, he and his wife received some heartbreaking news. Their son Randy, 5, had been diagnosed with uveitis, an inflammation of the middle layer of the eye. "We took him to specialists all over the state, but nobody could ever figure out what was causing it," Dixon says.

When Randy was 8, surgeons removed one of his eyes, and the other was infected. With cornea transplants, he has regained low vision in his remaining eye—"enough to see the big 'E' on an eye chart," Dixon says. As his son spent years learning to adapt, Dixon's work with the Lions took on a new dimension.

"It became more meaningful, more important," he says, noting that a part of his club dues goes to the Lions Eye Institute for Transplant and Research. Also, the Three Rivers Lions Club conducts eyeglass drives, and every year members visit Mexico to help build homes and provide eyeglasses to children in need.

Today, Randy Dixon works with his younger brother, Greg, restoring classic automobiles. Like their father, both are Lions. Vernon Dixon is proud of them and hopes to see the club continue to expand.

"Our club has got too many old people like me," the retired businessman and World War II veteran says with a laugh. "We need to get some younger people in. It's a great organization, and the parties are always fun."

Earl McKee (left, in cowboy hat) and Vernon Dixon pause together at the Three Rivers Lions Club Roping Arena in California. Their Lions club holds events at the arena including a national competition for professional animal ropers and a music festival.



OLDER LIONS STILL ROAR

George Huvendick, 93 Lion since 1950 Leavenworth Lions Club, Kansas

George Huvendick wanted to be a pilot from the time he was in kindergarten. In World War II, he got to put his skills to the test in the U.S. Navy Air Corps. Huvendick's job was to fly over the Pacific to give the American troops target practice. "We were dragging the targets behind us, and they were shooting real bullets at the targets," he says. "And the local people were shooting at us all the time."

In spite of the danger, nobody in Huvendick's squadron was shot down, a testimony to both the pilots and the ground troops. In the middle of the war, Huvendick found time to marry a young woman he had met during basic training. "Marjory was a schoolteacher in Kansas City. They fired her because back then; they didn't hire married teachers," he remembers. "It was the best thing that ever happened to us. She went with me every place I went—Oklahoma, Seattle."

Eventually, they settled in Leavenworth, where Marjory's uncle got him a job at a local steel manufacturer. Friends brought him into the Lions. Huvendick eventually bought the steel business, but still made time to contribute to Lions Club fundraisers, from selling brooms to delivering trash bags to area residents (the city paid the Lions a fee for the service).

"I liked everything they had going on," he says. "The Lions club helped me to exist in the present. Working together was fun. You're associating with the best of people."

George Huvendick (left) rides with fellow Lion Mike Wright (at wheel) in the Leavenworth Veterans Day Parade in 2013.



Rudolph Gestl, 98 Lion since 1951 Alton Park Lions Club, Pennsylvania

Rudy Gestl was known as "the strudel guy" for many years. A fundraiser for the Alton Park Lions Club, he sold German nut strudels, walking door to door in his neighborhood. "They'd say, 'Here comes that nut strudel guy," his wife, Teresa, says. It was one of countless Lions fundraisers and projects that benefited from Gestl's dedication. "With over 50 years of perfect attendance you could always count on Rudy," says the club's secretary, Gary Pave. "There is not a more dedicated Lion in our district."

Gestl, now a retired electrician, also installed all the wiring for a building used by the Alton Park Youth League. He sold jelly beans to fund an Easter egg hunt for children, which eventually incorporated beeping "eggs" so that visually impaired youngsters could join the fun. He also supported annual community tours by Santa Claus, who was riding in a fire engine. "They made the sirens come on, and all the kids would come out," Teresa Gestl says. "They'd give out candy and the kids would be delighted."

Gestl also was known for good ideas. He gave some thought to the Alton Park Lions Club's 30-year tradition of taking visually impaired people to the Pocono Mountains, where they enjoyed a picnic and rode on lake pontoons. Everyone loved the outing, but the 60-mile bus trip was tiring and a bit costly. So Gestl approached his boat club in Bethlehem, only 18 miles away. The boat club was pleased to offer its facilities, and in 1984, the event was switched to the new venue. This year's event had 100 people in attendance from age 3 to 97. "In the 30 years of running the picnic, only one person has gone

in the water, and he came up laughing," says club President Joe Sizer. "The fear on their faces is soon replaced with gigantic smiles as they cast off. Most look to get back in line as soon as their boat returns to dock."

Gestl says he has loved the many Lions service projects he's been involved in. Asked about his favorite memory about his club, he responds, "What we did for the blind felt very good." Adds his wife: "He just said that with tears in his eyes."

Reynolds Tomter, 98 Lion since 1960 Pigeon Falls Lions Club, Wisconsin

Reynolds Tomter remembers when he and some friends launched a couple of service clubs in Pigeon Falls back in the 1950s. "They were a good idea, but they didn't really have bylaws and rules. They just sort of fizzled," he says. Then a Lions district governor visited, and persuaded the group to start a Lions club. "We got organized," Tomter says. "We had rules, regulations and bylaws to live by. And our club has been going strong every since."

Steps like keeping minutes and assigning duties helped the Pigeon Falls Lions accomplish great projects, he says. One of them is a local park where Lions built a new baseball diamond, complete with outfield fences and scoreboards. Little League and high school teams use it, and the Lions have a popular fast-pitch softball tournament there every spring that attracts teams statewide. "It's our biggest fundraiser," Tomter says. "It has helped us fund so many village improvements, and it's all because of our organized Lions club."

Tomter, who delivered war supplies with the merchant marines in World War II, has a strong sense of civic duty. Before retirement, he served as a volunteer fire-fighter and ambulance driver while running a department store. He treasures his membership in the Lions and has enjoyed watching the younger generation take over. "It's been the best thing that happened to our little village," he says.

LION Magazine profiled nearly 20 longtime members in the October 2015 issue (page 36).





Reynolds Tomter visits Eckern Park, renovated by his club.



Get More Social with Less Stress

More than ever, Lions are getting social. According to Mike Allton, a social media consultant and blog coach in St. Louis, Missouri, "Every club should have at least a Facebook page, Twitter profile and a Google+ page so you stand the greatest chance to be found, attract new members and demonstrate relevance." Streamline your Tweets and posts with Hootsuite (hootsuite.com), a free tool that helps you keep up with all of your networks in once place. Use a personalized dashboard to post to multiple sites at the same time, easily respond to comments and view analytics. "Hootsuite is a terrific tool for managing and monitoring social media, and it makes communicating via social media much more efficient," says Allton, author of "The Unofficial Book On HootSuite: The #1 Tool for Social Media Management." Allton offers these tips for getting started with Hootsuite:

- 1. Download the Hootsuite App and use it for monitoring on the go.
- 2. Use the AutoSchedule option to schedule status updates at opportune times.
- 3. Schedule news and reminders about upcoming events in the days leading up to each one.
- 4. Review reports to measure how effective your posts are so you can focus on the posts that resonate.

The September LION featured a number of Lions' fundraisers that have been around for 60+ years ("Too Good to Ever End," page 28). We knew there were many more, so we asked Lions to post their longtime projects on our Facebook page (facebook.com/lcilionmagazine).



Frances I. Horn-Smith, Benton Lions Club, Penn-sylvania For over 30 years our club has hosted a free "over-80 dinner" every spring. At our last dinner we served over 90 people over the age of 80. It's a lot of hard teamwork but well worth every minute.



Grand Junction Lions Club, Colorado We will be putting on the 87th annual Carnival in February. We are giving away \$125,000 in grants from last year's carnival and raffle fundraiser. This event has helped fund many projects, from the Two Rivers Convention Center to our Riverfront Trail.



Linda Faye Oberhoff, Washington County Ladies
Lions Club, Texas We've had a blanket program since
the club was chartered. Small quilts are donated to
the law enforcement to present to children who are
removed from unsafe conditions and put in protective
service

Watch for the next question for Lions on Nov. 3.

Grab an Image, Catch More Eyes

There's no doubt about it: images help you get noticed on the web. Never run short on visuals for your website, social media pages or marketing materials again, with more than 200 LCI branding and promotional images available on Pinterest. Go to pinterest.com/lions clubs/marketing-promotional-images to take a look, and then take some images with you.



Connect with Us Online: lionsclubs.org/web

Email us at lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org to submit a comment or make a story suggestion for our editors.

Club Toolbox

Look After Your Leos

More than 167,000 Leos in 6,715 clubs around the world are stepping up with youthful exuberance to serve. But to thrive, Leos need Lions who can gently guide them, lend wisdom and provide uplifting recognition. Lions can consider these tips to help your Leos succeed and develop a lifelong love of service.

Four Lessons from a Leo Adviser

Stephen Helwig, an Athens Lion and chairperson of the District 18 I Leo Program in Georgia, has been the Clarke Middle School Leo Club adviser for more than a decade. Helwig shares insights gleaned from years of practical experience.

1. All Onboard

"The Lions must all be fully behind the idea of a Leo club before voting on it. I've seen Lions clubs split apart because there wasn't complete support. I also recommend a threeperson Leo committee so the adviser isn't overburdened."

2. Help Leaders Develop

"The Lions' primary role is to foster, nurture and guide Leos. Leos are not there just to help us with our projects—quite the opposite should be true. The Leo program is best when Leos are our partners in service."

3. Communication is Key

"There are many misconceptions Lions have regarding the nuts and bolts of a Leo club, so making sure all parties are on the same page is a big part of a Leo club adviser's role."

4. Forget Preconceptions

"The perception of today's youth is that they're very self-involved. I've found this generation is looking at the world and feeling a need to improve it. And they want to see adults who care about them and are interested in how they want to serve."



Jubilant youth from around the world represent Leos at the international convention in Honolulu.

Leos Speak Out

How can Lions be better Leo club sponsors and advisers? Ask Leos and find out! Leos eagerly shared their tips on Facebook (facebook.com/ leoclubs).



Priscylla Piucco, Cocal Do Sul Leo Club, Brazil You can't invest in something without knowing it and the Leos are the Lions' most valuable investment. So get closer to your Leos, teach them what you know, learn from them and together you will change the world even faster.



Niraj Bal, Kathmandu Capital City Leo Club, Nepal Lions and Leos should have regular joint meetings so that there is no communication gap between them.



Ai Lyn Irene, Penang Metropolitan Leo Club, Malaysia Listen. Listen. Listen.



Jounayet Rahman Rifat, Chittagong Khatunganj Leo Club, Bangladesh Work together, exchange views and ideas. Also, past Leos should be Leo club advisers.



PaoLa Dewiyanti Susilo, Bandong Liberty Leo Club, Indonesia Leo advisers must love the Leos and have good communication skills so the Lions and Leos have a good relationship.

Just a Click Away: LCI Resources

Find an array of tools to maximize your Leo club sponsorship at lionsclubs.org. Check out the Leo Club Program Resources Guide, Leo recognition opportunities



(including the Centennial Service Certificate of Recognition, pictured) and project ideas. Follow the Leo e-news and watch for important events, such as International Leo Day on Dec. 5. And remember to help Leos become the next generation of Lions by directing them to the Leo to Lions Transfer Form.

Another Word of Advice: Let Leos Lead

"Once you help get the Leo club started, let the kids lead. Remember that it's their club and not an extension of your Lions club. They may have to learn some lessons, such as electing the best leaders, for themselves."

—Lion Cheryl Kerns, Leo Club Program advisory panelist and District 17 A Leo Program chairperson in Kansas

Read the announcement of the new Leo Club program (May 1968 LION).

BE PART OF THE CELEBRATION!



Membership Awards

Check out all of the awards you can earn!







Lionsclubs.org/CentennialMembership

Lions' Compassion Helps Expand Transplant House in Wisconsin

BY ERIC MARGULES

Imagine you need a kidney transplant—imagine the anxiety and stress of putting your health in someone else's hands. Now imagine traveling to a new city to get the operation, knowing you don't have—or can't afford—a place to stay during your recovery.

This is the situation facing many people who travel to Madison, Wisconsin, for transplant operations at the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics and lack the resources or social connections to secure housing while they're in town. Transplants are complex surgical procedures that typically require significant time for recovery and preparation, so having a place to stay is essential to a successful operation.

Thankfully, there's hope.

Since January 2013, Restoring Hope Transplant House (RHTH) has been a home away from home for patients who are in the Madison area to receive medical transplants. The home provides up to six weeks of temporary housing for transplant patients—and their adult family members and caregivers—in an environment that offers compassion and supports healing.

And it works. In fact, it works so well that there often aren't enough beds for potential residents.

After learning that the house was experiencing weeks at a time without vacancy, the Lions from Multiple District 27 D1 decided to help. In addition to fundraising, Lions secured a \$75,000 Standard grant from Lions



Restoring Hope Transplant House will more than triple the available rooms for transplant patients in Madison, Wisconsin.

Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) to help fund an expansion of RHTH.

The first phase of RHTH's expansion plan, completed in the summer, includes the renovation of the current patient rooms to include double and twin-sized beds, as well as the improvement of a community kitchen, on-site laundry and other amenities.

With the second phase of the expansion plan, set to begin in the near future, RHTH hopes to expand its capacity from five private rooms to 16, dramatically increasing its ability to serve patients in need.

After years of fundraising and with contributions from 10 different districts, Lions' and LCIF's contribu-

tions have helped RHTH secure more than \$200,000 of the more than \$1 million required for the expansion.

"We are so grateful for [Lions'] support of transplant families and Restoring Hope Transplant House," says Cindy Herbst, executive director and co-founder of RHTH. "We are beyond words with your extremely generous donation that will allow us to expand this home. The stories of our guests are moving and powerful. Having the Lions as partners gives us greater courage, resolve, compassion and energy to do the right thing in serving others."

For information on Standard grants and to find out how your Lions club can apply, visit lcif.org.

Caring for Mothers and their Babies

BY CASSANDRA BANNON

At meetings in their clubhouse Quito Lions trade gossip, jest with one another and plan projects. Next to the clubhouse is a concrete reminder of their commitment to service: the Quito los Olivos Lions have operated a community medical center in the space adjacent to its clubhouse since 1997.

Funded by modest patient fees, the Quito los Olivos Medical Center is staffed by a team of 22 medical professionals and operates six days per week. From microsurgery and neurosurgery to ophthamology to maxillofacial surgery, the clinic provides routine and specialized medical care to approximately 20,000 people each year. Since 2002, the clinic has offered extensive services for cleft lip and cleft palate, free of charge to the families in need of those services.

Quito, Ecuador's capital, sits high in the Andean foothills. Chartered in 1980, the Quito los Olivos Lions Club has 29 members.

Recently, their clinic has seen an increase in the number of low-income expectant mothers seeking care. The private clinics in the area typically charge US\$30 to US\$50 for prenatal and maternity services, which is beyond the financial means of many residents. Consequently, more women are turning to the Quito los Olivos Medical Center for quality, acessible health care and family services.

To accomodate the increased demand, local Lions clubs built a second floor on the clinic to house a dedicated maternity ward. With the new space allocated and the professional expertise already on hand, all that was missing was the medical equipment.

Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) awarded a US\$59,043 Standard grant to the Lions of Ecuador to equip the new maternity clinic. Local Lions used these funds to purchase critical supplies such as an infant radiant warmer, a fetal monitor, newborn cribs, three electric hospital beds, a portable electrocardiograph machine, other diagnostic tools, a pediatric scale and birthing table.

"It is important to face life with a smile," says patient Laura Inés Rodríguez Zapater. "LCIF and the Quito los Olivos Lions Club have provided us with a reason to smile!"



The Lions of Ecuador remain committed to improving the health of mothers and their children.

The LCIF grant has substantially increased the amount of services the clinic can offer. The new maternity clinic now provides women of childbearing age with family planning education, health screenings, prenatal care, delivery and post-partum care. The clinic also offers vaccinations, nutritional counseling and therapeutic services for children. The addition of the maternity clinic means the Quito los Olivos Medical Center will now serve an expected 30,000 people each year, which means healthier mothers, healthier families and a healthier community.

LCIF Standard grants provide matching funds from US\$10,000 to US\$100,000 to Lions clubs or districts that have identified a need within their community and have a plan to address that need. Projects must serve a large number of people and must be beyond the scope of traditional club and/or district fundraising activities. Standard grants generally provide capital funding for equipment and infrastructure needs. To learn about Standard grants, please visit lcif.org.

Club News

The Springfield 16 Acres Lions Club and District 33 Y and 33 A **Lions** of **Massachusetts**

participated in the Convoy of Hope, a collaboration of 82 churches and volunteers to help people in need during a five-hour event. More than 1,500 volunteers donated goods and services including new shoes, family photo portraits, haircuts, nutritional educational materials and health services. Lions gave hearing and vision screenings to more than 100 people.

Weatherly Lions in Pennsylvania sponsored a tire collection project and received 45 tires to be recycled.

Waconia Lions and their families in Minnesota personally delivered 510 poinsettia plants to nursing homes, assisted living and senior apartments. Each recipient received the plant and a personal greeting.

Harker Heights Lions in **Texas** donated a commercial coffeemaker to a firehouse and are planning to donate one to another firehouse.

Three members of the **Mount** Vernon Lions Club in Washington traveled to Gaspar Hernandez in the Dominican Republic on a medical mission. Lions Teresa Pugh, Lynn Pugh and Destiny LaGrandeur paid their own way and brought with them 3,000 pair of eyeglasses that Mt. Vernon Lions collected and processed during the year. More than 1,000 people were seen and 1,800 pairs of eyeglasses distributed. Nearly 100 people had cataract surgeries during the five-day trip.

The Rowan Lions Club in Iowa has been hosting a chicken barbecue since 1955. Chartered in 1952 in the rural community of Rowan, population 158, Lions and volunteers serve approximately 600 chicken meals during the annual event.

The North Park Lions Club in California began a "Fresh Food for Families" project in which Lions deliver monthly more than a ton of fresh fruits and vegetables to two public schools in underserved areas. A food bank gives Lions the food at no cost, and members use their own vehicles to deliver the produce in bulk to the schools. Lions also have created a similar fresh food program that helps 100 families. They also deliver holiday food baskets. Last year, they distributed 375 boxes of food weighing 30 pounds each to families in need and distributed sandwiches, water and fruit to 200 homeless people.

The **Amherst Lions Club** in Massachusetts donated a desktop magnifying machine valued at \$3.000 to the Amherst Audubon Library.

Huntertown Lions in **Indiana** helped pay for a ramp installation for

a local family. "This isn't something we do all the time. We just got word that the family needed Lions' help on this project," says Lion Vic Scheele.

The Lake City Lions Club in Florida participated in a sight screening at a daycare center for under-privileged children. Lion Dr. Ron Foreman and his staff from North Florida Eye Care examined 70 children between the ages of 3 and 4 years old. Those who were discovered to have vision problems were referred for further treatment by the club at no cost to the family.

Brazoria Lions in Texas donated \$3,000 to the PET Cart Project, which builds "personal energy transportation" (PET) carts on sturdy frames to enable mobility to handicapped persons in remote regions of the world. Costing \$300 to build, each cart is propelled by a hand crank and has puncture-proof tires



Boise Bench Lions landscape the area surrounding a gazebo at the **Idaho** State Veterans Home. The project cost \$600 for materials, and Lions will maintain the area by continually weeding and planting. To sweeten the gazebo project, Lion Liz Cadinale delivers freshly-baked cookies each week to veterans. Boise Bench Lions have participated in several projects at the home for many years. They also weed and plant gardens on the grounds, have built benches and serve dinner once a month to veterans.

The West Chester Lions Club in Pennsylvania gave a \$1,000 donation to help support Camp Abilities for blind children.

Twenty-two villages in India have been assisted by Lions in **Illinois** and a matching LCIF grant. Raj Rajaram of the Burr Ridge-Hinsdale-Oak **Brook Lions Club** in Illinois collected funds from his club and friends to improve sanitation in poor rural areas. The Lions Club of **Dharamshala** in **India** also contributed \$500 to the effort, bringing total donations to \$5,000. An LCIF grant matched that amount. Working with an agency in India, 176 toilets were built.

Lions in **Atwood**, **Kansas**, delivered 63 baskets of food during the holidays to families in need. They also donated \$1,200 to Atwood's senior center, \$500 to Kansas Service Dogs, \$350 to a food pantry and \$600 to a community garden. Lions distributed nearly \$31,500 last year to help local organizations and individuals.

Saddle River Valley Lions in New Jersey hosted a second Leo Night for more than 100 Leos they sponsor in three clubs. Leos met Lions and told of the individual projects in which they participate including working with Habitat for Humanity, spending time with Alzheimer patients and donating gifts to pediatric patients.

Seventh- and eighth-graders from a middle school in **Pennsylvania** collect eyeglasses for Lions, including the **Chambersburg Noontime** and **Greencastle Lions Clubs**. The glasses are sent to a regional facility in New Jersey for processing and shipment to developing countries.



The Colorado Springs Security Lions Club in Colorado spend \$9,000 to purchase new back-to-school clothes for 93 children from low-income families. In addition to 10 Lions, volunteers included "Lion for the Day" volunteers who consisted of school personnel and counselors from the Colorado Lions Camp. Each child was able to personally pick out a wardrobe by accompanying volunteers through a Walmart store. After the shopping spree, the store treated children to snacks.

In **Oklahoma**, 16 members of the **North Enid Lions Club**, one of whom wore a lion costume, volunteered as Salvation Army bell ringers for a day.

For 70 years, **Johnston Lions** in **lowa** have devoted many projects to community schools. They volunteer, sponsor an awards banquet and a teacher appreciation day, provided bleachers for a school gymnasium, gave flags and paid for stadium press boxes, donate scholarships and park cars for school football games. The club also tests children's vision, sponsors an annual book sale to benefit the library and sells discounted trees for residents to purchase.

Smith Mountain Lake Lions in Virginia donated to a community hospice program that provides for hospice care and pastoral counseling for families.

The **Guhan Ayudante Lions Club** in **Guam** donated a wheelchair to an elementary school student with cerebral palsy. Additionally, they gave supplies to another student at the school who has a medical condition.

Venice Lions in Florida visit day care and early learning centers every week from September to May to screen children for vision problems. In about five percent of the testing, a follow-up visit with a professional is needed. Lions send a detailed analysis of what their screening discovered as well as a personal phone call from a Lion. The 52-member club also initiated a publicity campaign with posters that read, "Lions are Loose on the Streets," and detail their many service activities.

District 19 A Lions in **British Columbia, Canada,** presented the Medal of Merit Award to an off-duty Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer who braved a house fire to rescue a 2-year-old child inside. The medal, available for purchase from Lions Clubs International, is given to citizens as special recognition for acts of heroism, humanitarian and outstanding community contribution.



Azle Lions in Texas sponsor an annual Angel Tree project for underprivileged children in their community of nearly 11,000. Last year, more than 1,000 children received gifts from Lions, police and other local organizations and individuals who partner yearly to make the holidays brighter for them. Lions sponsor 20 trees located throughout Azle where people can pick "angels" from a tree to purchase gifts for them. If they choose to donate money, Lions and other volunteers purchase and wrap the gifts for youngsters whose names are chosen. Bikes, helmets, books, toys and winter clothing are just some of the presents donated to children.

Neillsville Lions in **Wisconsin** arranged for and delivered a lift chair from the Clark County adaptive equipment loan program for senior citizens.

The Hertford Lions Club in North Carolina gave each of three graduating high school seniors a \$1,000 scholarship in memory of former member Jim "Catfish" Hunter, who helped start the scholarship fund by purchasing and autographing balls for sale by the club as a fundraiser. Hunter, inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1987, died from ALS in 1999.

Continued on page 53

Thank You

Going the Distance

When Susan Graham-Gray was diagnosed with Stargardt's disease in 2000, she felt helpless as she gradually became legally blind from the inherited form of macular degeneration. She turned to her lifelong love of running to cope. "I got on my treadmill, which I called my driver's seat. It was the only time I felt in control," says 47-year-old Graham-Gray. Not only did getting on that treadmill turn into a career, but a decade later, thanks to Lions, Graham-Gray reached a level of independence she never thought possible.

Now a professional runner, the upbeat and energetic Graham-Gray has won numerous races and even qualified for, competed in and completed the 2008 Olympic Marathon Trials—the first legally blind runner to accomplish this. But Graham-Gray was still feeling held back—until she found out about Leader Dogs. The Beaver Creek Lions in Maryland helped her receive her charming yellow Lab, Rascal. "I can walk to the store, the bank. I can get out and do what I want to in life. And Rascal has



Susan Graham-Gray and Rascal enjoy an outing to a park.

been positive for the whole family. My three kids didn't want to leave me alone, which wasn't fair for them. Now they know it's OK because Rascal is with me," Graham-Gray explains.

When Rascal needed leg surgery recently, it was the Chambersburg Noontime Lions' turn to help; the Pennsylvania club covered half the cost. After a recovery period, Rascal is back on track with Graham-Gray. "When Rascal was recovering, I really missed him and realized how much he's changed my life. He's so special—and so are Leader Dogs and the Lions."

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

December 5th is INTERNATIONAL LEO DAY!

Celebrate this annual occasion by organizing a joint service activity with your local Leo club. When Lions invite Leos to serve, they energize their club and nurture the next generation of service leaders.

No Leo club in your area? Consider sponsoring a new Alpha Leo club. International Leo Day is the perfect opportunity to engage local youth. Get started today!

Leo Club Program Department leo@lionsclubs.org facebook.com/leoclubs



Anniversaries

Information

November 2015

95 Years: Arkansas City, Kan.; Ashland, Ohio; Galesburg, Ill.; Pittsburgh, Pa.

90 Years: Covington, Tenn.; Hellertown, Pa.; Magna, Utah; Manheim, Pa.; Maplewood, N.J.; Michigan City, Ind.; Mount Kisco, N.Y.; Petaluma Host, Calif.; Torrington, Conn.

85 Years: Colfax, La.; Dunbar, W.V.

80 Years: Clinton, N.C.; Denmark, S.C.; Hartsville, Tenn.; Laurel, Del.; Loudon, Tenn.; Oakville, ON, CAN; Phil So Phil, Pa.; Queenstown, Md.; Walterboro, S.C.

75 Years: Bellville, Texas; Cardston, AB, CAN; Chicago Jefferson Park, Ill.; Claflin, Kan.; Columbus, Kan.; Edgerton, Wis.; Elizabeth City, N.C.; Fort Thomas, Ky.; Latrobe, Pa.; Mariposa, Calif.; Metairie, La.; Monocacy, Md.; Norco, La.; Oakland Mt. Lake Park, Md.; Westminster, Md.

50 Years: Ashfield, Mass.; Attleboro South Attleboro, Mass.; Bedford, N.H.; Delano, Minn.; Essex Gray Ridge, Mo.; Fifield, Wis.; Garnavillo, Iowa; Harbour Breton, NL, CAN; Kahaluu, Hawaii; Kotzebue, Alaska; McGregor, Minn.; Oakland City, Ind.; Pasadena, NL, CAN; Plover Whiting, Wis.; Prince George Spruce City, BC, CAN; Randolph, Ohio; Saanich, BC, CAN; South Haven, Ind.; Stamford, Conn.; Stewart, Minn.; Village, La.; Weston, Mo.

25 Years: Alexandria Golden Brothers, Minn.; Bellingham Harbor View, Wash.; Harlingen Amigas, Texas; Long Island Portuguese, N.Y.; Santee Rancho Santee, Calif.

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

View the Higher Key Awards.

In Memoriam

Past International Director Frederick "Fred" Cole, who served on the international board of directors from 1990 to 1992, has died. A Life member of the Mt. Olivet Lions Club in West Virginia since 1974, he also served as a trustee and president of the West Virginia Lions Sight Conservation. A United States Marine Corps veteran, Cole was the recipient of numerous Lions awards and involved in his community and church.

For the Record

As of August 31, Lions Clubs International had 1,377,872 members in 46,587 clubs and 743 districts in 210 countries and geographic areas. There were 381,597 Melvin Jones Fellow recipients and 78,993 Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow recipients.

Convention Countdown

2016

June 24-28

2017 Chicago, Illinois
June 30-July 4

2018 Las Vegas, Nevada
June 29-July 3

2019 Milan, Italy
July 5-9

2020 Singapore, Singapore

June 26-30

Fukuoka, Japan

Club News

Continued from page 51

Lake Havasu City London Bridge Lions in Arizona sponsor an annual grocery store shopping spree fundraiser that generates approximately \$1,000. The winner of a ticket raffle sale has two minutes to load groceries from the shelves into a cart. Waseca Lions and Boy Scouts in Minnesota celebrated their partnership at a Lions meeting on the 100th anniversary of community Scouts. A Boy Scout leader attended the meeting to thank Lions for their continuous support of Troop 85.

Members of the **Tokai Lions Club** in **South Africa** sponsored an environmental cleanup with children in Cape Town to teach them the importance of keeping their community clean. Together they collected more than 120 bags of trash.

District 204 in **Guam** sponsored a health fair that drew 350 participants from the community who had blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol screenings.



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Club News Exclusive to the Digital LION

The Chester Lions Club in New Jersey gave a \$500 donation to the National Federation of the Blind. The funds will be used by the foundation's Braille and learning programs.

The Quakerstown Lions Club in Pennsylvania donated 850 pounds of food to a food pantry. Its cash equivalent was approximately \$2,500.

The Hamilton City Lions Club in California assembled 50 back-to-school supply boxes for low-income children. Lions delivered and mailed letters asking local businesses for donations. They intend to expand the program next year to include other schools.

Fort Vancouver Lions in Washington raised \$8,000 by selling 470 pails of hand-picked cherries and strawberries. Lions sponsor berry sales as an annual fundraiser.

Westminster Lions in Maryland donated three scholarships to graduating seniors and also helped serve more than 80 meals at a soup kitchen.

In **Sri Lanka**, two members of the **Lions Club** of **Alubomulla**, Rohantha De Fonseka, a past district governor of 306 A2, and his wife, Yamuna, celebrated their wedding anniversary by constructing a house for a family in need living in a remote village.

The Warwick Lions Club in New York donated \$1,000 to Meals on Wheels.

The Raigarh City Lions Club in India screened more than 1,300 men, women and children during a dental and eye screening project. Follow-up treatment was provided free of charge by medical professionals.

Hutto Lions in **Texas** have screened 440 children and recommended eye exams for 63 since last year.



She may be squeamish around needles, but a student's momentary displeasure at having her blood drawn may just save her life. The **Bajkul Lions Club** in **India** organized a thalassemia awareness and screening at Barabari S.K. High School. More than 300 students had their blood screened for this red blood cell disorder that causes approximately 25,000 deaths worldwide every year.

The Cheyenne Sunrise Lions Club in Wyoming sponsored its 23rd annual Ride for Sight. Funds raised from the project go to vision clinics and projects.

Members of the Francis Scott Key Lions Club in Maryland have been supporting a food pantry for the past 10 years. Members bring at least one canned good or boxed item to each meeting for the collection.

Ridgeland Lions in Connecticut gave \$7,500 to the Boys & Girls Club. The donation is half the profits Lions raised at an annual golf tournament they sponsor.

Warren Lions in Arkansas gave a donation to Miracle League to help build a baseball field for special needs children. The club also gave a donation to purchase choir risers for the Warren Cultural Center.

Members of the Jamshedpur Tatanagar Lions Club in India taught elementary students about healthy eating and how to prepare nutritious meals during a recent project.

The South Carroll Lioness-Lions Club in Maryland participated in National Night Out, an effort to involve community members in crime prevention activities and promote neighborhood partnerships. Lions held a free raffle of an emergency bag containing a weather radio, flashlights, batteries, bottled water, canned goods, wet wipes and a first aid kit.

The Poongodi Chandrasekar Lions Club in India organized a career day for 325 girls, who learned from an expert the employment options available to them after finishing their schooling or training. The participants also learned how to prepare for a job interview.

The Jackson Lions Club in Louisiana gave school supplies and a donation to an elementary school to provide necessary provisions for children from low-income families.

Brandywine Lions in **Maryland** sponsored a Red Cross blood drive at a fire station. The drive drew 53 donors.

In Alabama, the Anniston Lions Club gave a \$500 donation to a high school band.

Blandford & District Lions in England sponsored a street fair to raise funds to help disabled and blind veterans.

Members of The Dalles Lions Club in Oregon transported tissue from a hospital to the Legacy Tumor Bank in Portland to facilitate cancer research.

The Waco Founders Lions Club in Texas checked more than 100 people for vision abnormalities during a screening.

The Southport Lions Club in Indiana spent \$3,000 to purchase 10 body cameras for the Southport police department for officers to wear to record public interactions. Every on-duty officer will wear a body cam on duty.

Turlock Lions in California raised \$4,500 for a high school to purchase new bleachers. The money was raised from the club's annual crab feed and wine booth at the county fair.



A youngster sits high atop a horse at camp. **Highland Heights Lions** in **Ohio** Lions pay for sight impaired children to attend a horse therapy camp.



The Monmouth Lions Club in Maine, in conjunction with the Monmouth Department of Public Works, created a town Adopt-a-Highway program. The state does not sponsor Adopt-a-Highway, but Lions worked with the town to develop one that now has 10 civic organizations participating in twice-yearly cleanups. A new sign recognizes the clubs participating in the effort.

The Grand Cayman Lions Club gave a \$20,000 donation to the Cayman Islands Cancer Society. The money was raised from a walk/run event.

The Brazoria Lions Club in Texas conducted vision screenings at a Head Start program, discovering that five out of 45 preschoolers needed further testing.

The Christianburg Lions in Virginia sponsored a golf tournament that netted the club more than \$4,000 for sight-related activities.

In India, members of the Sangur Greater Lions Club sponsored a blood drive that collected 50 pints of blood.

Members of the Farmville Lions Club in Virginia gave a donation to the Prince Edward Volunteer Rescue Squad. In Georgia, the Norcross Lions Club screened more than 450 children and 90 adults at an elementary school. Lions discovered that 90 children and four adults needed to be referred for further testing and possibly needed eyeglasses.

As part of a Children's Dignity Week celebration, members of the Bhubaneswar Crown Lions Club in India sponsored debate and music contests for 70 students from the Odisha Blind Association. Lions from other clubs attended the event, and tea and snacks were provided for all participants and their families. In another activity in recognition of the special weeklong celebration, Lions prepared and served school lunches to students at a school for the deaf.

The Sorrento Lions Club in British Columbia, Canada, collected 547 pairs of eyeglasses, 367 pairs of lenses and 246 carrying cases for the Canadian Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center.

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Dane La Joye, Managing Editor

Roar of Approval

Jim Platzer, a member of the Fort Wayne Shoaff Park Lions Club in Indiana, along with his wife, Janice, can now add author to his long list of achievements, which include former private pilot, marathoner and motivational speaker. After losing his sight gradually several years ago, Platzer received his guide



dog Maddy in 2005. Their successful pairing led Platzer to co-author with illustrator BarbarAnn Fitzgerald a 75-page children's book about his experiences with Maddy called "The Lion-Hearted Puppy: A Guide Dog's Journey." Platzer says the book, written from his guide dog's perspective, is a tribute to all service dogs and includes life lessons for children. Sadly, Maddy passed away three years ago, and Platzer's new dog Mica now guides him. "I may not be able to see, but I'm living life in high definition, thanks to Lions. If they hadn't first helped me get a Leader dog, I wouldn't be able to help and give back to my community. I wouldn't be able to appreciate the things I do today," says Platzer. He's seeking a publisher for his book. "There's so much good that service animals do in the world. I really want to support Leader Dogs for the Blind and Lions, and show the world how they serve," he explains.

Watch a video of Jim Platzer flying the skies again with a little help from a friend.

Murray Leeper of the **Rockport Lions Club** in **Texas** came up with a clever way to boost membership around his community. Leeper printed at his own expense business cards with his name and contact information and pertinent

information about his club's significant projects and meeting times. With a tagline of "Ask Me how to Become a Lion," Leeper says he's handed out around 200 and several people have joined because of his invitation to attend a luncheon meeting.

Past District Governor **Shamir Andrew Ally**, a native of Guyana and member of the **Indian Trail Lions Club** in **North Carolina**, and his wife Maryann, have donated nearly 1,500 textbooks, CD-ROMs and videos to the University of Guyana Library. The couple's donated business books cover subjects from accounting to strategic management and are valued at more than US\$95,000.

Safford Lions in Arizona mourn the loss of Lion Carl Watson, but continue to be inspired by his enthusiasm, devotion to serving and joyful presence. Watson (right) and his wife, Sharon, were in a singing group and



often sang patriotic songs at Lions events, community celebrations and a nursing home. He continued to perform until his failing health no longer allowed him to sing. "I can't think of anyone more dedicated to Lionism," says fellow club member Carolyn Vessels.

In Virginia, when **Dan Dellinger** became a **Vienna Host Lion** in 2008, he jumped right in to actively help at Christmas tree sales, summer picnics and anywhere else help was needed. A former U.S. Army officer, Dellinger was appointed to a White House committee to investigate employment opportunity improvement for returning veterans. He was also elected national commander of the American Legion in 2013.

A year with a lot to smile about.



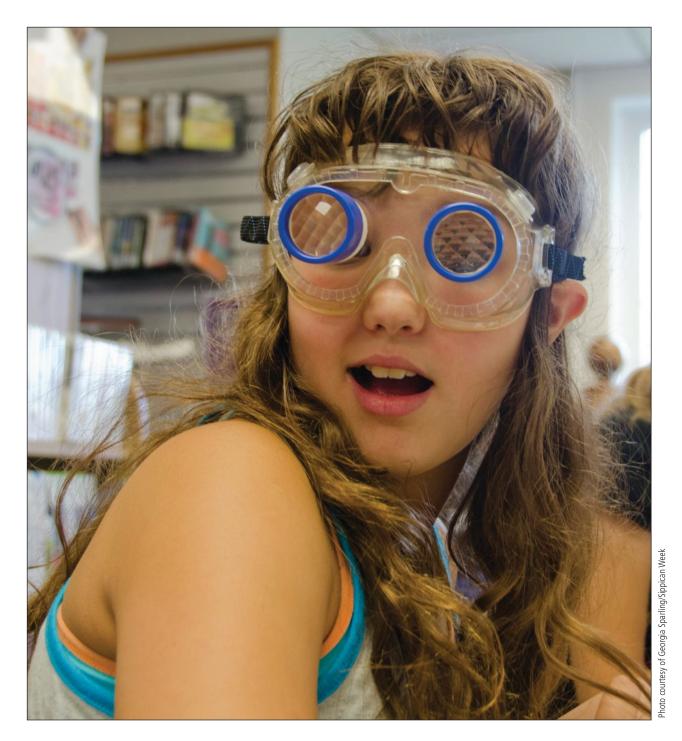
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Last Roar



Bug-Eyed

Bridget Farias tries out glasses that provide "compound bug vision." In contrast to inset human eyes, the compound eyes of insects "bug" outward. Bridget was enrolled in the Mad Science program at Plumb Library in Rochester, Massachusetts. The Rochester Lions Club underwrote the summer enrichment program as well as summer reading activities.



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