

# LION

MARCH 2017

## A Life Redeemed

Saved by a Service Dog



Lions Clubs International





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22

# Contents

**March 2017**

Volume 99 | Number 7



26

## Features

**22**

### A New

### Leash on Life

Prepared to end her life, Lion Nancy Lagasse put her life back together thanks to a service dog.

**26**

### Manchester United

A Vermont club continues to thrive after recognizing the need to evolve.

**34**

### Dancing with Dad

Dads and daughters happily share the dance floor in Massachusetts.

**40**

### Ascension in a Depression

Lions discover the advantages of unity in the woeful 1930s.



34



40

## Departments

- 3** President's Message
- 10** First Roar
- 13** One of Us
- 14** Service
- 18** Service Abroad
- 44** Foundation Impact
- 45** Club News





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**100th  
International Convention  
Chicago, Illinois  
June 30-July 4, 2017**

# WE SERVE

## MISSION STATEMENT OF LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL:

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

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### POSTMASTERS

Periodicals postage paid at Oak Brook, Illinois 60523 and additional mailing offices. Subscription price, US\$6.00 year, US\$12.00 year mailed outside North America; Single copies, US\$1.00. Send notices of undeliverable copies on form 3579 to LION, 300 W 22nd St Oak Brook IL 60523-8842. “Canada Post Publications Mail No. 40029736 Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: LIONS 2835 Kew Drive, Windsor, ON N8T 3B7.”



## President's Message



William VanLandingham of the Visalia Pride Lions Club and members of the Hanford Breakfast Lions Clubs, the Hanford Leo Club and other clubs in California came together to provide food, gas, supplies and toys to families who lost their homes to fires in Lake Isabella. Clubs will continue to meet local needs even as Lions Clubs International promotes a new service platform.

## A New Service Platform for our Second Century

When I was younger in the 1960s, the winds of change blew. Then again, those winds are always blowing. “Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future,” President John F. Kennedy said. So we have to manage the inevitable change. “Change with direction” is how I like to put it. We need to change the world in a positive manner.

Lions Clubs International is changing with direction. We are moving ahead with a new service platform. Our past is still relevant, and we’ll still help the blind, support youth and do the many things that clubs do. Besides focusing on vision, we’ll control diabetes, address childhood cancer, protect the environment and curb hunger. These five areas represent our new global service framework.

Our work with diabetes will be emphasized. Diabetes is a rapidly growing scourge both in developed and developing nations. Lions will increase awareness and expand screening and treatment programs.

We’ll also really step up our environmental efforts, which really matter to younger Lions and Leos. We’ll work for clean water and air, better sanitation and more passive sources of energy.

As for vision, besides assisting the blind and continuing to build eye clinics and hospitals, we’ll help those with impaired vision. We’ll increase our eye screening of children and devote more resources to growing problems such as macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma.

A common chord we will strike in serving will be supporting youth. We’ll especially target pediatric cancer. Sadly, survival rates are as low as 10 percent in some nations.

We chose this framework after much study and consultation with Lions and Leos. We are confident our new global service framework matches the interests and capabilities of Lions and Leos.

Our goal is to serve 200 million people annually by 2021. That’s an ambitious plan: it triples our current humanitarian impact. But we know that in the past when Lions have been asked to reach a goal they smashed past it.

The world is rapidly changing. Lions will meet that change with a renewed, refocused commitment to serving the world’s needs. Our second century of service will greatly expand our scope and reach and ensure Lions remain the greatest force for good among all service groups.



Chancellor Bob Corlew  
Lions Clubs International President





[The Big Picture

Peachy Keen





The University of Alabama's Crimsonettes and a Lion mascot gather before the 2016 Chick-fil-a Peach Bowl Parade on Dec. 31 in Atlanta. Lions Clubs International sponsored the parade, viewed by an estimated 10,000 people. The 12-block parade that ended at the Georgia Dome included six floats, 10 marching bands and 10 Corvette convertibles with local dignitaries. Alabama thumped Washington 24 to 7 in the Peach Bowl to earn a spot in the national title game. Photos by Karen Wink



## [The Big Picture



Unimpeachable Pageantry





(Clockwise from left) Past International President Jim Ervin of Georgia (white coat) joins other Lions on the Lions float in the Peach Bowl Parade. The drum major of the Selma High School Marching Band from Alabama leads his band down Peachtree Street. Harry the Husky, the University of Washington mascot, entertains spectators. Christine Phuong-Ly Albright (left), 2017 USA National Miss Southern States Teen, and Lindsay Dobbs, 2017 Miss Southern States, smile at the crowd. A colorful Alabama fan cheers on the Roll Tide band and cheerleaders.



[The Big Picture



Sea Lions





Essential to the ecosystem as well as to tourism, coral reefs off Tioman Island in Malaysia have been damaged by coastal development and overfishing. The Pekan Nenas Lions Club is using innovative steel structures to preserve the reefs.

## WATCH OFFERS TEXTING IN BRAILLE

A South Korean startup has developed a smartwatch that outputs texts in braille. It means the visually impaired will no longer have to rely on a voice system like Siri to read their texts aloud. Dot Watch connects by Bluetooth to an iOS or Android device and, besides the time and an alarm, displays incoming texts and tweets on a watch face that displays four braille characters at a time. A grid of pins that rise and fall produce the combinations making up the braille alphabet and numerals on the watch face. It vibrates when the wearer receives a text, then displays the text before returning to the time. Made of lightweight aluminum, the watch weighs 35 grams. More than 150,000 people have pre-ordered the watch, expected to be on the market for \$290 by March. For information: dotincorp.com.



The Dot Watch displays time, texts and tweets in braille.

## A BARN-RAISING AWARENESS

The view is pretty much the same on US 30 west of Convoy in western Ohio: farm fields and barns. Until you see a barn with a 40-foot by 30-foot vinyl sign publicizing the centennial of Lions Clubs



Proud of the sign and Lions are (from left) Jerry Koenig and Dan Bonifas of the Venedocia Lions, Roy Ringwald of the Middle Point Lions, Larry Swords of the Lima Lions and Don Wiechart and Ken Warnecke of the Spencerville Lions

International. Eight area clubs collaborated on the project. "You can't miss it. It's great advertising," says Larry Dealey, a Convoy Lion whose barn for his grain farm hosts the sign. The four-lane road, part of the old Lincoln Highway, is heavily traveled with about 8,000 cars zipping by each day. A bright spotlight illuminates the sign at night.

## RIVER BLINDNESS ELIMINATED FROM GUATEMALA

Guatemala has become the latest country to eliminate onchocerciasis, known as river blindness, the World Health Organization announced. In 2013, Colombia became the first nation to be free of river blindness, and its elimination in Ecuador and Mexico was confirmed in 2014 and 2015, respectively. LCIF has provided The Carter Center with millions of dollars in grants to fight river blindness, and local Lions clubs provide logistical support and help mobilize communities to receive the medication ivermectin. Other partners in the disease eradication include the Pan American Health Organization, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Merck (which donates the medication). River blindness is caused by the bites of flies that live near rivers and transmit parasitic worms. The disease, besides its debilitating personal effects, takes an enormous economic toll, preventing people from working, harvesting crops and caring for children. Some 600,000 people in Latin America had been at risk of contracting the disease. Lions and The Carter Center continue to work against river blindness in Brazil and Venezuela and in large swaths of Africa.



## VIDEO MAGAZINE FEATURES KIDSIGHT

The latest LQ, the Lions Quarterly Video Magazine, profiles Lions KidSight. The January LQ also features a preview of the Centennial celebration at the international convention in Chicago this summer, Lions in Greenland improving the environment as part of the Centennial Service Challenge and the impact of the Peace Poster Contest on a young woman. Be sure to “like” and share LQ on social media. LQ is available on the LCI website, YouTube, iTunes and DVD.



The latest LQ previews the international convention in Chicago; former U.S. Vice President Al Gore will be the keynoter.

[Watch the latest LQ.](#)

## 57 Years Ago in the LION



### MARCH 1960

A trained reader records the latest edition of Newsweek; the tapes are made into records for the blind by the American Printing House for the Blind in Louisville. Thousands of blind listeners, as well as libraries and schools for the blind, received the “talking magazine” sometimes only hours after the printed one was available on newsstands. Finis E. Davis, the first vice president of Lions International, was superintendent of the American Printing House for the Blind.

[Read the full story.](#)



## Overheard

**“That week I learned how to make authentic tiramisu, explained that we no longer fought the Native Americans and tried to teach them to say ‘howdy.’”**

—Quinn Spear, 17, on his Youth Exchange week in Italy made possible by the Midland Downtown and Midland West Side Lions Clubs in Texas. From the Midland Reporter-Telegram.

**“When I got home there was food in the fridge that I just had to put in the microwave and warm up. Who did that? No one would claim it, but I know it was the Lions club.”**

—Van VanLandingham after his long hospital stay. He’s a member of the Visalia Pride Lions Club in California, the area’s first gay service club. From the Visalia Times.

**“People are drinking more beer. It’s been a good year.”**

—Russell Hague of the Crooked River Ranch Lions Club in Oregon on his club’s bountiful recycling of cans and bottles. From the Bulletin.





Deade Apgar-Herman retired after 46 years with Lions Clubs International.

### LONGEST-SERVING LIONS EMPLOYEE RETIRES

Deade Apgar-Herman began working for Lions Clubs International in 1970 when headquarters was located in Chicago. Back then she worked, not in a cubicle, but in a bullpen with a typewriter, of course, and, unlike now, there were no female division managers and very few male clerical workers. Apgar-Herman, the administrative coordinator for the Convention Division, retired in December after 46 years. She was the longest-tenured employee. "I'll really miss the routine—coming to the office [in Oak Brook now] every day and seeing the same people. I'll miss the camaraderie," she says. She's worked 43 international conventions. She's been nearly everywhere—from Busan, Korea, and Birmingham, England, to Taipei and Toronto. "They're all unique. I have lots of special memories," she says. "What I really appreciated is getting to understand the different cultures. I also really liked how everything came together at the convention. All the problems you anticipated were taken care of." She also enjoyed getting to know Lions who regularly attended convention. "They'd say, 'How's it going? You're still here!'" She does not hesitate a bit in answering a question about retirement plans: "I'll spend time with my two grandkids!"

## By the Numbers

18

Age in months of the steer named Melvin (after Melvin Jones) auctioned off at the Sandwich Fair by Sandwich Lions in Illinois.

560

Pounds of fish fried by Nashua Lions in Iowa at their Friday night fish fry.

23

Outstanding high school baseball players who showcased their skills for scouts and supporters at the (Montgomery) Dixie Lions Club's East-West All-Star Game in Alabama.



50+

Schools that competed in the two-day Joe Wynne Lions Club Invitational, a track meet hosted by Somers Lions in New York.

4,000

Length in feet of a trail at a nature center described in an audio tour for the visually impaired. Made possible by Naperville Noon Lions in Illinois, the audio tour is accessible by a smartphone or regular phone.

18

Age of sharpshooter Mary Patrick, who hopes to qualify for the 2020 Summer Olympics; some of her equipment and competitive costs are paid for by Cornwall Seaway Lions in Ontario, Canada.



66

Pints of blood collected at a blood drive for the American Red Cross by Paw Paw Lions in Michigan.

590

Fish placed in the Conococheague Creek by Chambersburg Lions in Pennsylvania for the 890 anglers who took part in the club's Trout Derby.

3

Hours it took for Scio Lions in New York to wash and clean 232 quarts of strawberries for the Scio Strawberry Festival.





## Debbie Cantrell

Lebanon Host Lions, Missouri

Lion Debbie Cantrell (formerly Whittlesey) was a victim of domestic violence for 22 years before she found help at a local family crisis shelter. She later discovered that Lions support that shelter, and in 2004, she joined the Lebanon Host Lions.

In 2011, she was serving as district governor of southern Missouri when a tornado took 158 lives and injured more than a thousand in nearby Joplin. She led Lions' efforts to help and was honored as a Champion of Change by the White House. In 2016, she took part in the 38th Annual Lions Day with the United Nations.

Cantrell has shared her story with thousands, volunteered at the shelter that helped her start life anew and kept the Lion commitment to serve.

### Can you recall your first Lion meeting?

I knew a gentleman in Lions, and he took me to my first meeting. When I walked in there were about 15 guys and no women. I thought, 'Oh no. I've made a mistake.' But they were very welcoming. They made me feel like they needed me, and that I could help them.

### What made you get more involved?

My club made me feel important. They invited me to a cabinet meeting, and I realized that Lions is a lot more than my local club. I come from 22 years of feeling insignificant. It was great to feel appreciated.

### How would you encourage other women to join Lions?

I would say that as a woman it's very positive, empowering and



Lion Debbie Cantrell (left) and Leo Katie Jackson of Sundre, Canada, share a "girl power" moment at the 2016 Lions Day with the United Nations where both were addressing the issues of women empowerment and gender equality.

supportive. It gives you an avenue to do the things that we as women like to do. We have built-in nurture. We want to take care of people.

My babies are grown and I have grandchildren I love, but it's fulfilling to do activities and events in my community.

### What is your favorite local Lions' project?

We just finished our fifth annual Diabetes Day, partnering with Mercy Hospital in Lebanon. I love to hear people say they've learned something new.

### What do you remember most about your trips to Joplin?

I had a cell phone, and it rang constantly. Lions from California, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New York

City ... all backing us up with their words, their money, their volunteers.

I felt so scared, but at the same time the presence of the Lions everywhere was so strong. We say we're Lions, and we say we care. That's easy to say, but when the actions and the words meet, it's a beautiful thing.

### What's one of the cool things that happened to you as a Lion?

The very first Lion to call me and offer help after the tornado was Lion Kevin Cantrell from the Marshfield, Missouri Lions Club. He's my husband now. It's an amazing thing to happen to a girl who vowed to never get married again. But his heart was a Lion heart. It was easy to fall for him.

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





Edison Metro Leos Lucy Gao (left) and Melanie Zhang perform the sword dance for an audience in New Jersey.

## Lions and Leos Make Beautiful Music Together

A band leader in college, Lion Eddie Hui is able to combine his love of music with service. Hui, 72, is the leader of the Edison Lions Musical Group of New Jersey. The daringly different, 25-member ensemble plays or dances to Broadway show tunes, classical songs by Handel and others, spiritual songs such as “Ave Maria” and, especially, traditional Chinese songs.

The group consists of Lions and Leos and a few non-Lions of Chinese descent. Many are from or connected to the Edison Metro Lions Club, whose members have a Chinese background.

Hui founded the group in 2008, two years after serving as district governor. “I just thought we could have a lot of fun while still doing community service,” Hui says.

The group performs at nursing homes, veterans’ hospitals, adult day care centers and senior centers as well as at Lions’ gatherings. They often play before Chinese-Americans. The two-hour show varies depending on the audience. “We find out who our audience is before we go and adjust our performances accordingly,” Hui explains.

The Leos are talented. They play instrumentals on guitar, saxophone, violin and flute. A Leo who is autistic plays the piano. Leos demonstrate yo-yo tricks and Kung-Fu moves during the show.

The group has evolved. Originally it was about 30 percent Lions and Leos and 70 percent non-Lion. Now only two or three are not Lions or Leos.

The group once performed for free. Then Hui discovered that other performance groups like theirs charged a fee, so he now suggests a small donation. “Setting a higher amount would be against our community service spirit,” he says. Still, the group raised more than \$10,000 last year.

Leos leave the group when they go to college. But that’s not a problem. “We have so many talented young people in our community. But if they want to perform with us, they have to be Leos,” says Hui. “So the clubs are really growing because these kids want to show what they can do. I see our group continuing to perform for a long, long time.”

## Learning Tech Skills from Blind Teachers

In Trinidad, Leon George voluntarily shares his computer skills with residents of the Audrey Mollineau Halfway House, a home for women with mental or intellectual disabilities as well as visual impairments.

He can understand some of their frustration because he lost his sight in 1985 as a result of glaucoma.

George and other Lions serve through the Computer Literacy Project started by the Petit Juan Lions Club of San Juan and its branch club based at the Blind Welfare Association of Trinidad and Tobago. George is an instructor there.

“What is most rewarding for me is the enthusiasm and the joy it brings to the women. But the most useful thing for them is teaching them another way to communicate,” he says. “Now these women can read a newspaper online. They can find the information they want and save it.

“We have to take it slow, to exercise a lot of patience. Most of the women are considered mentally challenged because of the trauma they have had in their lives.”

The tutors use a screen reader called Job Access With Speech (JAWS). A computer voice helps them complete actions. Instructions start with beginning skills like finger positioning, typing and saving documents before moving on to word building and email.

Zelma Young-Bernard, president of the Petit Juan Lions, says the project expands the horizons of the otherwise homeless women who have found refuge in the house.

The women with limited concentration may find the program more difficult, but George says he expects interest to grow. “It’s so popular and so encouraging that I think we will be here for a long time,” he says. “And for some, the extra activity also serves as therapy.”



# Sharing Lunch and Life Lessons in Ohio

The children come for the food and leave with a head filled with new knowledge.

Savannah Lions in Ohio host “Savannah Summer” in a park for low-income children when school is out. Picked up by Lions Dick Algeo and Bill Morgan, the bagged lunches come from a food bank in nearby Ashland. The educational component comes from—well, just about anywhere. Deputies from the sheriff’s department once visited with bomb removal robots. Another time Lions arranged for enactors dressed as President Abraham Lincoln and his wife Mary to bring a lunch they would have enjoyed in 1864—hard-boiled eggs, biscuits and ham. Lions in the small town of 412 people also provide Legos, books and games for the children.

The initiative grew from Lion Judy Kocab’s food deliveries to two young brothers after she discovered their family ate leftovers from a diner. “I knew there were children who were hurting, who went to bed hungry. These kids need help,” says Kocab, who worked with Lion Mary Edward to begin “Savannah Summer.”

Kocab is certain the project has made a difference. She recalls Mikey, 10, who lived alone with an alcoholic father. “He often left him to fend for himself. Mikey soaked up all the positive attention from us,” Kocab says. Lions connected a girl who didn’t like school with an after-school tutoring program and arranged for a young single mother to receive a stroller for her baby. “We try to focus on helping even one child or family have a better summer,” says Kocab.



Children examine a hissing cockroach presented by “Amazon Eric” as part of his nature presentation during “Savannah Summer.”

Photo by Lydia Nowakowski



The presentation silver bought by the people of Juneau in 1941 for the USS Juneau has been recovered and brought home by the Mendenhall Flying Lions.

Image courtesy of the Juneau-Douglas City Museum.

In 1941 the people of Juneau, Alaska, united to purchase a silver set for the city’s first namesake ship, the USS Juneau, following tradition to present silver to the Navy officers and crew when a ship is named.

Folks held raffles to raise money. Schoolchildren even donated their milk money.

Seventy-five years later, the Mendenhall Flying Lions, led by their

## Juneau Lions Bring the Silver And History Home

president Donna Hurley, brought the presentation silver home.

The USS Juneau is remembered for its tragic role in American wartime history. Six months after the christening, in November of 1942, 685 men lost their lives when the ship was sunk by a torpedo in the naval Battle of Guadalcanal. Ten men survived.

The silver set was not on board when the ship sunk. It was brought out of U.S. Navy storage twice when subsequent ships were named for Juneau, and then not again until 1987 when a memorial in Juneau was dedicated to the crew.

Hurley helped with the memorial and met the five remaining survivors of the sinking as they toasted their lost mates with the silver cups.

Decades later, in 2014, a friend asked what had become of the silver.

Hurley did not know. But she was bent on finding out.

“After meeting five of the men who survived that tragedy, it kind of puts a place in your heart that’s hard to describe,” she says. “Where there’s a need, there’s a Lion. That’s the first thing that went through my brain.”

Hurley scoured old news reports, and with the help of Jodi DeBruyne, curator of the Juneau-Douglas City Museum, found the silver was stored in San Diego. DeBruyne made arrangements with the U.S. Navy to have the set loaned to the museum for 10 years. But the museum didn’t have the money to ship it, and so one of the Mendenhall Flying Lions flew to San Diego and got it.

“People appreciate having something that remembers the sacrifice those people gave,” says DeBruyne.



## Lions Keep On Truckin'

When Lion David Stark Sr. passed away in 2008, his wife, Deanna Stark, and granddaughter, Rebecca Shockley, joined his Lions club to carry on his legacy.

But that wasn't all. They wanted "something fun to do," says Shockley. Stark had a 1957 American LaFrance fire truck sitting on his driveway in Mehlville, Missouri. He had purchased it for \$600 in the late 1990s, and it quickly became his very large toy and hobby, used primarily for parades.

Eager to keep his love for the Lions alive, Deanna Stark gave the truck to Mehlville Lion Geoff Mees, asking only that he do something positive with it.

What could be more positive than to use it for Lions' projects?

Mees and his fellow Lions stripped, sanded and painted the truck. They raised money for repairs by offering local business sponsorships. Any business that donated \$500 or more would see their name on the truck.



Mehlville Lions rehabbed a 1957 fire truck for parades and projects.

Work on the truck has been steady for the last six years, Mees says. "But I've been really working hard on it for the last 4.5 years. I got new wheels and new tires on it. We painted it a dark blue—Lion blue. And a purple lion's head is airbrushed on the dash."

Mees also built a smoker for the truck, allowing Lions to smoke 16 turkeys at a time. With the help of the neighboring Southside Lions and the Lemay Jefferson Baracks Lions, both in St. Louis, they delivered turkey dinners to 48 families.

The truck is also outfitted with drink taps, and it has parade seating on the back.

Mees says the truck has been instrumental in upping their club membership numbers. "New folks coming into the area see what we're doing. They see the truck," he says. "If they want to hustle and be a part of something good, then they like what we do and they join in."

## Hooked on Crochet

Folsom Lake Lion Cris Gerard heard about the need for help with a crochet project at Folsom State Prison, and she was hooked.

The inmates in California were crocheting hats for babies, but couldn't find places to accept their donations. Gerard says she knew the Lions could help. She enlisted the support of her all-female club of 10, and now inmates in the Hooks N Needles charitable crocheting program are turning out more than 1,000 items a year that the Folsom Lake Lions distribute to nine charities.

"The Lions legitimized our program. Once they stepped up, it all changed," says Marcia Devers, who coordinates the weekly leisure time program that began with an inmate request in 2011.

The group has increased from three men to about 50, says Devers, and their skills have grown from making beanies to hats and scarves, blankets and a variety of stuffed animals including a lion. They are self-taught or taught by a fellow inmate.

"We are just the in-between. We provide them with yarn, and we distribute what they complete," says Gerard. "They do the important part."

The Lions' \$500 budget for the project is usually spent on stuffing. The yarn is donated, and Gerard takes 10 to 12 large bags of yarn to the prison every few weeks.

"The men leave their issues and their daily problems in prison life behind, and they come in here and support each other," explains Devers. "They know their time is well spent because they're giving back."

"These Lions. They might be small, but they're mighty. They get a lot done, and that's impactful for these guys. There are not a lot of things that are motivating and impactful around here on a daily basis. But the Lions are."





(Left) Scandia Marine Lions in Stillwater, Minnesota, grew and gave away more than 350 milkweed plants to support the monarch butterflies whose numbers are dwindling because of habitat loss.

## Growing the Number of Monarch Butterflies in Minnesota

Scandia Marine Lions Janie O'Connor and Marilyn Opp were in line for dinner at their club meeting in Stillwater, Minnesota, when an idea began to sprout.

Opp had read in a previous LION magazine about the decline in the number of monarch butterflies because of habitat loss and the need to plant more milkweed to support them. O'Connor, a naturalist whose lifelong interest in monarch butterflies led to her being known as the club's "butterfly lady," had read it as well.

They agreed that the Lions could help.

The women planted a few test seeds in pots, and O'Connor, who first raised caterpillars and butterflies as a childhood 4H project, watered and watched as milkweed grew in her living room window.

Soon the two had planted their service project idea in other Lions' heads. Lion Don Peterson offered his greenhouse, hundreds of pots were donated, and O'Connor washed the pots in her bathtub.

Lions and friends helped plant 418 pots of milkweed from O'Connor's collection of about 1,600 seeds. Eighty-nine percent of the seeds germinated.

But their work wasn't done. When the greenhouse got too warm, the women moved the plants to Lion Dan Lee's fenced garden plot, nestling them between his garden vegetables.

"We were lucky. It rained," recalls Opp.

Not long after, they loaded more than 350 thriving plants onto Lee's hay wagon and drove slowly—8 mph—into town to share their plants with fellow Lions. Leftovers were given away at a farmer's market.

From start to finish the project took about eight weeks, O'Connor says. "But when you have a passion, you don't call it work."

"You just need a couple like-minded people, first to be excited about it and then to champion each other so you keep going," adds Opp.

O'Connor wears a T-shirt that says, "If you plant it, they will come." She's talking about milkweed and monarchs. But apparently the same can be said of the Scandia Marine Lions.

## Persistence Yields Potatoes in N. Hampshire

Lions in Henniker, New Hampshire, expected the usual garden pests when they proposed planting a vegetable garden to support local food pantries.

Lion Jerry Eisen, a lifelong gardener, was glad to take on the challenge.

What Eisen did not anticipate was the stack of paperwork and years of red tape that plagued their efforts to grow vegetables on government-owned land and acquire water from the only close water source, Amy Brook.

Eisen persevered though, "so our club could follow through on our pledge to serve others," says Lion Marti Capuco. Finally, in their fifth growing season, the Lions' garden had water and plentiful produce despite the local drought.

The quarter-acre garden is a joint effort between the Henniker and Hopkinton Lions Clubs to support food pantries in both towns. Although Eisen spearheads the project and mows, other Lions contribute Saturday time for chores, plus Tuesday evenings during harvest season.

Their reward: 1,000 to 3,000 pounds of produce a year to share with others.

"It's been a very successful joint effort. People are enthusiastic, and they put in a lot of time," Eisen says.

Although the idea for the garden was planted more than six years ago, it took a year to get the lease for a community garden on the fertile U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land. Then it was four more years before permission was granted to pump water from the nearby brook. Lions had to haul water.

"It's a good thing it finally came through," says Eisen. "This past year was the driest. If we hadn't gotten water, we would not have had a garden."

The Lions grow tomatoes, cabbage, eggplant, string beans, cucumbers, squash and, of course, potatoes. Local schoolchildren have also helped. "It was like an Easter egg hunt for them harvesting potatoes," says Eisen. "You never saw anything like it."



JAPAN

## Blind Children Enjoy Animals

Bending low, the blind children put their ears close to the chicks to better hear their chirping. They touched the shell of the tortoise, surprised at its cold hardness. They smiled in wonder when they heard the high-pitched meows of the cats.

The visit of a mobile petting zoo to the Chiba Prefecture School for the Blind was a day of discovery and delight. “The kids really look forward to this event every year,” says Assistant Principal Kazutoshi Noshiro. “A lot of them are shy at first—they never touched an animal before.

“It’s such a precious experience for them. I always try to encourage them to be brave and touch because that direct contact with another living thing, it’s so important to the psyche.”

The Yotsukaido Lions Club has sponsored a special day for the school, the only one of its kind in Chiba, for 20 years. It evolved from a potato digging event and then a peanut digging event before becoming what it is today.

The activity was held in the schoolyard. The children wandered among geese, chicks, miniature dachshunds, cats, goats, marmots, ponies, rabbits and turtles. Being around the animals allowed the children to compare what they knew with what they experienced. A song they know has the lyrics: “nobody walks as slow as you, Tortoise.” But one young girl discovered otherwise: the tortoise “can move fast,” she observed.

The line to ride the ponies was long. The next day many of the children, asked to draw what they experienced, chose to depict a pony.

Interacting with the animals was highly beneficial to the students, says Noshiro. “Because of their visual impairments, the sensation of touch is so important for these children’s development,” he says. “It’s a wonderful experience that lets them understand the shapes and warmth of other living beings.”



A child from the Chiba Prefecture School for the Blind rides a pony.

AUSTRALIA

## It’s the Best of Times for Dickens’ Descendant

The Bookmart run by the Glenside Lions Club is regarded as the best used book shop in South Australia. It has a good back story, too: a volunteer is a descendent of Charles Dickens.

Jacqui Holdich volunteers because she’s a big reader and wants to serve her community. But the rare and out-of-print books on Dickens she’s discovered in unpacking boxes of donated books have turned her into somewhat of a Dickens scholar and transformed her into a sought-after speaker.

Holdich is a first cousin of Dickens four times removed. They share a grandfather, Charles Barrow, whose daughter, Elizabeth, married Dickens’ father. Growing up, Holdich knew she was related to the writer, but last year she traced her exact connection through Ancestry.com. “I was excited and told all my friends at the Bookmart,” she says. “Not everyone has a relative buried in Westminster Abbey.”

Holdich has been a reader of Dickens but now is diving into his complete collection of novels, which she owns. Her interest in the author grew even greater when she stumbled across a donation of “A Tale of Two Brothers: Charles Dickens’s Sons in Australia.” Holdich then wrote a six-part newspaper story on Edward Dickens’ life in Australia, and since then has been invited to speak at an international conference on Dickens in Sydney and before a gathering of teachers and librarians in Adelaide. “This is all a new development in my life,” she says.

Staffed by Lions and volunteers, the Bookmart is located next to a scenic park and creek. It raises more than AUS\$100,000 (US\$73,500) annually. Holdich works in the extensive children’s section. “It’s pleasing to know so many local charities are reaping the benefits,” she says of the store’s success.



Jacqui Holdich’s understanding about her ancestor, Charles Dickens, has grown since she started volunteering at the Lions’ Bookmart.

## BRAZIL

# Primer Book Doesn't Go Out of Style

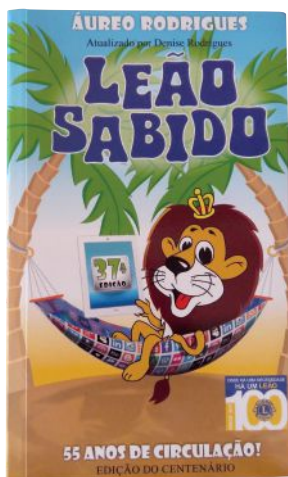
In 1963, devoted Lion Áureo Rodrigues, worried that fellow members in Brazil didn't understand what Lions were all about, published a 45-page, pocket-size primer on Lions Clubs. His idea had staying power. Last year the 37th edition of "Smart Lions" was published.

The current edition has 264 pages, compared to the 45 pages of the original, and the material, including information on the Lions' centennial, is updated, of course. But otherwise the book, written in Portuguese, has been remarkably unchanged. It's still pocket-sized, still mostly in a question-and-answer format and still explains the basics of membership such as Lions' history and protocol, the requirements for a Melvin Jones Fellowship and tips for better meetings.

The book also has stayed in the family. Rodrigues, who served as an international director from 1965-67, died in 2014. But his daughter, Denise Rodrigues, the editor of the Portuguese LION in Brazil, now oversees its publication.

Her older sister helped her father prepare the first edition when she was just 8. An estimated 70,000 books have been sold in Brazil and Portugal through the years. "I don't think my sister or my father would have realized it would have been such a success," says Rodrigues.

The updated material includes digital age advice such as creating a password on MyLCI and centennial matters including the centennial service challenge. But her father's goal to further service remains at the heart of the book. "Take your little book and serve without fear, with an open heart," Denise Rodrigues writes in the latest edition. "If you have any questions, consult the book. That is how my father became 'the Forever Smart Lion.'"



## ESTONIA

# Lions Right at Home at Zoo

Lions went to the zoo to mark the centennial.

Nearly 100 Lions from Estonia spent a day of service at Tallinn Zoo, the nation's only zoo, to celebrate the upcoming anniversary of Lions Clubs International. They raked the grounds, mended and painted fences, and after animals were whisked away temporarily, even cleaned cages.



Lions make picnic benches at Tallinn Zoo.

Lions from 12 clubs also erected eight picnic benches, each marked with a club name. After their work was done, they enjoyed pancakes they made for themselves on electric stoves.

The zoo's collection includes a snow leopard, a Siberian tiger, and, yes, an Asiatic lion.

## INDIA

# Hundreds Receive Limbs

Many of the Indians lost a limb in a road accident. Others suffered that fate after a work injury. Whatever the cause, Parbhani Lions helped 210 patients, young and old, receive prosthetic limbs at a camp.

A well-known charitable group in India, Sadhu Vaswani Mission provided the doctors and specialists to do the fittings. Lions organized the camp, publicizing it, transporting the patients there and back and providing food. Lions held two camps: the first for patients to be examined and measured and the second for the fittings.

Afterward, the patients expressed their gratitude to Lions. "I was totally helpless," an older man told a Lion. "Now I can do my work and help my family."



Lions organized the camps to fit the prostheses.



## SCOTLAND

# No Record, But the Deep-fried Chocolate Was Tasty

In America it's how many hot dogs you can devour in one sitting on Coney Island. In Scotland, in a twist on food gorging, villagers in small seaside Stonehaven munched on deep-fried chocolate bars and washed them down with an iconic Scottish soft drink.

The contest was not how many bars one person could eat but how many people would simultaneously indulge in the gluttony. Fifty-three people took part, and some decided to help themselves to a few extra. "I ate three myself," says Lion Mike Hopkins. "They're quite easy to eat. They're soft, and they melt in your mouth after they've been cooked in batter."

The Stonehaven & District Lions Club organized the eating stunt as part of its annual Feein' Market, a community festival with entertainment, food and stall after stall of goods for sale such as crafts, clothes, jewelry and books. The Mars nutty chocolate bar is a longtime favorite at the Carron Restaurant in town, and the drink consumed was Irn Bru, wryly known as "Scotland's other national drink."

The intent of the Lions was to set a world record with their "fancy piece and a bru" endeavor. But Guinness World Records rejected the bid. "We were a bit cheesed off, especially when one of the records is someone watching TV for 94 hours," Hopkins vented to a local newspa-



Deep-fried chocolate and a Scottish soft drink make for happy festivalgoers.

per. "We were told our record is not a skill, and I don't really see how watching TV is a skill."

The Feein' Market dates back hundreds of years to when farmers converged on the city center to offer their labor and skills—a kind of mobile job center. The modern market began in 1973, and Lions took it over 16 years ago.

The eating spectacle drew a crowd of more than 400 people. "The atmosphere was really good. We had a great day," says Hopkins.



## ISRAEL

# Contest for Seniors Focuses on Peace

Peace was the theme. A blank canvas was the challenge. The competitors were seniors, several of them blind.

Israeli Lions sponsored the Golden Age Painting Competition. The theme was drawn from the Bible: "They will beat their swords into ploughshares" and "nation shall not lift up sword against nation." Forty paintings were submitted. Painters hailed from Argentina, Belgium, Russia, Switzerland and Israel. Faiths represented included Jews, Christians and Muslims.

A panel of judges chose the winner: 73-year-old Israeli Eli Zarfati of Ashkelon. In his painting (photo), the red symbolizes war. The butterflies are flying to hold back the winds of war. Within a tank is a plow to sow seeds of peace.

A special award was given to Israeli Lion Gila Ezrachi, one of the blind painters. The competition was held at the Knesset (Parliament) in Jerusalem.

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(Opposite) Writer helps Nancy Lagasse get around town.

## A NEW LEASH ON LIFE

Lion Nancy Lagasse of Virginia was 72 hours from killing herself when the phone rang and four words—‘You have a dog’—changed her life.

BY TODD SCHWARTZ

Photos by Andrew Scott

“What a beautiful seeing-eye dog,” the woman in the parking lot says to Nancy Lagasse. It’s not the first time she’s heard it today, and it won’t be the last. Inwardly, she has to laugh. First of all, she’s not blind, and, secondly, at that very moment, she’s getting out of her van, car keys in hand.

Yet, as she is each and every time, Lagasse is polite and enthusiastic, explaining that her 90-pound Labrador Retriever is a wonderfully talented canine companion, service dog and goodwill ambassador who supports her as she lives with multiple sclerosis. Lagasse is tempted to add—but refrains—that her four-legged, tail-wagging helper has not yet learned to drive.

It has been 11 years since the call came that altered the rapid downward course of her life. Lagasse had been a thriving nurse, artist, homemaker, horseback rider and volunteer when she was diagnosed in 2000 with multiple sclerosis, a disease in which the body’s immune system attacks its own nerves. Besides stabbing pain, the disorder causes balance and movement problems, dizziness and eventually, in its progressive forms, substantial disability. Lagasse had been forced to use a cane and sometimes a wheelchair.

As time passed, Lagasse lost her job, her home, her husband and her will to go on. She was 55 years old.

“Life as I knew it ceased to exist,” she says today. “My mind tried to will my body to perform the things that I had done for my entire life, but it was futile. I could no longer work at the job that I loved dearly. I could

no longer ride horseback or will my hands to play the piano, paint or sculpt or bake with my children. My husband left me and took our money. I believed my life was over. I had a plan to end my pain.”

Fatefully, two years earlier, Lagasse had gotten on the long waiting list of an organization called Canine Companions for Independence, which trains and provides assistance dogs, free of charge, to people with disabilities. Founded in 1975, CCI was the first program of its type in the nation, and its “graduates” are hugely in demand. When the call came that Lagasse had finally made it to the top of the list, she was just three days from the date she’d chosen to put an end to it all.

“I told them I’d think about it,” Lagasse remembers. “Which shocked them, because these dogs are so in demand. But I had given up hope. I’d confided in my daughter about my plans, and she begged me to go up to this small town on Long Island where they conducted two-week training sessions for the recipients of service dogs. I went, thinking it would be our last mother-daughter trip.”

What Lagasse found in Medford, New York, was community, hope and, ultimately, life. Who she found was Arkin, a two-and-a-half-year-old, mind-reading partner who could—among some 50 different commands—pick up whatever she dropped, take off her socks, empty her clothes dryer, turn lights on and off and, most importantly (and without any command needed), accept her for who she was.



Writer does household chores such as empty the dryer.

“When I got to CCI,” Lagasse says, “I was amazed. These people wanted nothing from me—all the training and provision of the dogs is paid for by corporate and private donations. They knew I was balanced on the precipice and they were ready for my needs. Everything began to change.”

It was during her stay at CCI that the Lions appeared on her radar.

“The two weeks of learning to work with our service dogs on the CCI campus were intense but rewarding. I was in a class of twelve, each with varied disabilities,” says Lagasse. “In our downtime we gathered in the beautiful bistro and family room which was made possible by contributions from Lions clubs. It was called the Lions Den, and it was the place we’d share our stories of what brought us to Canine Companions. We’d eat, play games, watch movies and just bond, hugging and supporting one another. These were the most giving people I have ever met. They were loving, supportive and positive. I began to realize that life was a gift. That anything was possible.”

When she returned to her home in Virginia with Arkin, you could say she had an entirely new leash on life. Arkin showered her with love and friendship and made it possible for her to go just about anywhere and do just about anything. Along with her CCI classmates and fellow graduates, she felt part of a nationwide community—“wrapped in their arms,” as she puts it. And she never forgot the generosity of Lions. By 2008, she was one herself.

Today, Nancy Lagasse is a little bit busy. She volunteers her time for nine different organizations including Habitat for Humanity, a veterans’ group, a suicide prevention concern, a hospital and her synagogue.

“One of my favorite quotes comes from Gandhi,” she offers. “He said, ‘The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in service to others.’ Volunteering does as much or more for me as it does for those we serve.”

First and foremost, according to her, Lagasse is an active member of the Warrenton Sunrise Lions Club—about an hour west of Washington, D.C. When she moved 20 miles south to Culpeper, her club wouldn’t let her leave, and some days they drive nearly an hour to bring her to meetings.

“It’s a real family,” she says. “I’m so proud of being a Lion.”

As a Virginia District 24 trustee for the Lions Project for Canine Companions, Lagasse gives presentations throughout the District of Columbia area, promoting CCI to Lions clubs and other groups. She tells her story, and how her life changed with the help of her furry helper.

“When I go out and about in public,” Lagasse points out, “whether with a cane or wheelchair, people used to stare at me with pity or avoid me all together. Now strangers still look at me—but, in reality, they are staring at my canine partner. He’s a people magnet! They are drawn to



me with questions, compliments and admiration. I often laugh and share with them that now it is never about me! It’s all about my pooch. How wonderful that is.”

It hasn’t always been easy. CCI assistance dogs are retired from active service around age eight, and go on to become much loved family pets. Parting with Arkin almost sent Lagasse back down the rabbit hole.

“Retiring the dog that saved my life was so tough,” she remembers. “When they began the process of providing me with a second dog, I said, ‘I can’t do this again. I don’t want another dog.’ They patiently convinced me that I could go home with a second dog and continue to live independently ... or not.”

So Lagasse went home with Writer, named in honor of longtime CCI supporter and bestselling author Dean



Koontz. The well-fed dog bears an uncanny resemblance to Alfred Hitchcock. Like the famous director, Writer is very, very smart. And unlike said director, not at all creepy.

“CCI matches a dog with you both physically and emotionally,” says Lagasse. I will always deal with depression, so I need a sensitive dog. Writer knows how to help me.” That ranges from emotional support to helping her do laundry to bringing her drinks from the fridge—although since cans look like cans to a dog, Lagasse never knows if she’ll get a soda or a beer.

So Nancy Lagasse moves forward, helping as many people as she can through her Lions club and many other groups. She’s horseback riding and snow skiing again and relearning the piano.

“There’s something very powerful,” she explains,

“about standing at the precipice of your life. Every single day after is a choice. You ask yourself, ‘Is this day going to matter? Will I live it to the fullest?’ My biggest life lesson is to see MS as an inconvenience rather than a roadblock. With Writer’s help I can do anything anyone else can—I just have to figure out how to do it differently. Disabled is not unable, and, yes, I will live to the fullest every day.”

A service dog eases a veteran’s emotional pain  
(March 2012 LION).

On a lighter note, take a look at  
a guide dog for a blind dog (February 2012 LION).



# MANCHESTER UNITED

## A Vermont club continues to thrive after recognizing the need to evolve

BY JAY COPP

Photos by Shannon De Celle

Located in sparsely populated southwestern Vermont, Manchester regularly fills up with outsiders. In the summer canoeists and fishermen frequent the forests that encircle Manchester, set in a valley. Zealous leaf-peepers arrive from as far as California to gawk at the brilliant burst of colors in October. Hardcore skiers charge down the white slopes in the winter.

The upscale outlet stores that line Manchester's main street also draw crowds. The visitors come for the shopping and the ambience. Authorities have been careful to preserve a small-town feel and not allow Manchester to be too commercialized. Neon signs are prohibited. Establishments are bound by a required amount of green space on their property. Until recently, when three-story retail buildings were permitted, the maximum was two-story. "The joke was that the fire department only had a two-story ladder," says John O'Keefe, town manager.

Preoccupied with the outdoors or shopping, most visitors don't learn the rich history of the town, chartered in 1761. Ethan Allen and many of his Green Mountain Boys lived in the area; in 1775 the ragtag militia defeated the British at Fort Ticonderoga, the first American victory of the Revolutionary War. Entrepreneur Charles Orvis founded America's first mail-order business in Manchester in 1856. Known for its fly-fishing gear, the company is headquartered today in Sunderland, the next town over, and Manchester has a well-appointed Orvis store.

Another famous link is Robert Todd Lincoln, the president's son, who built a lavish estate in town in 1905. The Lincoln family stuck around for decades. Perhaps a sign of how the town's long history and majestic setting fosters humility, Lincoln Isham, Robert Todd's grandson and a lawyer who died in 1971, was surprised once to find the court was closed for a holiday. "What holiday?" he asked a judge. "Lincoln's birthday, of course," the judge replied.

The Manchester area was also home to two of America's most iconic artists. Robert Frost wrote poetry and worked his farm in South Shaftsbury, just 18 miles from Manchester. Norman Rockwell lived and painted in Arlington, a mere eight miles south of Manchester. At least one of a local Lions' relatives posed for a Rockwell painting, and the Quality restaurant in Manchester, since renamed, is believed to be the setting for his well-known Saying Grace painting.

The ghost of Rockwell can be said to hover over Manchester, at least during its town hall meetings. The artist famously depicted civic involvement in New England in his Freedom of Speech work, one of his Four Freedom paintings of World War II. Using his Vermont neighbors as models, Rockwell painted a rough-hewn blue-collar man standing up to express his views at a town hall meeting. Citizens in ties and dress shirts listen to him attentively.

Rockwell is sometimes derided for idealizing small-town America. But he was spot-on regarding Manchester. Its town hall meetings often are packed. The budget meeting in March is especially crowded. Hundreds from the town of 4,100 squeeze into a room and actually vote on the budget line by line.

Among the regular meeting-goers are members of the Manchester Lions Club, one of the state's most active clubs. At the budget meeting, a voice vote clearly signifies the outcome for most line items. But if someone says, "I doubt that vote," a head count is taken. Last year Lion Penny Charbonneau carefully counted those who stood.

Well-known around town, Lions are woven deep into the fabric of community life in Manchester. O'Keefe, who once lived in Boston and observed community groups like the Lions there, notes, "A small town revolves around community life. A Lions club has much more impact in a small town."



Joining the Manchester Lions Clubs has been an uplifting experience for its younger members, who have lifted the club to new heights. Shown are (from left) Amy Herrmann, 41, Nicki Dexter, 23, Retha Charette, 31, and Past District Governor Pam Nichols, the youngest club member when she joined at age 49 in 2007.





Club stalwarts (left) Bruce Murtaugh (who plays Santa at the Elf Express) and Joe Charbonneau fondly recall the club auction, held at the Lions barn at a park.

The Lions are needed. Despite its stream of visitors, pockets of need persist in Manchester. Schools and non-profits never have enough money. People lose their jobs, become disabled, can't pay the bills when a marriage flounders. In serving as a reliable resource, the Lions help sustain community. The club is a strong stitch in the social pattern.

Manchester emits a certain timelessness—its long, rich history, the seasonal rhythm of its visitors, the grand natural setting, its embrace of participatory democracy. The Lions club fits in seamlessly. Chartered more than a half century ago in 1951, it, too, seems permanent and impermeable to significant change. But Manchester Lions have realized that not evolving and taking charge of its destiny is tantamount to losing ground and relevance.

## A Giving Community

Schools in Manchester let out at noon on Thursdays. Students are required to ski or skate for the remainder of the school day. Residents are passionately devoted to outdoors recreation and cultivate that trait in the next generations. The commitment to outdoor sports pays off in the arena of international competition. Residents can name local participants in the Winter Olympics and proudly point out that the state as a whole surpasses its neighbor, the much more populous New York, in Olympics accomplishment.

Ski season brings in hordes of outsiders to Manchester. Three ski resorts are located less than 30 minutes from the town. But summer is actually the busiest season for the town with its outdoors enthusiasts. The only slow time is the “mud season,” the doleful weeks of the spring when it's chilly and rainy.

The beauty of the natural surroundings is hardly the only attraction. In the 1980s a host of upscale outlet stores opened in Manchester, the first in the region with high-end budget shopping. The main street is flush with the likes of Eileen Fisher, Kate Spade and Armani. The stores are good for the economy but slow traffic to a crawl. “The local joke is that if you don't get your shopping done before Saturday morning, don't bother,” says Bruce Murtaugh, a three-time president of the Lions club.

The stores are a mixed blessing. An economy dependent on retail stores—and snow—is problematic. Last year the ground remained bare. “He worked 10 hours last year,” says Lion Pam Nichols of her husband, who plows in the winter. “The year before he went three and a half months without a day off.” The number of families who used the food cupboard at the village hall jumped in the winter of 2016 to 300 from 170.

The lower wages paid by the retail stores result in unpaid bills. The Lions not only support the food cupboard but also a couple dozen other concerns in town such as Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners, Meals on Wheels



The next generation of Lions epitomizes new ways: Herrmann owns a mobile coffee shop.

and heating bills during the long winter. “People would not starve, but their lives would be a lot harder [without Lions],” says Murtaugh.

The volunteerism of Lions is community-wide. Residents are proud of their help-thy-neighbor ethos. When remnants of Hurricane Irene in 2011 left homeowners without safe water or electricity, invitations quickly sprang forth: “Come to my house. I’ve got water.” Village officials asked Lions to cook at the village hall for those not otherwise cared for. “The Lions were the auxiliary force,” says O’Keefe.

Reconstruction also was a matter of spur-of-the-moment volunteerism. Teams of high school students descended on homes to rip out soggy drywall. Freelance volunteers including Lions drove down the roads searching for homeowners in need of a handyman. “By the time FEMA showed up, the work was already done,” says O’Keefe. “They said, ‘OK, show us what the damage is.’ It was fixed up already.”

Personal, behind-closed-doors volunteerism is common. Joe Charbonneau, a Lion who was the greenskeeper for many years at a local country club, meticulously tended to the grass of two new soccer fields put in by the town. “It must have been 100 volunteer hours,” says O’Keefe.

Charbonneau (a cousin of Penny Charbonneau’s husband) also befriended Wendell Cram, a legendary community figure whose health had declined precipitously. As a boy Cram learned to ski on crude, homemade skis and qualified for the 1940 Winter Olympics, which were cancelled because of the war in Europe. As a soldier he was part of a ski unit ready to dash down the Alps to

fight the Germans. Those plans never materialized, but his unit’s service is commemorated in a bronze statue of a 10th Mountain soldier in ski-crazy Stowe. Charbonneau frequently visited Cram at his home, providing companionship as the town icon gradually slipped away.

## Time Marches On

The Lions club would not have come into existence when it did if not for the restrictive policies of Rotary. Back in the early 1950s pig farmer Oscar Johnson attended a Rotary meeting and was set to join. But the club already had a farmer and allowed only a single representative from a profession. Johnson’s dad had been a Lion in Stratford, Connecticut, so Johnson helped charter the Manchester Lions Club in 1951.

The club’s first activity was a bicycle safety course at a new elementary school. The first fundraiser was an auction in 1952. Lion Charles Hawkins flew his private plane to publicize the fundraiser. Using a public address speaker attached under the wing, he announced the hours while buzzing locals. Supposedly, but likely apocryphal because of the danger, Hawkins would shut off his engine at times to ensure he could be heard.

The club’s first fundraiser was its auction. Quickly becoming its most well-known and successful project, it continued for more than a half century. The auction was a study in consistency. Each year, for 47 consecutive years, the original auctioneer, the voluble Bus Mars of Pawlet, took the microphone and auctioned off the goods donated to the club.



The auction was a community happening. Held in the Lions barn at a sprawling park and sports complex, the mood among the buyers was festive. Who doesn't love a bargain and walking home with a newly purchased treasure? Ending the auction three years ago was "like a spear in the heart" for people, says Charbonneau. But times had changed. Increasingly, people sold their unused household items on the Internet. The death knell was the opening of a Habitat for Humanity office that accepted donations for resale. "If you call Habitat, they pick it up tomorrow. Our auction might have been months away," says Nichols.

The decline of the auction helped the club realize that change can be uncomfortable but is sometimes necessary. The club needed new projects. It needed younger members. The ending of the auction was "kind of sad," says Nichols. "But time marches on. If you don't make adjustments, you

go away." Looking back, the decision to move on proved to be sound. "The club better have changed. If it didn't, it wouldn't have been viable," says Charbonneau. "Some of the older members don't like that much change. But the club has to evolve."

## A Necessary Evolution

In the fall the club once again held its venerable Maple Run, a distance race that drew 700 runners. One of the race marshals was Lion Ben Boors, 77, the beloved, long-time custodian at Burr and Burton Academy, the independent high school in Manchester. Boors became a Lion in 1961. "I wish I were 20 years younger. I'd do more activities," says Boors, somewhat misleadingly because he still volunteers at a number of projects. "I'm there even if it's five in the morning," he adds.



Ben Boors, the club historian, has his own personal story to tell: his daughter used this braille typewriter, given to her by the club, to succeed in school and life.





The Elf Express brings the joy of the season to children. Key to the project are (right photo) Neil Post, who coordinates it, and Mr. and Mrs. Claus (Murtaugh and Nichols, respectively).



Boors can personally attest to the power of Lions' service. In 1986, his daughter, Theresa, became blind due to a hereditary disease. Undaunted, Boors kept her at the regular elementary school—its first blind student. The club gave her a tape recorder and then a braille typewriter. Determined to succeed, Theresa became a model student. She earned her doctorate, wrote two books and today serves as a Baptist minister. Boors is deeply grateful for the place of Lions in his life. In 2008 he was awarded a Melvin Jones Fellowship. "I think that was the highlight of my life," he says.

Coordinating the Maple Run was Lion Amy Herrmann. She once worked on the race as an employee for the parks department of Manchester and helped out as a volunteer ever after she left that job. "I got a little ribbing from the Lions. Why don't you just join?" she recalls.

Her mother is a Lion in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, where Herrmann grew up. So she joined the Lions two years ago and courageously agreed to be in charge of the race. As fate would have it, the Chamber of Commerce in Manchester, the Lions' partner on the race that provided much-needed office resources for the race, dissolved during a key pre-race stretch. "What did I get myself into?" recalls Herrmann, who owns a mobile coffee truck. "This was supposed to be a well-oiled machine."

The day was saved when Make A Wish agreed to come on as a race partner. Herrmann had enough help to do what she needed to do including extensive social media. She promoted the run on Facebook, posted a video of the race shortly after the starter's gun was fired and posted the

results the next day. Herrmann, 41, is part of the new wave of younger Lions in the club.

Herrmann brought Retha Charette, 31, into the club, and Charette in turn convinced Nicki Dexter, 23, to join. Now Dexter's boyfriend is set to join. In just a few years the 60-member club, while still not young, has turned a corner. Nichols, who owns a hair salon, was the youngest member when she joined at age 49 in 2007. "The dynamics of the club are definitely changing," says Nichols, who took a quick liking to Lions and served as district governor last year. "The average age was 70 when I joined. It's down to 55."

Becoming a Lion is a surefire way to become integrated into Manchester. The average age of residents is older than the state average, and longtime residents abound. "We've been here 45 years, so we're not native," cracks Lion Becky Nawrath, a Lion since 1993. Some families, extending outward and sometimes referred to as one of the "clans," are certain of their place in town. Newcomers must find an entry point to belonging.

Charette, a project coordinator for Big Brothers, Big Sisters, moved to the area from Massachusetts along with



her boyfriend three years ago. Becoming a Lion has worked out. “I met a lot of people, not just Lions, but because of Lions,” she says. She competes in a roller derby league, and Lions she had just recently got to know showed up at a game to loudly cheer her on. “It’s the first time I felt like I really belonged,” she says. “My friends said, ‘Your Lions really know how to have fun.’ ‘Yeah, that’s why I am a Lion. You should join.’”

Charette met Dexter at a Big Brothers, Big Sisters event. Soon after her college graduation, Dexter had moved to the area to teach before taking a job with the parks department. “You’re young,” Dexter said to Charette. “What do younger people do around here?” Charette replied, “I don’t know. I hang out with older people.”

Dexter, who recently bought a home, plans to stick around Manchester for a while and stick with Lions. “It’s a great way to meet people, to get connected to the community,” she says.

The club has welcomed not only new members but also their ideas. As Herrmann was finalizing the details of

Lions serve as conductors. Using his real white beard, Murtaugh plays Santa, and Nichols is one of the Mrs. Clauses. Leos or students involved in theater at the high school play the elves, who sing and dance on the train; each car has three high-energy elves. The musical’s script was written by a local ringer, Jim Raposa, a former Broadway professional who now teaches at Burr and Burton Academy. A show business friend of his in New York created the music and lyrics for the upbeat production on the train.

The train ride is so alluring that among its riders have been Make A Wish children, who pick the festive adventure over a trip to Disney or a visit to the Fenway clubhouse. They ride for free, of course, as does about one in 10 children, either disabled or disadvantaged in some way.

Each year about 2,000 riders take the Elf Express. The Lions do an annual survey of riders. “We’ve had no negative feedback at all. Well, one exception,” says Neil Post, who has led the event for a few years. “One year Mrs. Claus was having trouble with her knees. She went to sit

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## ‘The club better have changed. If it didn’t, it wouldn’t have been viable.’

---

the race, Dave Pardo, a longtime member, disagreed with one of her decisions. “This is the way we’ve always done it,” he told her. Then a look of regret came over his face. “Wait a minute. I’ll shut my mouth,” he told her. “That’s why we brought you in.”

The old guard has been willing to give way to the new. In the past, the liquor inevitably flowed freely at director’s meetings, and members who “missed a meeting got a phone call,” says Charbonneau. He joined in 1987 because “the community was good to me.” Being good to the club can mean letting go a bit. “It’s time for younger blood,” he says. “I’m nearly 60. Someone else can do the bulk of the work.”

The club’s biggest fundraiser, the successor to the auction that generates as much as \$30,000 and brings joy to children and their parents, is its Elf Express Train Ride. Five carloads of children and guardians board a lavishly decorated vintage train on a December weekend and take a one-hour ride full of singing, dancing, caroling and, of course, an appearance by Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus. Begun five years ago, the elaborately staged event is centered around Christopher-Pop-in-Kins, a cuddly elf who greets the children in costume prior to boarding. The elf’s tale is told in a popular storybook that flies off shelves nationwide during the holiday season. On the train the story is read on a loudspeaker as the children read along.

down and took off her wig, and one of the kids saw her.”

The weekend project is exhausting, say Lions, but also highly enriching. “There is such joy on the kids’ faces,” says Post. “You couldn’t pay me enough to do this. It’s hard to differentiate whether it’s more rewarding for you or for the people you are helping.”

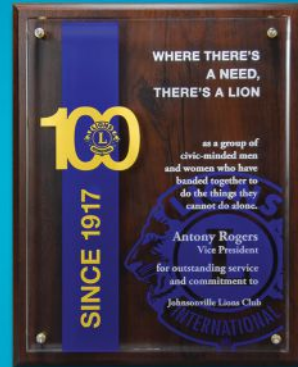
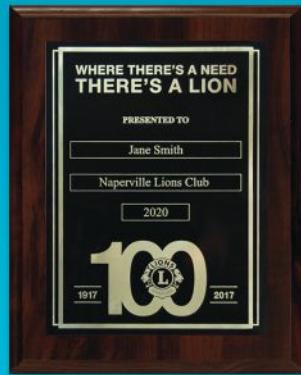
Post grew up near New York City and ran an import/export business there for many years. He understands how Lions in a small town make a difference by acting a bit differently. “A small town is different marketing-wise,” he says. “It’s not as aggressive, more laid back. It’s talk-about-it marketing. It’s face to face. You can send all the email you want. But you need to go see them.”

As coordinator of a major event, Post knows what it’s like to ask for help and get it as well as needing to accept “sorry” and then call on someone else. “You have to realize this is a volunteer organization. People do as much as they can. You can’t be pushy about it,” he says. “In general, I feel we play very nice together.”

Like others in the club who have put in serious blocks of hours, he’s ready to hand over the reins—confident someone younger can do just as well if not better. “I’ve done it long enough,” Post says. “It’s not that I don’t love it. I know people are out there with different ideas. Young people are on a whole different page.”

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# DADS AND DAUGHTERS STEPPIN' OUT

Photos by Peter Goldberg

For 20-plus years the folks in Marlborough, Massachusetts have been dusting off their dancing shoes in anticipation of the annual Father Daughter Dance sponsored by the Marlborough Lions Club.

In the first year, in 1996, planners were sweating bullets before the music even began. They had punch, cookies and decorations galore, but just 50 tickets had been sold. The Lion in the lion suit had to be put back in his cage because young dancers were afraid of him.

Thankfully, another 100 last-minute dancers showed up at the door.

The beat was on.

Now, more than 600 fathers and daughters take to the dance floor each year, and planners are worried that they may be outgrowing their spot in the Marlborough High School cafeteria.

Fathers, they know, will never tire of dancing with their daughters. And Lions will never tire of helping out.



Heartwarming moments come in all forms when dads and their daughters take to the floor. "The girls just love it, and the dads do too," says Lion Barney Kalman who takes tickets and pours punch—lots and lots of punch.



Like this, Dad!



"The girls like to dance together too. They play all the kids' pop music. Their music. They don't play our music: Aerosmith or Led Zeppelin," says Lion Mark Gibbs. "But it's the best thing ever. Great for the community. Great for everyone. I love it."





Group hug for the pretty-in-pink girls.



Even the finest of dancers need to take a rest and catch up on the news.



Little girls have their own paparazzi when dads are around.



Daughters can be a handful, but this father doesn't seem to mind a bit.



Even from the sidelines, the dance is fun, says Gibbs, a grandfather who has made it a tradition to bring his granddaughter to the dance. "We wouldn't miss it," he says.



Time to take the princess home. Daddy's beat!

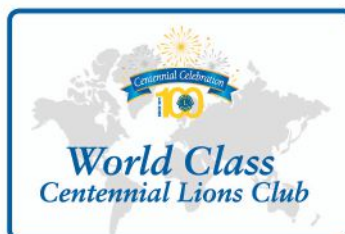
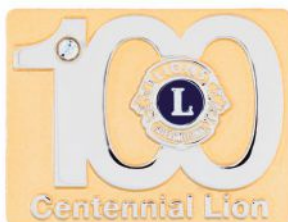
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# ASCENSION IN A DEPRESSION

## Lions discover the advantages of unity in the woeful 1930s

BY JAY COPP

Amid the anguish of the Great Depression, Salisbury Lions in Maryland opted for a theatrical display of confidence that better days were ahead. So in May of 1931 they convinced 100 businessmen to march in a funeral parade complete with a hearse and a drum and bugle corps. Two men leading the parade carried a sign that read “The Passing of Old Man Depression.” At the courthouse a pastor sermonized on the evils of the undearly departed, and an effigy of the terrible old man was burned.

Comforting humor aside, clubs nationwide were actively aiding the unemployed, needy children and struggling families. Drawing the open mouth of lions on large sturdy cardboard boxes, Lexington Lions in Kentucky asked the public to “feed the lion” by donating food. Long Island Lions in New York held a theater party and used the funds for coal and clothing for the jobless. Carlsbad Lions in New Mexico organized weekly hunting expeditions to secure meat for families.

In 1930 and beyond as the Depression worsened, Melvin Jones and other Lions leaders at headquarters in Chicago grappled with the consequences for Lions. The 1920s had been an era of rapid expansion for Lions Clubs. Many clubs had found their service niche, whether it be helping children, promoting good citizenship or cleaning up parks, rivers and streets. Most commonly, heeding Helen Keller’s plea for Lions to be Knights of the Blind in 1925, clubs aided the blind.

But now with the nation reeling what was the proper course for the association? Should it prioritize service that salved the wounds of unemployment? Should headquarters retrench? Could clubs keep up with their dues and was expansion still possible? The Great Depression would test the mettle and might of Lions Clubs just as it had begun an upward trajectory. By the end of the decade, Jones and Lions leaders had discovered that a national crisis would not splinter the association but instead show that clubs could assume a shared purpose and in doing so strengthen the identity and bonds of Lions.

Early on, few foresaw the length and depth of the economic disaster. Lions shared in the outlook that the downturn was a temporary phase. As editor of the LION, Melvin Jones ran a series of optimistic articles. “Business Depression is Largely a State of Mind,” written by businessman A.D. Stone, ran in the LION in June 1930. In April 1931, based on the “facts and figures” compiled by the Central Trust Company of Illinois, the LION blared in a large headline that “Unemployment Has Begun to Fade.” In actuality, the Depression would not release its grip on America until nearly the end of the decade.

Lions weren’t being laughably obtuse. They valued their bonhomie, their predilection to look on the bright side and believe in themselves and social institutions. East Cleveland Lions in Ohio thumbed their nose at the economic woes and held a Hard Times party in 1930 in which an outlandish costume of club bulletins and meeting announcements won first prize. Clubs held ceremonies in which a Lion, dressed as a doctor in a surgical gown and mask, gave birth to a baby doll christened “New Prosperity.” More seriously, the LION editorialized in 1933 that that the “Depression has not been all bad ... It has made men more considerate of each other. It has awakened in them an appreciation of spiritual values which before have been too much neglected.”

Yet despite their good cheer clubs redoubled their efforts to assist those in need. In 1932, Lusk Lions in Wyoming worked with the American Legion to create a municipal woodpile so people could heat their homes and men would have work. Shreveport Lions in Louisiana established a Poor Kiddies Shoe Fund so no child went to school barefoot. Knowing industry needed a boost (if yet ignorant of the long-term health consequences), Mullins Lions in South Carolina held a Tobacco Festival that drew the biggest crowd ever seen in town.

The question facing Lions headquarters was whether and how to mobilize clubs in countering the Depression. Since its founding, a tension had existed within Lions Clubs



Amid the Depression, an impoverished family camps by the roadside in 1936 in Blythe, California.  
Photo by Dorothea Lange/Getty Images



International over whether clubs could operate without directives or should be enlisted in association-wide initiatives. In the mid-1920s, after the appeal by Keller, Lions leaders agreed that helping the blind was Lions' signature cause. But clubs were free to fulfill that mission as they saw fit.

Lions leaders decided that the Depression required a special united effort. In October 1931, International President Earle Hodges of New York City asked all 80,000 Lions to rally around "Lions Business Confidence Week." Lions and other businessmen's groups would "crack the backbone of industrial depression" by spending \$200 million. Melvin Jones reasoned, "The more buying, the more goods manufactured. The more manufactured, the more employed." Thirty-eight governors and 23 railroad presidents endorsed the plan.

Several months later at the convention Jones reported that nearly \$600 million dollars had been placed in circulation thanks to the Lions plan. The grip of the Depression had hardly loosened, but President Herbert Hoover wired his gratitude to Lions for their "efforts to encourage a spirit of optimism."

Early in 1932 Jones represented Lions at a White House conference of civic and business leaders. Hoover's chief request was that the public stop "hoarding" funds and leave their money in the banks. Back in Chicago, Jones ran a story in the *LION* urging Lions to speak at churches and shows about the importance of not withdrawing their funds from banks.

Aurora Lions in Illinois took his plea to heart. After a panic in which residents stood in long lines to withdraw their savings, city officials closed all businesses for five days. The city council decided to ask the 20,000 residents with accounts to sign a pledge not to draw any money for hoarding. Lions went out into the community with the pledge cards and within a week more than \$700,000 had been deposited in the banks.

Lions Clubs faced its own struggles to balance its books and keep and add members. In fiscal year 1930, only partly affected by the Depression, membership increased by nearly 9,000. In 1931, the gain was a paltry 1,042. The news was negative the next year as well. Nearly 250 new clubs has been chartered, but membership was flat. Many veteran Lions were quitting. Headquarters was suffering, too. Salaries were cut, and 10 percent of the staff was laid off. In 1933 headquarters again laid off more staff and reduced pay as some clubs failed to send in their dues.

Throughout the 1930s Lions clubs took on the dual role of sponsoring familiar projects while paying special attention to the economic misery. Stockton Lions distributed 7,500 safety stickers as part of their Drive Safely Campaign. Edison Lions in Georgia helped tornado victims. Kennet Lions in Missouri built a cabin for the Boy Scouts. When massive flooding struck the Ohio River Valley in 1936, 2,700 clubs donated money, food and clothing.

Other projects deliberately targeted the economic woes of the times. Grand Forks Lions in North Dakota bought hay for farmers to carry their livestock through the winter. Hogeland Lions in Montana compiled a survey of destitute families to aid the Red Cross. Sauk Rapids Lions in Minnesota helped farmers by securing a potato buyer for their crop. A little hope together with some relief went a long way in tiding people over.

Headquarters' service statistics in 1933 reflect clubs' dual approach. Nearly 4,000 children received eyeglasses. Lions gave 1,198 white canes to adults. They planted 44,117 trees and placed nearly 2 million fish in lakes and streams. But clubs also provided nearly half a million free meals, distributed 12,617 Christmas baskets and spent \$16,697 on milk for schoolchildren.

Clubs were formed with the precise purpose of easing the misery of the Depression. Chartered in 1931, the Pacific Lions Club in Missouri was a whirlwind of relief. An early club report summarizes its efforts: "Provided work on civic improvement for unemployed men at the rate of \$2 per day. Aided destitute families of community. Staged a community Christmas celebration and gave out bags of candy and fruit to the children. Baskets of food were given to several poor families. Furnished undernourished school children with daily breakfasts and lunches, also with shoes when needed."

The confidence Lions preached was at last echoed in the White House with the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt as president in March 1933. "So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself," Roosevelt famously proclaimed.

Lions rallied behind two new government programs in particular, the National Recovery Administration (NRA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The NRA encouraged sectors of the economy to form trade associations. Looking to bring business knowhow to a government undertaking, Lions nationwide volunteered to serve on NRA-implementation committees.

Clubs also lent strong support to the CCC, which, along with Social Security, was the most popular program of FDR's New Deal. The CCC took unemployed young men and set them to work on conservation projects throughout the country, from tree planting to soil erosion and flood control. More than 75 percent of all trees planted on public land from the time of George Washington's presidency to 1942 were planted by the CCC. Lions in places such as Moab, Utah, and Toccoa, Georgia, lobbied for CCC camps in their communities while other clubs took it upon themselves to entertain CCC workers.

Economic conditions in the United States slowly improved in the second half of the 1930s. Lions Clubs' prospects also were more favorable. In 1939 membership jumped by 15,000, and 557 new clubs had been chartered. Lions had become the largest service club group in the world.

But there was also reason for worry. “There is war in Europe,” Jones wrote in the LION of October 1939. “There is war in Asia. The oceans are wide; but such is the interrelation of peoples and ideas in our modern world that none of us remains unmoved by these events, and many are the questions raised.” Those would be answered beginning Dec. 7, 1941.

*Douglas Bukowski contributed to this story. Sources: “An Ideal Triumphant,” by Robert Kleinfelder and Dennis Brennan.*



Dr. A. P. Wilkinson of the Detroit North End Lions Club in Michigan shares a treat at a Lions' dinner for orphans in 1933.

**“Depression Routed”** was the headline in the December 1930 LION. Well, not quite—there were many in need to serve.

**“Nation Applauds the Deeds of Lions”** was the story in the November 1931 LION

**“Lions are Helping in Reconstruction”** was detailed in the December 1932 LION.

Curbing hunger remains a cornerstone of service. Watch a video on Lions in Hawaii feeding the needy.



## Reaching across Borders to Fight Poverty

BY CASSANDRA ROTOLO

Although India has one of the fastest growing economies in the world, an estimated 50 percent of Indians lack proper shelter. An overwhelming majority of the population does not have access to adequate sanitation or secondary education.

Lions in Ireland are teaming up with Lions in India to help the poor in rural areas to help themselves.

Lions of District 106 I in Ireland are partnering with the Arni Silk City Lions of District 324 A4 in India help women break the cycle of poverty. Together, they received a US\$50,000 Core 4 grant from Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) to fund a microenterprise program for single and widowed mothers. LCIF believes that microenterprise boosts the economic well-being for those who live at or below the poverty level and have limited skills and capital but who aspire to improve their situation.

The Lions are working with Nandri, a nonprofit in Ireland, and Child Aid Trust (CAT) in India to provide microenterprise loans to single and widowed mothers. Most of the women who participate in CAT programs are illiterate and support their families through menial labor. They are part of the Dalit caste, the lowest social class in India. The women are denied access to traditional credit or loan options.

The women are given a loan of Rs. 25,000 (approximately US\$366), which they repay at a one percent interest rate for 25 months. Some women use their loans to purchase a

cow whose milk they can sell on an ongoing basis. Some choose to purchase sewing machines so they can find consistent work as seamstresses. Others open small shops to sell snacks and cold drinks in their communities. All of these options allow

widow in the village of Moranam, received a microenterprise loan. She lives with her two children in a small hut without electricity or proper sanitation and works as a daily laborer in a field. She used her loan to purchase a cow. Selling the cow's



Microfinance loans provide an option for women to break the cycle of poverty and support their families.

the women to be more independent and to feed and educate themselves and their children.

Lions are involved in every step of the process, from reviewing loan applications to distributing checks. Lions from both countries serve on an advisory committee, providing financial oversight, organizing public awareness events and even training beneficiaries on budgeting.

Lourdu Mary, a destitute

milk for food and dung for fuel is helping her meet her family's basic needs every day.

Since piloting microenterprise grants in 2014, LCIF has funded six projects in India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Ireland and Kenya, totaling US\$475,000. More than 1,200 loans have been issued.

For information on LCIF's microenterprise grant program, visit [lcif.org](http://lcif.org).

## Club News

The **Laurelton Lions Club** in **New York** completed a Legacy Project, rebuilding a memorial triangle that had been destroyed by Hurricane Sandy. The Lions included other community organizations in the project and renamed the location "Veterans Memorial Triangle."

The **Wild Rose Lions** in **Wisconsin** held two Christmas events: a free community Christmas breakfast and a Special Needs Christmas where Santa and Mrs. Claus gave presents to about 40 children.

The **McKeesport Lions Club** in **Pennsylvania** cleaned up litter along a stretch of county road they adopted and collected toys for the U.S. Marines Toys for Tots annual toy drive. Those who donated toys at their buffet breakfast were given cookies and a chance to win a gift basket.

**Fall Lions** in **Pennsylvania** gave away 10 bicycles and two tricycles at their Children's Christmas Party where children and adults had their pictures taken with Santa.

The **Winnemucca Host Lions Club** in **Nevada** kicked off the Christmas season with their annual Festival of Trees. There were 59 entries in the Magical Forest and children enjoyed breakfast with Santa and tea with Mrs. Claus.

The **San Marcos Lions Club** in **Texas** raised \$8,500 through their summertime tube rental operation in City Park and donated it to three local organizations. They also welcomed six new members, bringing membership to 94.

**Fountain of the Sun Lions Club** in **Arizona** sponsored a new Leo Club at Skyline High School. The 20 new Leos sold water at a warm homecoming carnival as their first fundraising activity.

The **Manitowish Waters Lions Club** in **Wisconsin** started a fund to help the family of a boy who was born without eyes. They asked others to contribute, and the Hayward Lions Club donated to the boy's eye fund.

The **Mountain Grove Lions** in **Missouri** screened more than 1,200 children at elementary and middle schools, and 75 of the children were referred for further exams.

The **Maharlika Lions Club** in **California** sponsored a fundraising dinner called "Dining in the Dark," where participants were served dinner while blindfolded. Profits supported their centennial and community projects.

**Ormond By The Sea Lions Club** in **Florida** welcomed International President Chancellor Lion Bob Corlew on a visit to their club. Members also met with Past District Governor Norma Callahan of the Volusia County Lions Club to learn about diabetic retinopathy screening.

The **La Vista Lions Club** in **Georgia** supported North Georgia University's Nursing School mission trips to the Dominican Republic. Clinics were set up in five villages occupied by people who work in the sugar cane fields, and since 2014 more than 3,500 people have been served.

The **Athens Leo Club** in **Greece** organized a Christmas bazaar. Food and drinks not sold were donated to a school with needy children.

The **South Cobb Lions Club** in **Georgia** was recognized as the Nonprofit Litter Prevention Organization of the Year by Keep Georgia Beautiful. In 2016 the club removed 462 bags of litter, 145 tires and 108 pieces of furniture from their six adopted miles of road.



The **Laporte-Benedict Lions Club** in **Minnesota** raised more than \$600 and collected more than 300 pounds of food for the local food pantry on their annual Haunted Trail Ride through the woods. Not everybody was scary like this guy. A kid-friendly area included pictures with the giant pumpkin.

The **Potsdam Lions Club** in **New York** sponsored free skating for families over the holidays when skating has become a tradition for many.

The **Avon Grove Lions** and the **Avon Grove Charter School Leos** in **Pennsylvania** conducted three days of eye screenings for more than 500 students. About 10 percent of the students were found to need follow-up exams.

**Sherman Evening Lions** in **Texas** gave more than 50 fourth-grade students a Natchez crepe myrtle sapling in a pot to take home and plant as part of the Fourth Grade Foresters USA program. They hope that planting a tree will encourage interest in the environment.

Members of the **Daytop Leo Club** in **New Jersey** delivered blankets, pillows, sheets and towels to the Randolph Regional Animal Shelter. The club is sponsored by Chester Lions.





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11 issues published yearly by Lions Clubs International  
300 W 22nd St. Oak Brook, IL 60523-8842  
(630) 571-5466 / Fax: (630) 571-8890  
lionmagazine@lionsclubs.org  
<http://www.lionsclubs.org>

(ISSN 0024-4163) (R-124397233)  
(PRINTED IN U.S.A.)

Official publication of Lions Clubs International. Published by authority of the Board of Directors in 20 languages—English, Spanish, Japanese, French, Swedish, Italian, German, Finnish, Korean, Portuguese, Dutch, Danish, Chinese, Norwegian, Icelandic, Turkish, Greek, Hindi, Indonesian and Thai.

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## [Anniversaries

### March 2017

**\*100 Years:** Ardmore, Okla.; Abilene Founder, Texas

**95 Years:** Appleton Noon, Wis.; Spokane Central, Wa.; Laredo Noon Host, Texas; Terre Haute, Ind.; Rutherford, N.J.; Huntington Downtown, W.V.; Winston Salem Twin City Host, N.C.; Cape Girardeau, Mo.; Hazard, Ky.; Columbia Host, Mo.; Cisco, Texas; Roanoke Host, Va.

**90 Years:** Collegeville, Pa.; Costa Mesa Newport Harbor, Calif.; Bareville Leola Leaco, Pa.; Brewster, N.Y.; Lawrenceville, Va.; East Los Angeles, Calif.

**85 Years:** Marietta, Pa.; Millersville, Pa.; West Union, Ohio; Strasburg, Pa.; Sunnysvale Host, Calif.; Hilo, Hawaii.

**80 Years:** Hyattsville, Md.; Williamston, N.C.; Dundee Township, Ill.; Winchester, Ind.; Medford, Maine; Sedro Woolley, Wa.; Saskatoon Downtown, SK, CAN; Lake Geneva, Wis.; Miami Springs, Fla.

**75 Years:** Salem West, Ore.; Vandalia, Ohio; Bloomfield, Conn.; Charleston, Mo.; New Buffalo, Mich.; Orbisonia, Pa.; Kulm, N.D.; Newton, Maine; San Antonio Harlandale, Texas; Princeton, N.C.; Troy, Ohio; Scottsville, Va.; San Antonio Highland Park, Texas; West Union, Iowa; Ellaville, Ga.; Burns, Ore.; Enfield, Conn.

**50 Years:** Florence Evening, S.C.; Northeastern L C, Ohio; Kuna, Idaho; Taylor, Neb.; Central City East Boyle Heights, Calif.; Killam, AB, CAN.; Beaumont Breakfast, Texas; Hilltop Lakes, Texas; Plum City, Wis.; Lemberg District L C, SK, CAN.; Snook, Texas; Dos Palos, Calif.; Boise Capital, Idaho; Springfield Evening, Mo.; Warner Springs, Calif.; Marine, Ill.; North Stonington, Conn.; Bunceton, Mo.; Austwell Tivoli L C, Texas; Stoughton, SK, CAN.; Polson, Mont.; Decatur, Miss.; Greater Irmo, S.C.

**25 Years:** Brooklyn Mid Bedford Heights, N.Y.; Brooklyn Stuy Park, N.Y.; Portland Metro, Ore.; Beauharnois, QC, CAN.; Brookhaven Alpha, Miss.; Grande Prairie Trumpeter, AB, CAN.; Brooklyn Remsen-Brownsville, N.Y.; East Haddam Community, Conn.; Jasper Quarry, Minn.; Madison, Miss.; Norton Community, Mass.; Alpine Stagecoach, Calif.; Montville Mohegan-Pequot, Conn.

\*Lions clubs operated before Lions Clubs held its first convention in Dallas on Oct. 8, 1917. Hence, the centennial of some clubs predates the centennial of Lions Clubs International.

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

## Let There Be Peace and Let It Begin with Lions

Nothing speaks louder to the world's need for harmony than a child's vision of peace—except for the collective expressions of millions of children.

Since 1988, Lions Clubs International has sponsored the annual Lions International Peace Poster Contest to encourage young people to express their perspectives on peace. Every year, as many as 400,000 children ages 11 to 13 from around the world participate in the contest. Sponsored by local clubs, the international competition reflects one of the key tenets of the Lions—to create and foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world.

One international grand prize winner and 23 merit award winners are chosen each year for their unique and heartfelt visions of peace created from crayon, watercolor, pencil and other mediums. All winners receive a cash prize and certificate.

Mustapha El Tawokji from war-torn Beirut, Lebanon, won the first Peace Poster

Contest in 1988-1989 by expressing the theme, “Peace Will Help Us Grow,” with a dove flying over a bed of roses. While he had never known peace, he expressed his vision of what peace would be like.

Grand prize winners have come from all over the world: Italy, Japan, Indonesia, Brazil, South Africa and the United States, just to name a few. The artwork and creativity of every child who enters the contest are celebrated by its sponsoring Lions club. Each young artist's work reflects his or her own experience, culture and worldview.

Visually impaired young people also have the opportunity to share their expressions of peace through the Lions International Essay Contest. Each year students ages 11 to 13 enter short essays on the same theme as the Peace Poster program for a chance to win a cash prize.

Both contests trace their roots back to a program in the 1960s called the Peace Essay Contest. To help celebrate LCI's 50th anniversary in 1967, Lions asked young people ages 14 to 21 to submit an essay on peace. More than 1 million entries were received. Former U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower served as honorary chairman of the international panel that chose high school student A. Russell Wodell of Cranbrook, British Columbia, Canada, as the winner for his essay titled, “Is Peace Attainable?”

“There is no easy road to peace,” wrote Wodell. “Only through evolution of his social, moral and intellectual values can man achieve true peace with himself.”

Young people from around the globe continue to offer Lions their expressions of peace in the hopes that one day the dream may come true.

*Read the rest of the 100 Touchstone stories written for Lions' centennial at [Lions100.org](http://Lions100.org)*



Mustapha El Tawokji from war-torn Beirut, Lebanon, won the first Peace Poster Contest in 1988-1989 with this entry.





## Signs of the Times

Hampshire Lions in northern Illinois give \$700 worth of new signs, replacing handmade ones, to the small village in 1960. Throughout our history, but especially the post-World War II era, Lions helped growing towns with basic infrastructure needs. Look for more historical photos in the LION as the 100th International Convention in Chicago in June nears.



Picture the Future of

PEACE

IMAGINE

600,000 children sharing their visions of peace

INSPIRE

Youth to showcase their talent

CREATE

Stronger ties in your community

Don't miss your opportunity to sponsor the **30th annual Lions International Peace Poster Contest!**

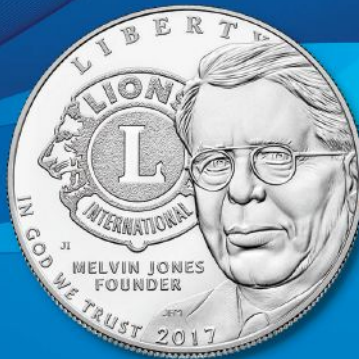
Give kids in your community a creative way to express their visions of *The Future of Peace*, the theme for the 2017-18 Peace Poster Contest. Order your Peace Poster Kit to play a key role in engaging our youth and promoting peace around the world. Get complete contest details at [lionsclubs.org](http://lionsclubs.org).

*The Future of Peace* begins with you and your club.

Order your Peace Poster Kit today!

[lionsclubs.org/  
PeacePosterKits](http://lionsclubs.org/PeacePosterKits)





# Celebrate 100 years of humanitarian service

by purchasing a Lions Clubs Centennial Commemorative Coin.

This exquisitely crafted, limited-edition, silver dollar coin is produced by the United States Mint and features our founder Melvin Jones.

This keepsake coin is the perfect way to honor our rich history and support the life-changing work of Lions around the world. *For each coin sold, US\$10 is authorized to be paid to Lions Clubs International Foundation to improve the lives of even more people in need.*

**The Centennial Coins will only be minted during 2017 and supplies are limited. Don't miss your chance to own a piece of Lions history.**



**On Sale Now!**  
**US\$52.95**

**Order your Centennial Coin today!**

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