

LION

WINTER 2025 LIONMAGAZINE.ORG

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to your
happy
place.*

*Lions are spreading
joy and feeling it, too.*



Lions International



ORLANDO

JULY 13-17, 2025

107th LIONS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

SERVING UP MAGIC IN THE SUNSHINE STATE

Lions and Leos from around the world are gearing up to enjoy friendship, fellowship and fun at the 107th Lions International Convention in sunny Orlando, Florida.

Famous for its family-friendly theme parks, endless entertainment and whimsical vacation vibes, Orlando is a top global destination and the perfect place to host this year's biggest celebration of service.

Come be part of it all in a city that's pure magic!



Register today!
lionscon.lionsclubs.org

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WE SERVE

LIONS INTERNATIONAL MISSION

To empower Lions clubs, volunteers and partners to improve health and well-being, strengthen communities, and support those in need through humanitarian service and grants that impact lives globally, and encourage peace and international understanding.

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EMBRACING THE LION EXPERIENCE

Dear Lion,

The work we do as Lions has a profound impact on countless communities and lives — including my own.

Becoming a Lion 40 years ago filled a gap in my life I didn't even know existed. While I had been blessed with a beautiful family and a successful business career, it wasn't until I joined Lions that I discovered the incredible rewards of being part of a group dedicated to serving others. The friendships, leadership opportunities and sense of fulfillment have left an indelible mark on my life. For that, I am profoundly grateful.

As Lions, it's important to reflect on how being part of this organization has shaped our lives — and to share those stories with others. Let your family, friends and social media community know why you're proud to be a Lion. Better yet, invite them to join us. What better way to make a mark on someone's life than by offering them the chance to experience the joy of service?

That joy is what fuels my commitment to *MISSION 1.5*, our ambitious goal of reaching 1.5 million members by 2027. Thank you for embracing this mission and helping to spread the joy.

At your service,

Fabrício Oliveira
International President, Lions Clubs International



We Serve

NEW PRESIDENTIAL LCIF SUPPORTER PINS

Your generosity changes lives and LCIF wants to recognize your gifts. Donors who make a one-time donation of at least US\$50 are eligible to receive International President Fabrício Oliveira's Presidential LCIF Supporter pin, which is only available this Lion year.

Gold Pin

US\$200 and above



Silver Pin

US\$100-\$199



Bronze Pin

US\$50-\$99



Donate today and receive your pin.
lionsclubs.org/WaysToGive





Next stop: Orlando

Pack your bags for the 107th Lions International Convention — our most thrilling celebration of service yet!

This is your chance to meet Lions and Leos from around the globe, hear inspiring stories and enjoy amazing entertainment. And it's all happening in Orlando, the ultimate destination for fun, sunshine and unforgettable adventures.

Register today! lionscon.lionsclubs.org

Lions Have Their “Best Day Ever” in Pasadena

Lions International rang in 2025 at the Tournament of Roses Parade in sunny California.

This year’s theme was “Best Day Ever!” — a fitting theme for Lions, who make every day the best day and another chance to make their mark on communities around the world. Lions International President Fabrício Oliveira and his wife Amariles were joined by Lion leaders, service dogs, student writers and others on the “Celebrating a Day of Service” float.

Lions and Leos decorated the 35-foot float with thousands of flowers, beans, rice and other natural materials. Year after year, Lion and Leo decorators come out in droves for this service opportunity, so much so that the Tournament of Roses leaders asked our volunteers to lend a hand with numerous other parade floats.



Peace Poster Kits Now Available Digitally

Children ages 11 to 13 are invited to imagine what's possible when diverse groups unite around a common goal, "Together as One."

Lions clubs can sponsor the 2025-2026 Lions International Peace Poster Contest in schools and youth groups, fostering creativity and community engagement. The Peace Poster contest gives children a chance to express their visions of peace while giving clubs an opportunity to build relationships in the community and attract new members.

For the first time, a digital download of the Peace Poster kit is available, offering immediate access to the materials while eliminating shipping costs.

The International Peace Essay Contest is also open for visually impaired young people to share their feelings of peace and envision a world where we all come together as one.

Purchase yours at lionsclubs.org/peaceposter.



Serving Up Kindness at the Peach Bowl

Bright and early on New Year's Day, football fans poured into the Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl FanFest, which was presented by Lions International.

Attendees had a chance to stop by the Lions booth to talk with local Lions and participate in a service project that involved writing cheerful notecards for residents of local assisted-living homes.

Later that day, the Lions International brand was on display throughout the



stadium as over 70,000 fans watched the University of Texas' double overtime win over Arizona State University in the college football playoff quarterfinal game.

Ghana Leo Club Wins Video Contest

The 2024 International Leo Day Video Contest celebrated its 10th anniversary with the theme #LeoTop10, inviting clubs to share their creativity and love for being Leos.

Clubs embraced the challenge by sharing their “top 10” in the areas of recruitment, community impact and club pride. The Leo Club of Accra Ubuntu from Ghana took home the grand prize with its inspiring video, “#LeoTop10 Tips for Recruiting New Leos.”

Watch the top videos at lionsclubs.org/leo-video-contest.



IN THE NEWS

OVERHEARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA

“I love being a Lion because it connects me to compassionate individuals who share a commitment to service. I'm proud to be part of an organization that has a lasting impact on both local and international communities.”

—Lion Renee Byron

“Being a Lion relieves my stress and improves my mental well-being. It has sharpened my dedication, commitment and leadership skills, and improved my patience as I passionately serve humanity.”

—Lion Osarenkhoe Ethel Chima-Nwogwugwu

“After receiving a life-saving kidney from an unknown living donor, I wanted to give back in a bigger way than I could on my own. I joined Lions and have moved up the ranks. I will be DG next year.”

—Lion Linda Deming

“Being part of my Lions club has given me the opportunity to grow, serve my community and work alongside incredible leaders. The power of service truly transforms individuals and communities alike.”

—Lion Ganesh Mahato

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BY THE NUMBERS

8

Years is how long the Lions and Rotary clubs in Avalon, California, have joined forces for their annual chili cook-off to raise funds that will help them benefit their community.

106

Cupcakes were donated by the Table View Lions Club in Cape Town, South Africa, as part of the Cupcakes for Cancer event to raise awareness and funds for the disease.

2,000

Educational workbooks were distributed by the Lagos Metropolitan and Ikeja Lions Clubs in Nigeria during a charitable event for International Literacy Day 2024, benefiting elementary school students.

420 million

People were served by Lions worldwide from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.



Be a part of our global partnership.

Join us in New York this March to commemorate the 47th Annual Lions Day with the United Nations and be part of the global conversation about this year's theme, “The Future of Service.”

Three reasons to attend LDUN 2025

- Learn how to address today's growing challenges.
- Meet U.N. diplomats and attendees from around the world.
- Be among the first to find out the grand prize winners of the International Peace Poster and Essay Contests.

Lions Day with the United Nations
Friday, March 21, 2025 | New York, NY, USA

Learn more and register at lionsclubs.org/ldun



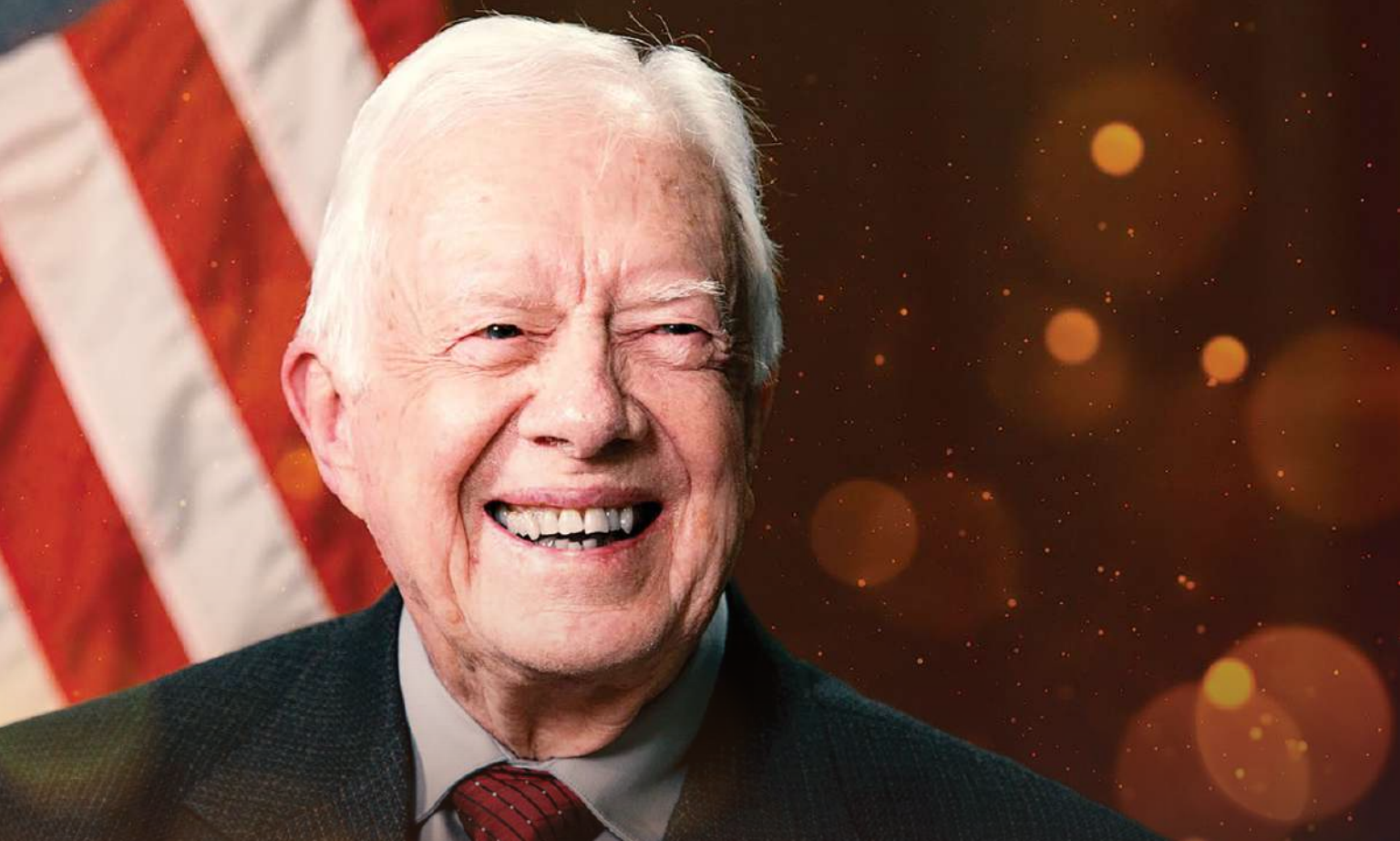


Photo courtesy of the Jimmy Carter Library

Celebrating the influential life of Jimmy Carter

By Past International President Jim Ervin

During my time as Lions Clubs International president, I had the distinct honor of working closely with former President Jimmy Carter. A Lion for over 60 years, he was an incredible servant leader whose dedication to helping others never ceased. Carter served as the 39th president of the United States with the same unwavering humbleness and compassion he had as district governor for 18 C District in Georgia.

In 1998, Carter and I visited Mali in sub-Saharan Africa, and it was the first time I witnessed the effects of trachoma. It was heartbreaking to see children experiencing completely preventable blindness, and I knew something had to be done. The following year, I worked with Carter to establish a partnership between Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) and The Carter Center to combat river blindness and trachoma in 13 countries in Africa and Latin America.



With Carter's incredible influence, Pfizer committed to supplying the needed doses of Zithromax to help eradicate preventable and treatable blindness. This pivotal agreement offered vision-saving treatment to hundreds of millions of people. By restoring sight one person at a time, the partnership between LCIF and The Carter Center empowered Mali to eliminate trachoma as a public health problem. The World Health Organization's validation of Mali's status in 2023 was a victory for sight and a reminder of the incredible strides long-term partnerships can make in

humanitarian relief. And this is just one of the many victories we've been able to achieve through this partnership.


Carter opened many doors for Lions, and we cannot begin to express our appreciation for him. We are grateful for his enduring humanitarian spirit and steadfast commitment to global service. His life spanned a century, but his legacy of building alliances, championing human dignity and serving with compassion will influence Lions for generations to come. 



Photo by JD Scott



Photo by Deborah Hake

EMBRACING Neurodiversity



Autism specialty club members use their unique gifts to enrich others and themselves.

BY HANNAH KRZEMINSKI

One of the most appealing aspects of Lions International is the wide variety of clubs that service-minded individuals can join. With 1.4 million Lions in more than 200 countries and geographic areas around the world, it's no wonder that no two volunteers are the same. Each Lion enriches their club with different talents, expertise, connections and a fresh perspective that helps the group serve more people in need.

In Canada, the Montreal Autism Community Lions Club (MACLC) takes a special interest in promoting inclusion. The specialty club is home to more than 30 Lions, many who are autistic or neurodiverse. Autism advocates Lori-Ann Zemanovich, whose son is autistic, and Ebohon Idonije founded the MACLC in 2021 after identifying an opportunity among neurodiverse folks and caregivers in their community hunkering down during the COVID-19 pandemic. The new club allowed its members to turn their isolation into unity by celebrating what makes each Lion uniquely themselves while raising awareness and encouraging public acceptance.

“Our focus is not simply to bring light, awareness and advocacy for the needs, adversities and challenges of the special needs community, but also to welcome them as contributing members,” said Zemanovich, the club’s president. “Our club celebrates our members’ ability to contribute to society by creating opportunities for them to use their gifts to help others and empowering them to develop their own leadership skills.”

One of the club’s largest annual service projects is a school supply drive that benefits up to 300 underprivileged students in the Montreal area. Lions raise more than CA\$6,000 to purchase items for students, pack everything together, then distribute the supplies to local schools.

“Our club celebrates our members’ ability to contribute to society by creating opportunities for them to use their gifts to help others, and empowering them to develop their own leadership skills.” —Club president Lori-Ann Zemanovich

The fundraising doesn’t stop there. Each year, MACLC Lions raise a total of CA\$15,000 to support inclusivity and special needs programs, autism and the arts, artistic expression and Lions International areas of service such as childhood cancer, disaster relief, vision and hunger.

“It is in the giving, that we ourselves are enriched,” said Zemanovich. “By serving those in need, we not only enrich the lives of those we serve, but our own lives for having served them.”

Organized service projects aren’t the only way Lions serve their communities. Sometimes, just being part of a club is service in itself, making Lions feel positive about themselves



Club founders Lori-Ann Zemanovich and Ebohon Idonije



and accepted by their peers. That is what Lion Zachary Hazan-Decruz, who is autistic, has experienced. He joined the MACLC during the summer of 2024 after attending a program hosted by the club. He was even recommended for the club’s Leadership Training Program, which mentors Lions who embody the will and spirit of serving others.

“To be a MACLC Lion means everything to me, from the sense of community and leadership, to being part of such great work,” said Hazan-Decruz. “From the bottom of my heart, it feels like I am part of a growing family that is always by my side. Even when things come up — like everyone has in life — I have the Lions club to rely on.”

Advocates say having a sense of community is especially important for people who are neurodiverse, as social outlets can sometimes be lost in adulthood after graduating from school and lacking the daily interactions with classmates and teachers they had grown accustomed to.

“By having a community to mobilize with and to be in solidarity with, that they know supports them, is the strongest foothold that autistic young adults can have to help them take whatever next steps they need to,” explained Zemanovich. “Whether it be finding housing, jobs or even more adult learning activities for them to take part in.”

MACLC leaders believe it is important for club members to build upon skills they developed as children, so they can continue to maintain their confidence in their journey of adulthood.

“The future is neurodiverse,” said Idonije. “Our community has taught me to be more aware of our differences, to accept, care and to love each other. The point is to promote and to foster positive relationships among each other, the community and the world at large.”

“From the bottom of my heart, it feels like I am part of a growing family that is always by my side. Even when things come up — like everyone has in life — I have the Lions club to rely on.” —Lion Zachary Hazan-Decruz

In addition to serving others and building meaningful relationships, MACLC Lions and leaders prioritize educating people everywhere to understand how inclusivity and diversity contribute to the enrichment that life has to offer. Rather than focusing on the adversities and limitations of those who are neurodiverse, the club hopes the world can appreciate the community’s unique abilities and contributions to humanity.

Since its founding, the MACLC has helped charter similar neurodiverse specialty clubs throughout Canada and around the world in places like France, Portugal and Nigeria. 🇺🇳

MAGLC'S THREE PILLARS

1. Accept/Inspire

Create an inclusive society that understands, accepts, respects and recognizes the needs, challenges, value and achievements of neurodivergent individuals.

2. Serve

Prioritize service and support to their Montreal autistic community, the needs of those within their club and their families, and those individuals and organizations that support and serve them.

3. Enrich/Empower

Improve and empower the lives of all those affected by autism and inspire others to appreciate, adapt and welcome the enriching value neurodivergent inclusion contributes to a better society.



Lion Zachary Hazan-Decruz

The Circle of Joy

**Lions give so much to the world.
And get so much in return.**

By Jenny Maxse

The impact Lions have on communities around the world is clear. But equally impressive is the impact being a Lion has on Lions themselves. We dug into our latest member satisfaction survey to find out what makes our Lions tick.



Survey says:
Being a Lion feels good.

95%

Feel they are making a difference.

92%

Enjoy opportunities for fellowship and fun.

86%

Realize personal growth and development.

91%

Have a sense of belonging.

80%

Feel their self-esteem and self-worth are enhanced.

Finding ourselves as Lions

Most people join a Lions club to help others and give back, but they ultimately find so much more. The friendships they make and deep sense of accomplishment they gain bring fulfillment and joy to their lives. Just ask these Lions.

“It gives me a warm feeling in my heart knowing I’m making a difference as a Lion.”



Tebo found a way to make a difference.

Terrence “Tebo” Richards, a member of the Thistletown Lions Club in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, witnessed the power of Lions at work — people of all walks of life changing the community one service project at a time — and wanted to be part of it.

What surprised Tebo most about being a Lion is that through his service, he’s not only helping others, he’s helping himself. Being a Lion is an outlet to lift his spirits when they need lifting.

“If I’m feeling a bit down or depressed and I go out and do something to put smiles on people’s faces, it gives me a warm feeling in my heart knowing I’m making a difference as a Lion.”

“Being a Lion has given me so many wonderful experiences and a great family.”



Heidi found an extended family.

Heidi Haiying of Melbourne, Australia, started as a Leo when she was a university student living in Sydney. Ten years ago, she moved to Melbourne where she didn’t know many people. Having experienced the power of fellowship as a Leo, she knew exactly where she could make some new friends. So she joined the Melbourne Chinese Lions Club.

“We spend a lot of time with each other. We learn a lot. We go through a lot together. And we have fun along the way. We attend different gatherings, have dinner and take short trips.”

Most importantly, being a Lion allows Heidi to be part of a close-knit group of people who want to make the world better together. “Being a Lion has given me so many wonderful experiences and a great family.”

*“ I found my voice.
I discovered I have something
to say to people. ”*

Paulo found his voice.

Leo-Lion Paulo Caceres of Paiján, Peru, began his service journey as a Leo years ago when a university professor invited him to join a club.

As a Leo, Paulo found it necessary to talk with authorities and others in his small town in order to get things done. This was a major feat for the once shy boy who was afraid to speak in public.

“I found my voice,” he said. “I discovered I have something to say to people. And I fell in love with the organization.” Today, Paulo continues to use his voice as a member of the Paiján Lions Club and as a university professor, inspiring future generations to find their way in the world.

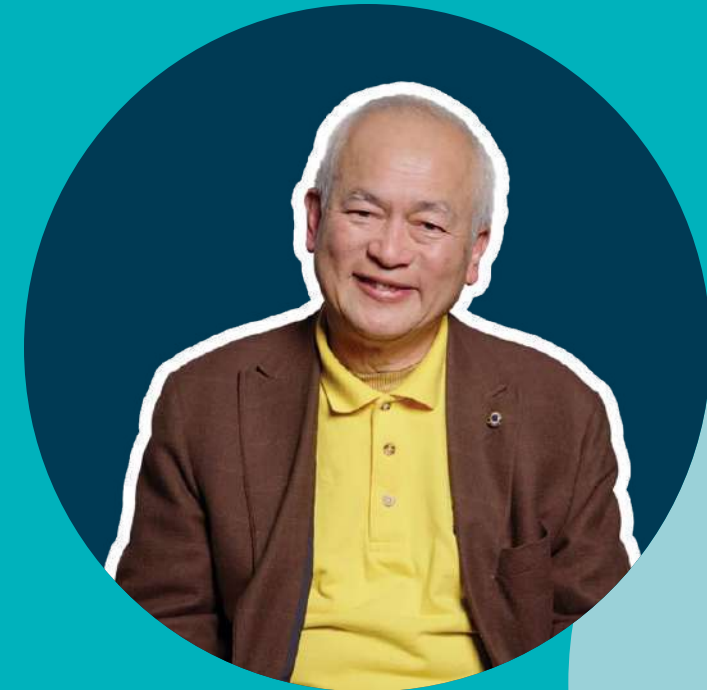


Raymond found his way as a leader.

Raymond Loh of Werribee, Australia, has been a Lion for more than 35 years — an experience he says has transformed his life. He recalls making many mistakes as a young Lion, but is grateful to the senior leaders who have guided him along the way.

His experience taught him how to be a great leader himself. “Great leadership gives us the confidence and courage to move past mistakes and grow.”

Today, he invites others to join Lions so they too can experience the benefits of membership and the organization he holds dear can continue to grow well into the future.



Katie found a sense of belonging.

Katie Townsend of Christchurch, New Zealand, loves being a Lion because regardless of background or skill set, anyone can be a member. She describes her club as “one big happy family” with all sorts of people coming together.

Katie, who is autistic and passionate about raising awareness of neurodiversity, found comfort in the welcoming nature of her club, allowing her to break out of her shell while supporting causes close to her heart.

“My club has been really supportive and welcomed me with open arms,” she said. “When I started, I was quite shy. But now I won’t stop talking.”

*“ My club has been really supportive
and welcomed me with open arms. ”*



*“ Great leadership gives us the
confidence and courage to move
past mistakes and grow. ”*



Scan the code to hear why these and other members love being Lions.

Through Lions clubs, I found ...

A community dedicated to serving others and making a positive impact in the world.
-Loay Albasheer, Jordan

A changed mindset about life.
-Byron Grants, United States

A sense of belonging.
-Busayomi Jummy, Nigeria

Happiness. Giving back was the one thing I lacked.
-Steve Kajala, United States

Friendships and like-minded people.
-Patti Redlin, United States

Peace and harmony.
-Punam Saud, Nepal

Friends and leadership qualities.
-Pushpa Rama, Australia

Wonderful friends around the world.
-Lion Moin Ahmad Butt MJF, Pakistan

Joy.
-Jocelyn Wan, Canada

My husband. We started a club together seven years ago then fell in love, married, and our second child is on the way.
-Lauren Brug, Australia

Lifelong friends and a sense of community.
-Mike Bartle, United States

Happiness.
-Chandrasekaran Vinnaiherthan, India

A sense of belonging.
-Busayomi Jummy, Nigeria

My passion.
-Susan Dalley, United States

Myself.
-Muazzez Yahya, England

Purpose.
-Christina Peirson-Hill, Canada



Tell the world why you're a Lion.

1 *Talk to your family.*
They see the impact you're making, but do they know the impact it's had on you? Share it with them.

2 *Tell your friends.*
They know you're a Lion, but do they know why? And how it's benefited you? Let them know!

3 *Post on social media.*
Be creative. Make a short video or share a photo representing how being a Lion has enhanced your life. Be sure to include the hashtag, #WeServe.

4 *Clue in your colleagues.*
Let them in on your little secret of why you're so happy at work. Doing good feels good, and that feeling carries over into your daily life.

5 *Share at a club or district meeting.*
If public speaking isn't your thing, introduce yourself to someone new and share your Lion story. People love to be inspired.



MISSION 1.5

MOMENT



HYOGO MIRAI LIONS CLUB

THE MISSION:

MISSION 1.5 is the drive to reach 1.5 million members worldwide, so we can better meet the growing needs of our communities and serve more people than ever before.

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED BY:

Hyogo Mirai Lions Club

LOCATION:

Hyogo, Japan

SUMMARY:

The Hyogo Mirai Lions Club is focused on recruiting capable young people to ensure a bright future for Lions in Japan. The 27-member club, with an average age of 35, hopes to model a solution to aging membership and is working to remove the financial barriers that make it difficult for young people to join.

ABOUT THE NEW CLUB:

Since being chartered in September 2023, the Hyogo Mirai Lions have added six new members and have five prospective members in the pipeline. Their goal is to reach 50 members by June 2025.

New members are drawn to the club's vocational diversity within a shared generation. They are executives, manufacturers, marketers, accountants, dentists, schoolteachers and more. And with the addition of new members with diverse experiences and skills, the club is constantly evolving.

As the club becomes more established, the community challenges it wants to address are becoming clearer. So far, their service has focused on promoting blood donation and providing respite for families in need. Their "Childcare Sento" initiative, for example, gathers families at a public bathhouse "sento" and offers quality childcare, giving overburdened parents much-needed time for refreshment and reconnection.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MISSION
at lionsclubs.org/mission1.5

HYOGO MIRAI LIONS CLUB'S FIVE TIPS FOR CLUB GROWTH

1 Share the vision of what you want to achieve. We align all activities with our vision, which is "to brighten the future of Hyogo with youthful ideas and action."

2 Give every member a role. New members often struggle to find their place. We help them discover where they fit, like a piece in a jigsaw puzzle.

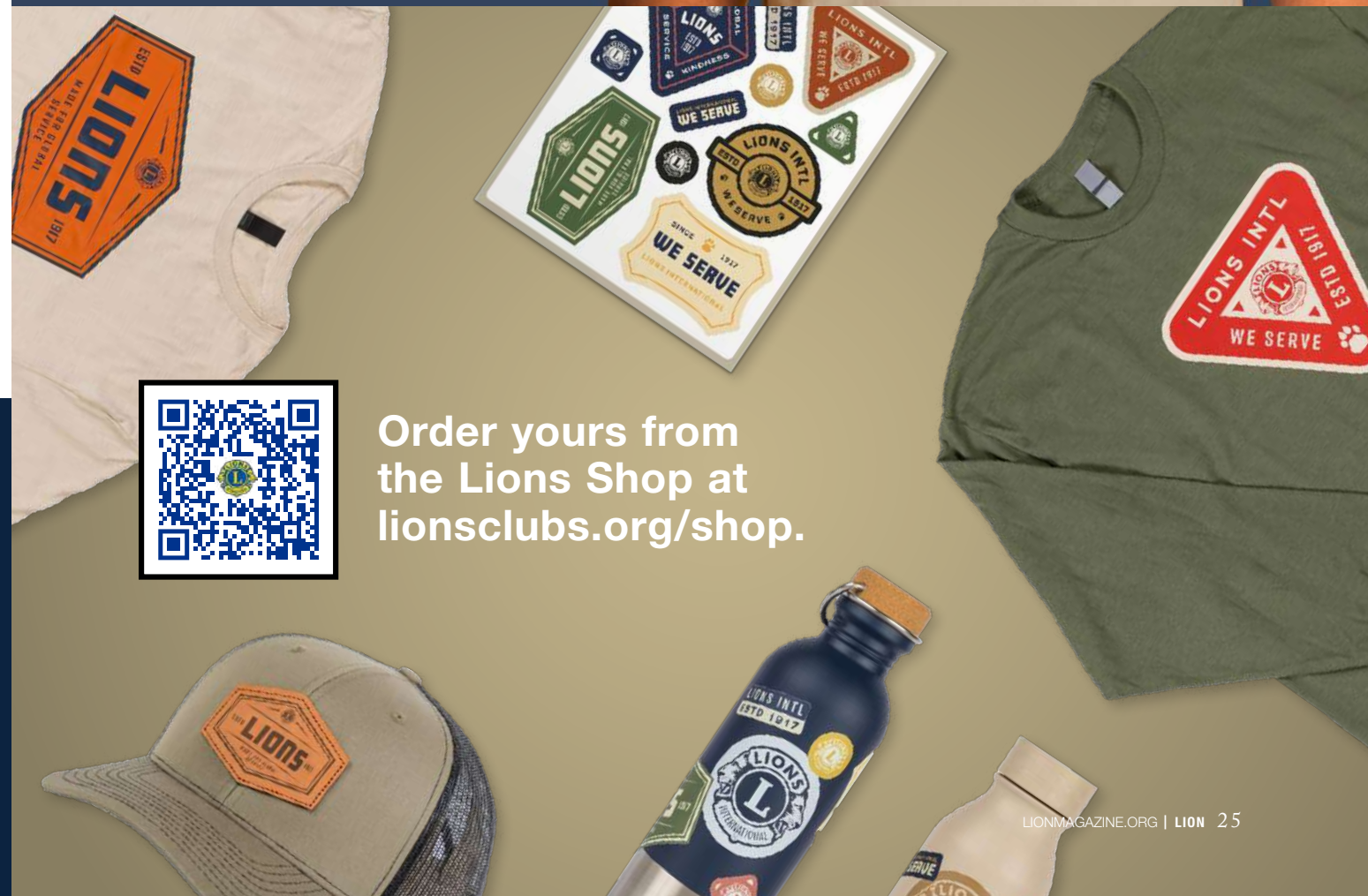
3 Be open to new members. We place great value on the contributions of new members and welcome the fresh perspectives and ideas they bring to the club.

4 Be a club that members feel proud to belong to. A club that earns respect from one's family and friends brings joy in belonging and participating. We strive to make our club's name well-known and respected, inspiring others to serve with us.

5 Create smiles and joy in the community. Serving can come with challenges and be exhausting at times. However, staying positive while helping others can help spread smiles and joy, which generates interest in our club and the work we do.

Turn heads while you serve.

Bring some extra style to your next service event with the *Lions Heritage collection*. This product line features contemporary designs that stand out no matter where or how you serve. Choose from a variety of mixed-material items, including water bottles, trucker hats, decals and more.



Order yours from the Lions Shop at lionsclubs.org/shop.

Making Papa PROUD

Teens Start Leo Club to Honor Grandfather's Legacy of Service

By Stephanie Foxen



Lion Tom Post



Leo Club of Palos

For 17-year-old Mia Narciso of Palos Park, Illinois, the Lions club was always synonymous with her grandfather, Thomas “Tom” Post. Along with family and football, giving back to others was most important for the man they called Papa.

“He was the kindest person I’ve ever met,” Mia said. “It never mattered if he knew you or not. It was never a matter of reciprocation. That was just who he was at his core.”

A Guiding Force

Growing up in the small suburb southwest of Chicago, Mia’s earliest memories include joining her grandfather for Palos Lions Club events and helping with service projects. She and her family fondly recall the fun of Candy Day and the fragrance of the spruces and firs at the Christmas tree sales.

Even as a small child, Mia recognized the significance of their activities. She credits these foundational moments with the Lions for instilling a sense of responsibility for her community and beyond. “I’ve always modeled everything after their exemplary service and dedication. It truly became a guiding force,” she said.



Lion Tom and his wife Kathleen with Bella, Mia, Chance and Indy Narciso

Tom was especially passionate about the Lions Recycle For Sight Program, which collects and distributes eyeglasses to individuals in low- and middle-income countries. In his 35 years as a Lion, Mia estimates that her grandfather transported hundreds of thousands of eyeglasses – meticulously cleaning and packaging each pair before driving them to the recycling center. He was well-known and loved by the partners at the many collection sites – somehow always finding time to stop and talk with everyone he encountered.

As young children, Mia and her sister relished riding along on these expeditions. And as Tom’s health declined in later years, the girls (by then newly licensed drivers) were happy to assist behind the wheel. Their mother, Gina Narciso, explained, “We saw this as an opportunity – not just for Mia and Bella to practice good highway driving – but to do a good service and have that one-on-one time in the car with my father.”

For years, Mia and Bella, along with their brothers Chance and Indy, wanted to be Lions like their grandpa. “The kids would always ask me, ‘How can we do what Papa does?’” Gina said. But at the time, she was unaware of opportunities within the organization for teens.



Bella helping Papa with Candy Day through the years

An Enduring Family Legacy

After Tom died in November 2023, the whole family was determined to carry his legacy of service and kindness forward. At the emotional celebration of life ceremony, during which Tom was honored with remarks from numerous Lions, Gina and her three siblings were inducted into the Palos Lions Club.

In that moment, Mia became more resolute than ever to get involved. “Watching my mom and uncles and aunt get inducted as Lions made me want to give back to the community in a way that would make [Papa] proud,” she said. Mia did her research and discovered Leo clubs, which are sponsored by local Lions clubs and open to members as young as age 12.

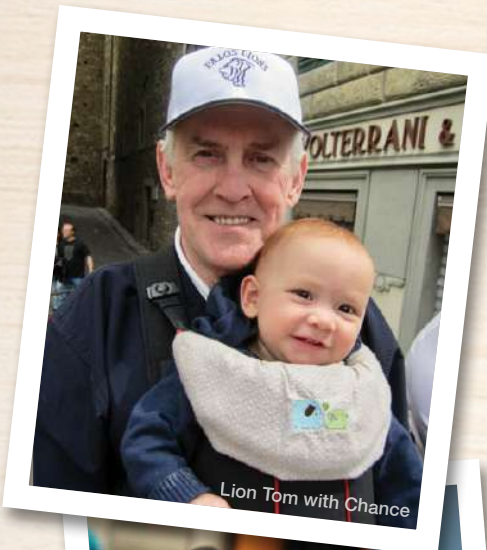
The honor student quickly set to work founding the Leo Club of Palos, which has rapidly grown to over 30 members and counting (including Mia’s brothers and sisters) across six local schools since it was chartered in August 2024. Mia, who is the club president, shares that local press, social media outreach and spirited

“There’s a stigma around youth nowadays that we’re not as involved with the community. But I think this shows how much we do want to contribute and, when given the opportunity, we will show up.”
-Leo Mia Narciso

weekly meetings held at the library have helped to spread the word.

But above all, Mia attributes the club’s early success to an earnest and sometimes overlooked desire among young people to give back.

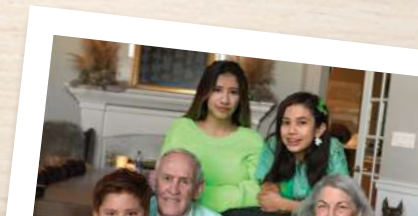
“There’s a stigma around youth nowadays that we’re not as involved with the community,” she said. “But I think this shows how much we do want to contribute and, when given the opportunity, we will show up. It’s been so incredible to interact with these kids.”



Lion Tom with Chance



Leo Mia and Lion Gina Narciso





A Bright Future

Though still in its early days, the Leo Club of Palos has made impressive strides — supporting the activities of their sponsoring Lions club, while establishing their own goals. Mia appreciates the way Leos and Lions collaborate and learn from one another. And that respect goes both ways.

“Mia has always been the compassionate child who cares deeply about other people,” Gina said. “She’s coming into her own right now and looking at colleges. I think she’s seeing that this path of advocacy is something she really wants. I could not be more proud, and I know my dad is, too.”

“Mia is a great leader. She is highly motivated and has recruited members that share a spirit of service,” said Herb Schumann, past club president and longtime Palos Lions Club member. “Establishing a community-based Leo club, with the ability to recruit from public and private schools was a very good idea. As the Palos Lions Club celebrates its 75th anniversary, our future looks bright.”

Mia has lofty ambitions — both for her Leo club and her future. The club’s short-term plans include technology tutoring for older adults, collecting gently used sports equipment for kids, organizing food and clothing drives, and more. In time, Mia hopes to partner with other Leo clubs, near and far, to strengthen their reach and impact.

Did you KNOW?

- Leos are between the ages of 12 and 30.
- There are about 270,000 Leos in 7,600 clubs serving in more than 150 countries and territories.
- Leos participate in over 60,000 service projects annually.
- Leo clubs are sponsored by a Lions club with one Lion serving as the Leo club advisor.

“Establishing a community-based Leo club, with the ability to recruit from public and private schools was a very good idea. As the Palos Lions Club celebrates its 75th anniversary, our future looks bright.”
-Lion Herb Schumann



Leo Club of Palos charter members



Leo Club of Palos club officers





SERVICE AROUND THE WORLD

Lions and Leos are serving their communities in nearly every country on earth.

Join us for a quick trip around the globe to check out some of their service.



Eau Claire, Wisconsin, USA

Eau Claire Seymour Lions Club

The club joined a county-wide effort on National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, collecting over 350 prescription pill bottles. These bottles, difficult to recycle locally, will be sent to communities where medicine is often dispensed unsafely. This project addresses both environmental concerns and global health needs. "This is an easy way to help people while caring for our environment," said Lion David Hogue. The club also collects eyeglasses, hearing aids, cell phones and shoes for those in need.



Belize City, Belize

Belize City Lions Club

After several years of planning, the Belize City Lions Club and the Belize Council for the Visually Impaired (BCVI) officially opened the Lions BCVI National Eye Clinic and Rehabilitation Center. Through the Lions' support, BCVI, a respected institution whose mission is to help the visually impaired, was able to expand its facility and its offerings to help meet an increased need for eye examinations, affordable glasses, medications, and cataract and glaucoma surgeries.

Rimbey, Alberta, Canada

Rimbey Lions Club

The Rimbey Lions know well the feeling of pride in being Canadian, and shared that with local students as part of the Lions of Alberta Foundation's ongoing project, "Project Maple Leaf." The club taught first-grade students about Canada and what it means to be Canadian — being a good friend and neighbor, being kind and helping people. When asking the children what they do to help their community, their family or their teachers, they received many funny and heartwarming answers. The students received a certificate, Canadian flag, flag pin and poem about the flag for participating.



Istanbul, Türkiye

Istanbul Kalamis Sahil Lions Club

The club installed "Lions Libraries" around Istanbul as well as in local schools. The club's goal was to create positive change for families in need by providing free books to help expand education, while also increasing visibility of their club in the community. The libraries, with their eye-catching telephone booth design, feature books in English, university prep textbooks, magazines and more.





Saipan, Mariana Islands

Saipan Marianas Lions Club

The club hosted its fifth annual 5K Walkathon with the goal of educating community members about diabetes and highlighting the importance of physical activity for long-term health. More than 200 people supported the event, and 76 people won raffle prizes that promote health and wellness. Participants were served fresh fruit, juice and coffee, and volunteer nurses from a local dialysis center provided free blood sugar screenings and blood pressure readings.



Wollongong, Australia

Lions Club of Wollongong

The club partners with a local funeral home to collect used eyeglasses. These glasses are sent to Lions Recycle for Sight Australia, which refurbishes them and distributes them to people in need in developing countries. Over seven million pairs have been donated over 26 years through this program, impacting lives across Africa, Europe, Asia and Oceania. The simple act of donating used eyeglasses provides the life-changing gift of sight.

Vasco, India

Lions Club of Chicalim Bogmalo

The club organized a large e-waste collection drive as part of the Lions of India's "Dump or Donate" campaign. Discarded electronics were collected from across the city to be recycled, refurbished and donated to underprivileged children. This project addresses India's growing e-waste problem while supporting digital access for those in need.



Ntungamo, Uganda

Rukungiri, Ntungamo, Kamwengye, and Kabale Lions Clubs

Four Lions clubs united for a day of service and fellowship. The day began with a diabetes awareness walk, followed by friendly competitions in volleyball, football, netball and tug-of-war. The Rukungiri Lions won the volleyball competition, while the Ntungamo Lions triumphed in football and netball. The day culminated in a joint fellowship and the induction of 16 new Lions. The event fostered camaraderie and strengthened the clubs' commitment to service.



**SERVICE
AROUND THE
WORLD**

Service the world counts on

These are just a few of the many stories showcasing the positive impact Lions around the world are making. From helping one person in need to helping an entire community, each and every act of your service matters.

Be sure to report your activities each month so we can effectively measure our impact, grow our membership and share our stories with the world.

Visit lionsclubs.org/service-reporting to learn more.



SERVING AGAINST ALL ODDS

OLDEST LIONS CLUB IN UKRAINE SURVIVES IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY.

BY ANNEMARIE MANNION

Current club members Asmina Symonyan, Elena Gryadusha, Vira Griadushcha, Olena Symonian and Sophia Nizhnik.



Members of the founding club in the late 1990s.

Founded in 1997 as Lions Club Donetsk Universal, Lions Club Svyatogorsk is the oldest Lions club in Ukraine. Despite facing tremendous odds in a country enduring more than a decade of conflict, the club members are holding on tightly to their resolve to help those in need — and each other. It’s an enduring testament to the spirit of Lions.

Lion Elena Gryadusha, who started the club, first learned about Lions when her husband was invited to a meeting in the city of Makiyivka in eastern Ukraine. “I learned about the projects Lions were doing all over the world, and I was very interested in establishing some projects in Ukraine,” she said.



The club's meeting place that was destroyed in 2022.

At its height, the club had about 25 members. They were an active and thriving club — with a focus on supporting youth — until 2014, when their world came crashing down around them.

When the conflict began, the eastern part of the country, where the club was headquartered, became occupied territory. To distance itself from the danger, the club relocated to Sviatohirsk, a city in the northern part of Donetsk Region, and two years later changed to their current name, Lions Club Svyatogorsk, reflecting their new homebase.

But danger proved to be unavoidable. In 2022, the club's headquarters in Sviatohirsk — the place for their meetings, future plans and future hopes — was destroyed in an attack. They lost all of their archives and resources, but not their desire to serve those in need. Today, the 12-member club, some of whom have dispersed to other countries, continues to meet via Zoom, another sign of their remarkable perseverance.

“Our club is like a small family,” said Club President Vira Griadushcha. “We maintain a positive spirit and we support each other no matter the distance or political landscape.”

“OUR CLUB IS LIKE A SMALL FAMILY. WE MAINTAIN A POSITIVE SPIRIT AND WE SUPPORT EACH OTHER NO MATTER THE DISTANCE OR POLITICAL LANDSCAPE.”

- CLUB PRESIDENT VIRA GRIADUSHCHA



Vira Griadushcha, current club president, and Elena Gryadusha, charter club president.



Olia Haiges, Elena Gryadusha and Olia's sister, Elena.

STAYING POSITIVE

One of the club's more recent projects was to work with the community of Sviatohirsk to create a "Fairy Forest," a public space 20 kilometers from a combat zone with swings and other playground equipment, playhouses, and a small stage for performances.

The club built some of the amenities in the park and also raised money and sponsorships to create this space that provides respite for young and old alike.

"It was a very big project," said Lion Elena Escot. "It gives parents a place to go with their children. Everything nearby has been destroyed."

Continuing to thrive as a club is challenging, but the members, some who are children of the founding members, are committed to keeping their work going. The club has maintained traditions as best it can, including celebrating the Chinese New Year and holding an annual meeting in Sviatohirsk at the end of the Lions' fiscal year to discuss upcoming projects and plans.

"This is our positive spirit and we support each other no matter what the difficulties or what the political landscape is now," said Lion Olia Haiges.



Volunteers hang a swing in the "Fairy Forest."

"IT WAS A VERY BIG PROJECT. IT GIVES PARENTS A PLACE TO GO WITH THEIR CHILDREN. EVERYTHING NEARBY HAS BEEN DESTROYED."

- LION ELENA ESCOT



A young visitor to the "Fairy Forest" browses the little library.



Children release balloons after burying a time capsule in 2017.



Angelina Harbuzova (left) and her artwork, which received third place in the 2019 Lions International Peace Poster Contest.

“OUR DREAM IS TO READ WHAT THE CHILDREN WROTE WHEN PEACE IS SETTLED. THIS IS OUR BIGGEST AND MOST IMPORTANT GOAL — TO SPREAD PEACE IN THE WORLD.”

- LION OLIA HAIGES

PROMOTING PEACE

Since 2014, the club has paid special attention to the theme of peace. It participated in a peace marathon that attracted 150 runners, wheelchair athletes and cyclists, as well as peace festivals and multiple exhibitions of posters submitted for the annual Lions International Peace Poster Contest.

One of their entrants, Angelina Harbuzova, earned third place in 2019. Her poster featured a nest holding people of many different ethnicities nestled in a colorful bed of flowers.

In a statement accompanying her entry, Harbuzova wrote, “We are people of different nationalities.

The earth is our nest, and we all live on it. And people should be kind and love each other.”

Similar themes will likely be found in a time capsule dedicated to peace that the club buried in 2017. The capsule contains pieces of papers with wishes for peace written by children. The club looks forward to removing the capsule and reading those messages in 2050.

“Our dream is to read what the children wrote when peace is settled,” Haiges said. “This is our biggest and most important goal — to spread peace in the world.”



100 Years of Unstoppable Spirit

In 1925, Helen Keller ignited a fire in Lions that burns brighter than ever today.

BY KRISTIN DIMAGGIO

It was June 30, 1925, when 45-year-old Helen Keller took the stage at the ninth annual Lions International Convention in Cedar Point, Ohio. Her historic address was a rally cry that not only guided the course of Lions' service over the past century — it established boldness as an enduring trait.

Keller was a maverick in her own right. At just 18 months old, an unknown illness rendered her deaf and blind. Such impairments were especially difficult at a time when there was limited care and treatment for vision and hearing loss.

Still, she persisted.

At age seven, Keller met her lifelong companion Anne Sullivan, the “miracle worker” who would teach her to spell — and understand — words in sign language. With the help of Sullivan and other teachers along the way, Keller mastered the alphabet (both handwritten and in braille for blind readers), learned to read and write, and eventually speak. She went on to become the first deafblind graduate of Radcliffe College in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Keller's hardships motivated her to become a champion for the underrepresented. She was an activist for many causes, but she was best known for her work with the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB). And it was there that she made her biggest impact, advocating for the needs of those with vision loss. But she knew she couldn't do it alone. So she turned an invitation to speak at the annual convention of an up-and-coming service club organization into an opportunity.

“I appeal to you, Lions — you who have your sight, your hearing, you who are strong and brave and kind — will you not constitute yourselves Knights of the Blind in my crusade against darkness?” —Helen Keller

Standing before a room filled with energetic Lions, Keller made her appeal.

“Try to imagine how you would feel if you lost your sight tomorrow.

Picture yourself stumbling and groping at noonday as in the night, your work, your independence gone! In that dark hour, wouldn't your heart cry out for a friend to teach you how to live in the dark?

“I appeal to you, Lions — you who have your sight, your hearing, you who are strong and brave and kind — will you not constitute yourselves Knights of the Blind in my crusade against darkness?”

Moved by Keller's words, the Lions were ready and willing to take on the challenge. And over the past 100 years, they have persisted.

Vision continues to be a leading cause that Lions around the world serve, working to improve the lives of the visually impaired and prevent avoidable blindness. But Keller's inspiration has transcended beyond vision. Lions have taken on numerous other challenges facing our world, supporting eight official global causes and serving communities in countless other ways.

Perhaps most importantly, Lions serve the world with the same passion and boldness that Keller exuded on that stage in Ohio a century ago. Her fighting spirit will continue to be a guiding force well into the future. **L**

Hear Keller's full speech

Watch a reenactment of Helen Keller's full address to Lions and hear the words that kick-started our work to serve the blind and visually impaired at lionsclubs.org/helen-keller.

Step Right Up!

SERVICE CARNIVALS GIVE FAMILIES A DAY OF FUN, FELLOWSHIP AND FREE SERVICES.

By Madeleine Miller
Photos by Edwin Lam

Who doesn't love a carnival? It's a place where you can bring your whole family and spend the day enjoying games, good food and special events, all while having lots of fun.

And that's exactly the experience Lions in Malaysia set out to offer in several communities — with a special Lion twist: life-enhancing service projects as the main attraction.

Lions in District 308 B3 in Malaysia created an innovative and exciting way to offer their services in communities without Lions clubs by hosting *Lions Service Carnivals*. These events have proven to be a great way for communities to benefit from Lions' service and learn what being a Lion is all about.



“It was at another carnival that I got to know about Lions. I saw that the event really brought many meaningful services to the community, so I joined a Lions club.”

-Lion Sia Sheue Wah



A FESTIVAL OF FUN AND SERVICE

The Kuala Lumpur event held in September 2024 was open to everyone and included booths featuring service projects tied to Lions International's eight global causes — childhood cancer, diabetes, disaster relief, environment, humanitarian, hunger, vision and youth.

Carnival-goers were offered an array of services. Haircuts were provided to kids at the childhood cancer kiosk, and attendees could get diabetes and blood pressure screenings at the diabetes awareness booth. There were fire prevention and CPR demonstrations at the disaster-relief station, a recycling campaign at the environment exhibit and hot food was served at the hunger booth. Vision screenings were available to all and a 3-on-3 basketball tournament was held for young people.

The carnival in Kuala Lumpur also offered peace-themed coloring contests, book exchanges for students, aerobic exercise and yoga classes, and a wheel of fortune with prizes. Other highlights included free games and food, a blood drive, an organ pledge station and complimentary legal advice. All of the service activities held at the carnival were selected based on the needs of the community where the event was held.

"This is our first time coming to the carnival," said Soniyaa A/P Rajendra. "I came with my husband and five children. We wanted to get some medical checkups, and I brought my kids for the coloring contest. We're all having a good time, and it's nice to be together here as a family. Lions clubs offer a lot of benefits, and I plan to either become a volunteer for Lions or join a club in the near future."

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLUB GROWTH

The carnivals are an excellent way to recruit new members, start new clubs, rejuvenate existing ones and raise awareness of Lions. To date, Malaysian Lions have held seven carnivals within their district, and all have been resounding successes. Collectively, the events have provided much-needed services to more than 2,000 people, brought in 60 new and charter members, and resulted in one new club and two club branches.

"Based on my experience helping out at the carnivals," said Lion Serene Lim of the JB Premier Lions Club in Johor Bahru, "people really want to know more about Lions, so we need to reach out. We must open our arms and welcome everyone, which is why our carnivals are such important events. They're 100% interaction between Lions and our communities, and we're showing them what Lions do and how we serve those in need."

Lion Sia Sheue Wah volunteered at the event in Kuala Lumpur.

"It was at another carnival that I got to know about Lions," she said. "I saw that the event really brought many meaningful services to the community, so I joined a Lions club. Everyone has a job and a family, but when all of us contribute a little bit, we can make our event successful. Earlier this year, I chartered a club with 22 members and introduced my five children to Lions, too."



“

“I came with my husband and five children. We wanted to get some medical checkups, and I brought my kids for the coloring contest. We're all having a good time, and it's nice to be together here as a family.”

- Soniyaa A/P Rajendra



HOST YOUR OWN SERVICE CARNIVAL.

Interested in coordinating a service carnival in your area? Lion Potter Ka Kai Fong of the Batu Pahat Lions Club, who has been instrumental in getting these service carnivals up and running in Malaysia, offers these tips.



Lion Potter Ka Kai Fong, right

- 1 Find a location.** Choose an area without an existing club that could benefit from Lions' service.
- 2 Gather your team.** This may include your own club or partnering with another club.
- 3 Start planning.** Consider what services are needed in the community and determine what size event your team can effectively support.
- 4 Spread the word.** Promote your event on social media and through other local media.
- 5 Follow up.** After the event, connect with attendees who expressed interest in learning more about Lions.



See a Lion service carnival in action.

Watch this video to learn more about the event in Kuala Lumpur.





“Ever since Helen Keller inspired Lions to champion the vision cause 100 years ago, we’ve served and advocated for the blind and visually impaired of all ages, in every corner of the world.”

-LCIF Chairperson Dr. Patti Hill



Expanding the SightFirst Legacy

LCIF launches new Vision Grant to support Lions' service.

BY SHELBY WASHINGTON

“Ever since Helen Keller inspired Lions to champion the vision cause 100 years ago, we’ve served and advocated for the blind and visually impaired of all ages, in every corner of the world,” said Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) Chairperson Dr. Patti Hill.

This historic appeal encouraged Lions to act as knights of the blind, and they have continually risen to that challenge by developing innovative projects, partnerships and programs, empowered by LCIF.

The SightFirst program has been one of the key ways Lions and Leos have lived out this challenge in recent years. Since 1990, SightFirst funds have allowed Lions, health care providers and partner organizations around the world to fight the major causes of preventable and reversible blindness, impacting more than 544 million people.



In just over three decades, LCIF approved more than US\$389 million in SightFirst Grant funding for over 1,400 projects in 118 countries, thanks to the incredible generosity of donors. These funds enabled 9.8 million cataract surgeries and trained 2.66 million health care professionals. They also secured hundreds of millions of doses of medications to control trachoma and river blindness, helping eliminate river blindness in Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Mexico, as well as helping eliminate trachoma in Malawi. These humanitarian service efforts have changed lives and improved communities. However, according to the World Health Organization, more than 2.2 billion people worldwide live with a vision impairment, and still need help.

To build on the legacy of SightFirst, LCIF launched a new Vision Grant opportunity that supports Lions-led service activities fighting blindness and preventable vision loss and assists people in underserved communities who are blind and visually impaired. The Vision Grant aims to support infrastructure development, equipment acquisition, human resource building and limited consumables, which are all core principles of the SightFirst program.

“We are extremely proud of our history, and look forward to the continued impact we will make restoring and preserving vision in the decades to come with this new grant opportunity,” said Dr. Hill.

Visit lionsclubs.org/vision-grant to learn how LCIF empowers Lions’ and Leos’ service in vision.



POP QUIZ!



THINK YOU KNOW LIONS?
LIKE **REALLY** KNOW LIONS?

Take this short quiz to test your Lions International knowledge.



Lions Clubs International
FOUNDATION



Question 1:

Who was the founder of Lions Clubs International?

- a. Melvin Jackson
- b. Martin Jones
- c. Melvin Jones
- d. Melvin Lions

Question 2:

How many Lions clubs are there in the world?

- a. 75,000
- b. 49,000
- c. 129,000
- d. 1.5 million

Question 3:

Who challenged Lions to become “Knights of the Blind” in 1925?

- a. Helen Keller
- b. Mother Teresa
- c. Susan B. Anthony
- d. Amelia Earhart

Question 4:

Where was the first Lions Clubs International headquarters located?

- a. Peoria, Illinois, USA
- b. Oak Brook, Illinois, USA
- c. Chicago, Illinois, USA
- d. Joliet, Illinois, USA

Question 5:

What year was Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) founded?

- a. 1958
- b. 1917
- c. 1975
- d. 1968

Question 6:

In which Canadian city was the first club outside of the United States chartered?

- a. Calgary, Alberta
- b. Winnipeg, Manitoba
- c. Windsor, Ontario
- d. Montreal, Quebec

Question 7:

In Lion year 2023-2024, Lions and Leos, with support from LCIF, reported _____ service activities, which benefited _____ people.

- a. 1.7 million; 422 million
- b. 4.2 million; 176 million
- c. 5.1 million; 518 million
- d. 2.5 million; 326 million

Question 8:

In how many countries and regions of the world do Lions and Leos serve?

- a. 200
- b. 100
- c. 175
- d. 150

Question 9:

Since its founding in 1968, LCIF has awarded how much in grants?

- a. US\$1.2 million
- b. US\$3 million
- c. US\$1.2 billion
- d. US\$3 billion

Question 10:

In 1917, the first Lions International Convention was held in what U.S. city?

- a. Boston, Massachusetts
- b. New York, New York
- c. Chicago, Illinois
- d. Dallas, Texas

Answers: 1.) Melvin Jones 2.) 49,000 3.) Helen Keller 4.) Chicago, Illinois 5.) 1968 6.) Windsor, Ontario 7.) 1.7 million; 422 million 8.) 200 9.) US\$1.2 billion 10.) Dallas, Texas

L PARTING SHOT

“ I joined the Cub club because I have a passion for making the world a better place. It’s a great opportunity for kids to give back to their community. ”

-Cub Abraham Price



Small hands, big hearts.

Abraham Price, 11, a member of the Alum Creek Cub Club in West Virginia picks up litter as part of his club’s service project. The 10-member Cub club is making a big impact in its community and is excited to follow in the footsteps of their older, more experienced sponsor, the Alum Creek Lions Club.

Visit lionsclubs.org/cub to learn more about the Cub program.

LION



Lions International

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