LION

WINTER 2023 LIONMAGAZINE.ORG

If You Build It, They Will Come

How the biggest club in North America attracts—and keeps—its members

Lions Clubs International

Lions Clubs International FOUNDATION

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3 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

4 BIG PICTURE

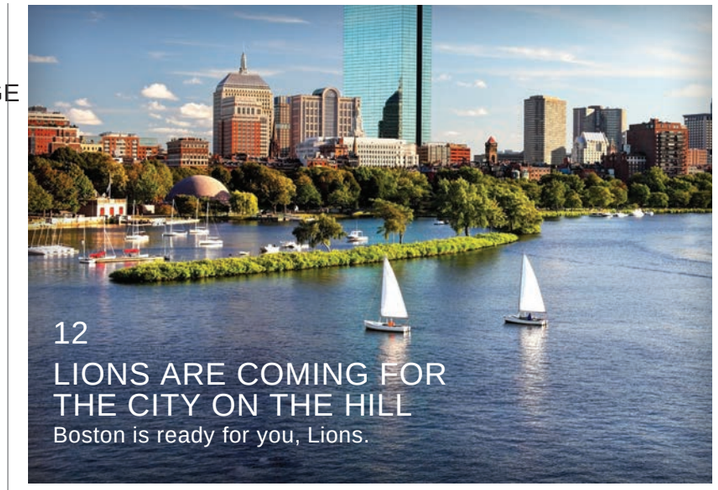
8 IN THE NEWS

14 GLOBAL SERVICE

44 LCIF IMPACT

46 CLUB NEWS

56 PARTING SHOT



12
LIONS ARE COMING FOR THE CITY ON THE HILL
Boston is ready for you, Lions.

16
IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME
How the biggest club in North America attracts—and keeps—its members.

24
KEEPING IT POPPIN
In Marshalltown, Iowa, popcorn is t name of the game.

30
GOLD RUSH
Land provides bounty that brings community together.

36
THE GREATEST CATCH
Traders pin their hopes on the ultimate find.

40
PINING FOR A BIT OF FUN
Lions in France throw a popular event for a unique sport.

42
UNITED IN KINDNESS
An LCIF special feature.

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WE SERVE

MISSION STATEMENT OF LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL:

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

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM

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At LCICon 2023, Lions and Leos will unite to forg a path to a better world. Come celebrate service with us, and enjoy the sights, history and culture of Boston.

- Enjoy historical trails and indulge in excellent food and drinks.
- Take part in empowering seminars, hear from Lions leaders and inspirational speakers.
- Enjoy world-class entertainment and meet your fellow Lions and Leos.
- Join the Parade of Nations on the historical streets of Boston.

BOSTON 2023

SCAN ME TO REGISTER

Lions 105th Annual International Convention • Boston, Massachusetts, USA • July 7-11, 2023

Building the Future We Want to See

Hello, Lions!

Do you have big dreams for your club? Do you want to grow your membership, get young people more involved, or expand the kinds of service projects you do? When you dream big—and I know Lions like to dream big—it can feel overwhelming and hard to know where to start.

But here's the big secret of Lions—you don't have to do it alone. The Global Action Team can help energize your efforts. We have a global foundation, LCIF, that's here to empower you with financial support. And there are more than 48,000 clubs around the world who are trying to do exactly what you are—build the club of their dreams. So go to local conventions and meet the Lions in your district. Trade ideas, get phone numbers, make connections.

The Seal Beach Lions Club in California didn't become North America's largest club by accident. They recognized they wanted to grow, and they wanted a membership that reflected their community—a diverse range of ages and life experiences. But rather than begin a heavy recruitment plan, they focused on building the kind of club that others would want to join. And it worked. You can do it, too.

Decide what is important to your club and then go after it. Build it. The results will come.

Make a Great Day,

Brian E. Sheehan

Brian E. Sheehan
International President, Lions Clubs International

We Serve.

Volunteering Looks Good on You

While the COVID-19 pandemic changed how Lions do service, it hasn't changed how much we enjoy doing it. The bright smiles, big hugs, and displays of club pride at the 104th International Convention in Montreal showed off just how good volunteering can make you look and feel.

See more photos and watch videos to relive the event online at **lionmagazine.org.**

Missed the convention in Montreal? Registration is open for the 2023 convention in Boston. Visit **LCICon.lionsclubs.org.**

Artists At Work

No one takes the Peace Poster Contest more seriously than District 307-A1 in Indonesia, where Lions ensure children have access to all the materials they need and the space to work so that they can bring their visions of peace to life.

Learn how your club can sponsor entrants at **lionsclubs.org/peaceposter.**

Coming Together to Serve the World 45th Annual Lions Day with the United Nations in Three Countries

This year, Lions Clubs International will celebrate 77 years of partnership with the United Nations during Lions Day with the United Nations (LDUN). This event commemorates a long-standing relationship, which began in 1945 when Lion leaders were asked to help develop the non-governmental organization (NGO) charter for the United Nations. To this day Lions continue to serve as a consulting NGO for the United Nations.

Now in three cities, the 45th Annual Lions Day with the United Nations is an opportunity for Lions to meet other members, interact with global diplomats, and celebrate Lions service around the world.

Centered around the theme “Hunger, Nutrition and Wellness,” attendees will hear from local and global leaders and dignitaries and be a part of the conversation addressing today’s growing challenges.

Lions who wish to attend should visit **lionsclubs.org/ldun.**

You Can Now Order More Copi of LION Magazine

Wondering how to entice that nice couple from down the street to join your Lions club? Want to show the community all the great things Lions do? We’re going to make that a little easier. You can now order extra copies of the print issues of LION Magazine online or through your club supplies catalog. Copies can be ordered by bundles of 10 for US$12.95 plus shipping.

If you use print issues of the magazine for marketing purposes, write to us and tell us what you do. You just might inspire another club to take action in their community.

Scan the QR code to order copies today.

Lions International is “Bridging a World Through Service”

Rose Parade Float Shows the World that Together We Can Help Commu Turn the Corner

On January 2, 2023, Lions participated in the 134th Rose Parade in Pasadena, California with a oat titled “Turning the Corner.” The oat represented bridging the gap between the needs of local and global populations and the humanitarian service that can provide hope to millions of people.

The 35-foot oat featured Lions tending a community garden, planting trees, and picking up litter.

“The New Year is a time to celebrate, but it’s also a time to re ect,” says International President Brian Sheehan, who rode on the oat with his wife, Lori. “As we think about our New Year’s resolutions, I encourage everyone to do something good for humankind.”

Leos Are Changing the World

Every December Leos around the world submit videos for the International Leo Day Video Contest. Their videos showcase the work they’ve been doing in their communities. The theme for 2022 was #TeamLEO. While they are all winners for meeting the needs of their diverse communities, we can only choose one club as the grand prize winner. This year, the Leo Club of Juhu in India is the grand prize winner for their video titled **“I Am, Because We Are!”**

“Why do we love being Leos? Because we love spreading happiness,” says Juhu Leo President Naishil Mehta. “Doing our bit for the community, bringing a smile to people’s faces, and working to empower society is what makes us love the movement.”

The Juhu Leos hope the video conveys the importance of the Leo movement in the lives of today’s youth. “Being part of a Leo club is nothing short of magical,” says Mehta.

IN THE NEWS

OVERHEARD

"I have never felt the wind behind my back more than I do with the support of the Lions."

—Ishpeming Lion Dan Perkins, founder of Partridge Creek Farm in Ishpeming, Michigan. See story page 30.

"I'm starting to grasp the sense of community that I didn't want to be a part of. Instead of running from something, I am now running to something."

—Billy Mercer, single dad whose children have been embraced by Lions. See story page 30.

"Even though we may not speak the same language, we can still make a connection by trading pins."

—Kent Clovis, member of the Stroud Lions Club in Stroud, Oklahoma and immediate past president of the pin trading club. See story page 36.

"I think the most important thing is relevance in your community, and every community is different."

—Scott Newton, Seal Beach Lions Club member. See story page 16.

BY THE NUMBERS

1

Cost in dollars to ride the Buckthorn Northern Railroad replica steam train, run by Loveland Lions in Colorado.

10

Miles in length of the Blessing of the Fleet road race organized by Narragansett, Rhode Island Lions.

100

Lighting shows included in the revitalized riverfront project funded by Fargo Lions in North Dakota.

1,000

Hours Lion Tim Fienup of the Marshalltown Lions in Iowa has spent selling popcorn at their weekly fundraiser.

100,000

Number of pins in the collection of Lion Joseph Trezza of the Antioch Lions Club in California.

Be a part of our global partnership.

Join us in New York this March to commemorate the 45th Annual Lions Day with the United Nations and be part of the global conversation about this year's theme, "Hunger, Nutrition and Wellness."

Three Reasons to Attend LDUN 2023
- Learn how to address today's growing challenges.
- Meet UN diplomats and attendees from around the world.
- Be among the rst to nd out the grand prize winners of the International Peace Poster and Essay Contest.

Learn more and register at lionsclubs.org/ldun

Lions Day with the United Nations

Friday, March 3, 2023

New York, NY, USA

LIONS ARE COMING FOR THE

CITY ON THE HILL

BOSTON IS READY FOR YOU, LIONS.

Whether it's history, sports, or great food that interests you, you'll nd it all in Boston. And this summer you'll also nd a heck of a lot of Lions.

July 7 through 11, 2023, Lions will descend upon one of the oldest cities in the United States for ve days of camaraderie, shop talk, and service. Registration for the 105th Lions International Convention is open. If you've ever been to a Lions International Convention, then you know that now is the time to get excited and get planning. If you have never been, now is the perfect time to start.

WHY AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION?

Fellowship.

We are a global service organization, and we have members all over the world doing amazing things for their communities every day. We think it's more important than ever to take the time to connect—in person—once a year so that we can share stories, strategies, and friendship. Many Lions and Leos make friends at convention that they keep for the rest of their lives.

Learning.

Hear from other Lions and exchange ideas on how to plan projects, recruit new members, and grow your club. Experts from headquarters are on hand to help you navigate the tech world, nd new ways to get grants for projects, and learn marketing and PR tricks that can help promote the great work you're doing.

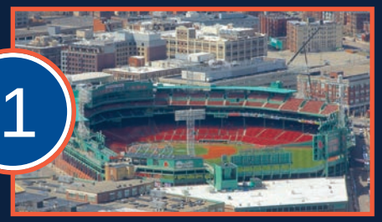
Fun.

We are Lions, after all. So no gathering is complete without a little—or a lot—of fun. And there's no shortage of good times planned for Boston. Whether it's joining in on a service project (because no matter where we go, Lions love to serve), singing along with some of the world-class entertainment lined up exclusively for Lions, or hopping on a bus and touring some of the unforgettable sights Boston has to o er, there is plenty of fun to be had. We can't wait to see you there.

5 MOST INSTAGRAMMABLE SPOTS IN BOSTON

Need some photo-worthy backdrops for your social media feeds? Pop on your Lions gear and head to some of these iconic locations.

1



FENWAY PARK

 e oldest Major League Baseball stadium in the United States, Fenway Park is not just the home of the Boston Red Sox, but the memorable location of many a major movie plotline. Snap a pic beneath the green and red sign to cement your place in history.

2

BUNKER HILL MONUMENT

 is 221-foot monument marks the site of one of the rst major battles of the American Revolution. If you're a history fan, take an Old Town Trolley tour which stops at this and many other historic sites.

3

ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM

You won't nd a more beautiful indoor courtyard garden in all of Boston. Modeled after a 15th-century Venetian palazzo, this museum houses some of the world's most prestigious art, including works by Rembrandt, Michelangelo, Raphael, Degas, and Sargent. Wear your prettiest pastels and situate yourself among the beauty.

photo credit: Kyle Klein

4

THE NORTH END

Boston's North End neighborhood feels less like a bustling American city and more like a dreamy coastal European village. ere is something for everyone's appetite and you never know when you'll nd your new favorite eatery tucked behind a painted wooden door just around the corner of a narrow, cobblestoned street. Make your followers salivate with a shot of your latest nd.

5

OUTDOOR ART

Outdoor art is ourishing in Boston, and nothing makes a social media feed pop more than large outdoor murals. Visit the Roxbury Love Story mural by local artists Pro Blak and GoFive, or head over to e Undergound at Ink Block—an 8-acre underpass located between Boston's South End and South Boston neighborhoods that was transformed into an active urban park. You might even be inspired for your next Lions project. Wherever you go, you'll nd you can't stop snapping pics.

photo credit: G. Ortiz.

BOSTON 2023

Register now at LCICon.lionsclubs.org.

USA

Gotta Love a Locomotive

When the conductor called “All Aboard!” on the Fourth of July, even Colorado’s Loveland Lions were surprised. More than 880 riders of all ages set a record with tickets to board their replica train in the park that day.

The Buckhorn Northern Railroad in Loveland’s North Lake Park is an authentic replica of a steam train that once served the area. It takes passengers on a quarter mile, seven-minute ride for US$1.

The train was built in 1977 and purchased by the City of Loveland in 1988. Loveland Lions took over operating it, donating their time and effort to run it six days a week, from Memorial Day through Labor Day. They split the proceeds with the city, and Lions use their 70 percent to support community vision projects. “It’s been a great partnership,” says Parks Manager Dan Willadsen.

The club’s millionth train rider received a lifetime pass in 2020.

And in the summer of 2022 the Lions welcomed more than 25,000 passengers, says Lion Lyle Gilroy who was happily working as the engineer on a sunny Sunday afternoon. Gilroy is one of 43 Lions and 12 volunteers who work 4.5-hour shifts either as a station agent in the depot selling tickets, snacks, and souvenirs, or as the conductor or engineer.

He likes to be on the job about three days a week. “I make a lot of friends here,” he says. Many families want to take his picture with the kids.

The train harks back to the days when the Buckhorn Northern steam train hauled clay from Devil’s Backbone to Wild’s Brick Yard west of town. Devil’s Backbone is a scenic, geologically diverse Open Space with two miles of Dakota sandstone rising 200 feet over the surrounding plains. Just west of Loveland, it is popular with bikers, joggers, and hikers for being home to native wildlife and wildflowers.

The train in North Lake Park doesn’t haul clay, of course, but it can carry 45-50 people at 3.2 mph, says a smiling Lion Gary Sampson, past district governor in District 6 E. “Hold onto your hats! Oh, people love it.”

Sampson says their passengers hav ranged from three days old to 102.

The train runs from noon to 8 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday through Sunday. On Wednesday, when all the help is at their noon Lions meeting, it is delayed until 2 p.m.

Besides the engine traveling on 1,588 feet of track, there are two open passenger cars, a cattle car, a caboose, the depot, a windmill, and a tunnel that the club funded and erected as a centennial gift to the community in 2019, says Sampson. By next summer they will have replaced the original engine and added a handicapped-accessible car that can accommodate wheelchairs and walkers.

COVID derailed the train for a good part of one summer. Problems on the track and with the old engine stopped things another time. But the city and the Lions expect next summer to be as good as the summer of 2022.

“Back in the ‘70s it was something new and different. A lot of residents came to North Lake Park,” says Willadsen. “Now we have the second generation of riders. People who rode the train as kids are bringing their own children. It’s nostalgia more than anything else. It’s a staple.

“It’s a treasure.”

GLOBAL SERVICE

CANADA

Little Ambassador Takes Leos Around the World

He’s little. He’s legendary. And he’s a Leo. Well, sort of.

Since 2018 Dustin Dumbledore has traveled to Lion and Leo events in at least four countries, received pins from International President Brian Sheehan and Past International President Brian Alexander, joined the Lions International Pin Trading Club in Calgary, ridden front and center in the International Convention parade, and spent countless hours in airports. All without uttering one complaint.

Perhaps that’s because he can’t technically talk. He is a stuffed animal. What he lacks in flesh and blood he makes up for with charisma.

He’s Dustin Dumbledore, the Leo mascot for the Lil Legendary Leos in Alberta, Canada.

With 400-plus Facebooks followers and numerous other fans this stuffed Leo has played a unique role in helping to spread the word about what Lions—and especially Leos—are capable of, says Foothills Lion President Tim Beer in Diamond Valley, Alberta, Canada.

It all started in 2018 when Beer’s daughter, Alicia Kiri Beer, attended the multiple district convention in Alberta and purchased him at the Lions Cavalcade for Diabetes booth.

At the time, she was chartering the Leo Club who chose their club’s name after discussing how great they were going to be. “We are going to be famous. We are going to be legendary,” the enthused group said. They are now 26 members strong and have the support of 60 Lions in their small town of about 5,000 people.

“Leos love to see what their mascot is up to. He is representing all of them,’’ says Tim Beer who works as a city bus driver.

“We can’t do an activity if he’s not there, so we make sure to always bring him along. People ask questions. Where did you get his vest? How does he get all the pins? They want to more know more about the Leo club, and with questions come good things.

“Sometimes things get very serious in Lions world,” says Beer. “He has shown Leos that even those at the top can take the time for pictures with the mascot. They are not out of reach. They want to have fun with everybody else, and Dustin Dumbledore allows them to do that.”

What the charming Leo cannot do is help when the Leos are sorting glasses, cleaning up a section of highway, or collecting firewood from farms to sell at the Lion’s Winter Campground. But he has already proven he can bring in new members. And soon he will be packing his own travel backpack for a busy July with the 105th Convention in Boston quickly followed by the USA/Canada Leo Leadership Forum in Chicago.

Says Tim Beer, “The little guy sure gets around.”

If You Build It, They Will Come

How the biggest club in North America attracts—and keeps—its members

By Erin Kasdin

e quaint seaside town of Seal Beach in Orange County, California, got its beginnings as a shipping port called Anaheim Landing, where growers found it a convenient distribution point for the wine they nurtured in their Southern California vineyards.

But when the railroad arrived in 1875, it took over as the main method of transport and the port town became a sleepy vacation getaway for people from nearby cities. When a branch of the Paci c Electric was planned, area businessmen decided it was time to build a town that folks could actually settle in. But for decades the town faltered. It remained a sleepy beach town with a population of about 400 summer residents, many of whom bought small cottages they planted right on the sandy beach.

In 1913 one of those businessmen decided to invest in building a pier o the beach, with large pavilions on either side for entertainment. en, several years later, another businessman decided to build an "amusement area." ey brought in rides from the closing San Francisco Panama-Paci c International Exposition and rebuilt them to establish the rst beachside amusement park in Orange County. What became known as the "Joy Zone,"—and current historic downtown Seal Beach—seemed to do the trick.

People came.

e area, by now called Seal Beach, became a bustling tourist destination, popular with local residents and recruits from the nearby naval base.

Jokingly referred to as "Mayberry by the Sea", Seal Beach's downtown is a three-block stretch of boutiques and cafes that runs into the historic wooden pier. It's a friendly place. Shop owners will happily sit and chat and no one is in a rush. e whole town has a feeling of being one big happy family. In many ways, it is. "People love to live here," says Mayor Joe Kalmick.

And that's in large part due to Lions.

Building A Club

Woven into the fabric of everyday life in Seal Beach are sh frys, arts and crafts fairs, Christmas parades, beach and gra ti cleanups, sight programs, historical restoration projects, youth outreach programs, and dozens upon dozens more events and activities. All run by Lions. Although Seal Beach is a small town, it's home to the largest and most active club in North America.

"In Seal Beach, if you ever want to get something done, it's the Lions club that can do it."

Established in 1939 with just six members, the Seal Beach Lions have been serving the communities of Seal Beach, Rossmoor, and Los Alamitos for 80 years. Whether it's the annual Fish Fry, which has been a staple of the community for 78 years now, the arts and crafts fair, or the Christmas parade, Seal Beach Lions seem to be everywhere. " e Lions club is so integrated in our community that almost every major event that goes on in the city, the Lions participate in or are managing it," says Kalmick.

With 418 members and 120 Leos, the club powers its way through a whopping 120-plus projects per year, with something on tap every single weekend except for Christmas. In a town with just 25,000 people, those are impressive numbers.

So, how do they do it?

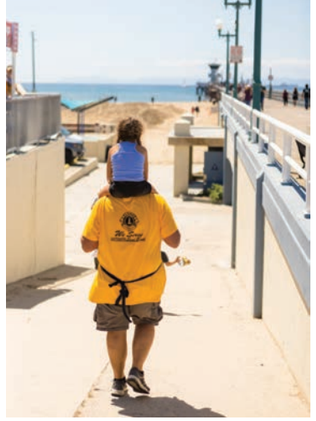
Be Known

e Seal Beach Lions do not recruit. Instead, 10 years ago they adopted the motto, "If you build it, they will come."

"We didn't ask a single person to join our Lions club," says Scott Newton, who joined Lions in 1988. "We've grown by being involved in the community and being able to bring youth into what we do." eir goal, he says, was to make themselves so entrenched in their community that potential members would come to them. And it's worked.

John Quinlan joined Lions approximately one year ago speci cally because he wanted to help restore the Red Car—an old repair car from the former Paci c Electric train line that, after being part of the city for more than 100 years, had fallen into disrepair. So when he found out that the Lions were involved to try and help broker a solution between the previous caretakers and the city, he knew this was a great opportunity. "Now instead of having to work within the city," says Quinlan, "I could come into the Lions club and o er support and my skills to try and bring the historical site back to life."

Since taking ownership, Lions have cleaned and repainted the Red Car and are preparing to open it up for events. " e community will hopefully get to know the Red Car



Seal Beach Lions coordinate more than 120 service projects each year, leaving plenty of options for every kind of service-minded member.

“Everyone in Seal Beach looks forward to the vibrant and eclectic Annual Arts and Crafts Faire hosted by Seal Beach Lions.”

again,” says Quinlan. “ e way it used to be.”

“In Seal Beach, if you ever want to get something done, it’s the Lions club that can do it,” he says. “ ey’re involved in everything.”

Be Seen

And they certainly do seem to be everywhere. e cargo van decked out in Lions signage is a familiar sight around Seal Beach. Lions take the van on every service project, whether they need it or not. “We’re very visible,” says club president Scott Weir. Not only do they bring their van, but at every event they leave brochures and post a sign that reads, “Another project by Seal Beach Lions.”

 eir social media feeds are lled with bright, well-shot photographs. eir comprehensive website is well-maintained and regularly updated to feature the next big project. It also includes a whole calendar of upcoming events, information on past events, ways to contact the club, and even an application to join. “We’re still invitation-only, but we want to give them a preview right away of what it’s all about to be a Seal Beach Lion,” says Newton.

And what is it like to be a Seal Beach Lion?

“It’s truly like family,” says lifeguard and Lion Nick Bolin. Bolin became a Leo in middle school when his best friend asked him to come to a meeting. He enjoyed having fun with his friends, getting to know some of the Lions, and becoming involved in the community. He became a Lion when he was 21, and while he’s involved with many of the projects, Bolin sees rsthand the joy Lions can bring others when community members check out one of the beach wheelchairs donated by Lions. e chairs make the beach more accessible to the elderly and those with disabilities. “ ose wheelchairs go out almost every day,” he says. “Some people are going out into the water for the rst time. It just really brings them a lot of joy. And that’s because of Lions.”

Represent Your Community

Ten years ago, when they decided to rebuild their club, the Lions focused on bringing in people from all walks of life, which meant they had to appeal to a wide variety of interests and abilities. is meant taking a critical eye to some of their old traditions. “We asked, ‘Are they relevant?” says Newton. e answer, he soon realized, was, well, no.

“I was looking around a room and noticing a lot of lips weren’t moving when we were singing songs,” says Newton. “It wasn’t relevant for a new generation. And that was one of the traditions we ended: singing songs at every meeting.”

Newton and the other leaders realized it wasn’t their fathers’ club anymore. “And my son says that about it as well,” he says. “And my grandson will say the same thing as they continue to evolve and change to be relevant in the community.”

Changing the way things are done isn't easy for everyone, even when it’s something non-essential, like singing songs. Some of the older members had trouble with the new way of doing things. But over time, they adjusted, and they adopted new traditions with their growing club.

One of those new traditions? “A lot more socialization,” says Newton. By focusing on bringing in established groups to Lions, they are able to get a lot more people in, and it has the bene t of being a ready-made mix of folks who already like hanging out. “Mothers’ groups in town? Become Lions. Join us,” says Newton. “I think the most important thing is relevance in your community, and every community is di erent.”

ey also are keenly aware of the pressures on young families and have made speci c e orts to not only reach out to families, but to ensure Lions is a place where the whole family feels welcome. “We want to make sure some of our younger members who are starting to have children stay active,” says Newton. “Because what happens with younger people that have children? ey want to disengage for a while. Let’s keep them working, let’s give them a reason to serve with their children.”

And it’s ok to hear crying in the back of a meeting. At Seal Beach Lions Club, people bring children. “It’s perfectly ne,” says Newton. Once a quarter Seal Beach Leos babysit the children while their parents are upstairs at a meeting.

And Leos see how much fun it is to be a Lion. ey feel involved. And they feel excited to join. “Literally on their 18th birthday they will join our Lions club. ey’ve been watching it their entire life. We are integrated—Leos aren’t in the background, they’re in the foreground. And that attracts them to want to be part of a club.”

Bring Ideas

And once you’re a part of Lions? Well, they expect you to bring it. Bring your passions and your ideas. All members are encouraged to come with an agenda. “We love new ideas,” says Newton. “We’re always looking for new projects.”

Ed Soles found himself chairperson for a brand new event ve months after joining Lions. As a professional skateboarder, he had participated in Skateboarding for Autism events in the past and thought it would be a great event for Seal Beach and for the Lions. “So, we’ve already got 24 children signed up and former professional skateboarders are going to be at hand helping them, training them, and teaching them some skills,” says Weir. “What a lot of fun.”

Fun and ful lling. For Quinlan, he feels like he’s nally found his voice with Lions. “I simply go up and make a presentation at our meetings and everyone wants to get involved. If you do have a passion for a project in your community, you simply present it. And the Lions club is so diverse and has so many great people within the club that they’ll take on your project.”

Be There for Your Community

In fact, they’ll take on just about anyone’s project. “We rarely say no when someone asks,” says Weir. Whether it’s the police department that wants to do an open house for a national night out or a carnival for local schools. “Yes,” says Weir. Lions will grill up some food and o er support in any way that’s needed. A resident reporting gra ti? No problem. “We’ll be there.”

ey are a small town and big club. ey’ve managed to build a club that has been able to attract, support, and sustain an astonishing number of active, engaged Lions. ey have built a sense of community through accessibility, friendliness, and smart advertising.

And instead of focusing on recruiting new members, they’ve focused on being the club their community needs. ey engage with their local businesses, their government, and the school districts. ey are continually taking stock of who they are. Seal Beach Lions make it their mission to represent their community and, above all else, remain relevant.

“Every club has the ability to do what we’ve done,” says Newton.

If you build it, they will come.

Watch Seal Beach Lions in action at lionmagazine.org

Seal Beach Lions choose the service projects that appeal to them. And if they have an idea for something they want to do, the club helps to make it happen.

FIVE WAYS TO MAKE SERVING FUN

“If you aren’t having fun, then you’re doing it wrong,” says Lion Melissa Murphy of the Sandwell Lions in England.

And making sure serving is fun is one of the main ingredients in the Seal Beach Lions’ success story.

» Ø å Ø Ô å Ø é Ø ê Ô ì æ ç â Ü á Ý Ø Ö à some good humor and good times into your club activities.

1 GET TO KNOW YOUR MEMBERS.

When you know your members well, you know what makes them laugh. Delmont Lions in Pennsylvania include a little get-to-know-you during their meetings. The club president picks a member at random and puts them in the interview seat, asking them about their interests, hobbies, and experiences. “It’s actually a lot of fun hearing members talk about themselves, especially the older folks,” says Delmont Lion Lisa Gismondi.

2 BE WILLING TO CHANGE THINGS UP.

It’s good to make some changes when something isn’t working for your club. Maryah Tucker of the Bay Area Special Olympics Lions Club says, “We got tired of having a board meeting and then the following week a general meeting with the same 14 people. So now we only have one meeting, and instead of what would have been our general meeting, we have an activity or event with the special needs community. We do things like dances, movie nights, craft nights and game nights. It’s been a game-changer!”

3 MAKE NEW TRADITIONS.

Sure, pancake breakfasts are great, but doing something new and unique with your club can be a great way to mix it up. On Halloween, Sandwell Lions have a tradition of going out for curry after dressing up and volunteering at the local spooky trail. And there’s × Ø á Ü ç Ø ß ì æ â à Ø ç Û Ü á Ú about a bunch of witches and warlocks gathering for a post-scare meal. Murphy says that they were even asked to pose for photos with other restaurant-goers this year.

4 CHALLENGE ONE ANOTHER.

Push yourselves with spirited contests and set goals with fun rewards. Charles Carter of the Dawsonville Lions Club in Georgia walked away with a pint of strawberries after he told a great joke at one meeting. His club has been running a joke contest to get the laughs going. “We draw three names out of a hat and ask them to tell a joke. The best joke wins a prize, donated by a member and placed in a paper bag. One meeting a Lion won two tickets and VIP parking for an NFL game.”

5 ENCOURAGE SILLINESS.

Whether it’s goofy costumes at a fundraiser or theme nights for club meetings, look for ways to show that Lions take their work seriously, but they never take themselves too seriously. Lions Mike Eisenberg and James Knight dressed up as Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum at the 2022 28-U District Convention in Utah and wandered the crowd, calling fellow Lions’ cell phones to see whose would ring—then taking the â ã â å ç è á Ü ç ì ç â á Ø ç Û Ø à Ü having their phone on. “They á à á had bags full of funny prizes and many very bad jokes,” says Lion Richard Stevenson. But their antics worked, and the crowd was engaged and having a blast. One feisty crowd member even swiped Tweedle Dee’s own cell phone and auctioned it off, forcing him to pay US$40 to get it back.

However you decide to add a little spark to your Lion events, remember that you can do a whole lot of good while having a whole lot of good times.

See Seal Beach Lions having fun at LIONMAGAZINE.ORG .

KEEPING IT POPPIN

IN MARSHALLTOWN, IOWA, POPCORN IS THE NAME OF THE GAME

By Joel La Puma

It's a deceptively modest fundraiser, but for one Lions Club, it's the kernel of all their programs.Every Saturday, the Lions Club of Marshalltown, Iowa brings a popcorn machine to a local store and sells popcorn for US$2 a bag. e ingredients are modest, too: Iowa-sourced raw corn, salt, butter, and oil. What makes this fundraiser remarkable, though, is that the Marshalltown Lions have been holding it for 47 years. Since 1975, the Marshalltown Evening Lions have sold popcorn, and since 1979, they've been selling it weekly. In that time, the popcorn fundraiser has raised thousands of dollars that the Lions have seeded back into Marshalltown.

PHOTOS BY SCOTT MORGAN

A CORNY IDEA

Good fundraisers often start with knowing your area and what you can bring to it. "Every club, every organization had their own fundraiser back then," says Marshalltown Lion Dan Roberts. "You need something of your own." e popcorn fundraiser was created by late Lion Rod Roupp, a farmer, and made use of a resource he had plenty of—corn. It's not hard to see why popcorn might be so popular in Marshalltown, where farms dot the landscape surrounding the city and its residents walk downtown past the historic Hotel Tallcorn. Even when you live in a city, in Iowa you can't help but grow up around corn. And in Marshalltown, you can't help but grow up around the Lions' popcorn.

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

e Marshalltown Lions have a very long-tenured club; they've seen a lot of Marshalltown residents grow up, week by week, at the Saturday fundraiser. Roberts, the club's treasurer, is its longest serving Lion with 43 years in the club. Lion Tim Fienup, the club's secretary, joined in 1983 and may have the most experience at the popcorn machine; he estimates that in his 39 years as a Lion, he's spent more than 1,000 Saturdays selling popcorn.

> "It's a local tradition, says Fienup. Once you smell the popcorn, you know we're there."

e cornerstone of those Saturdays, of course, is the Lions' popcorn machine. One of the Marshalltown Lions' three machines can be found at the Hy-Vee grocery store every week, the smell of popcorn wafting across the parking lot, announcing the Lions' presence before you even reach the entrance. e glass-paneled commercial poppers—the type you might see in a movie theater lobby—have the Lions Club International's emblem proudly displayed on each panel. At 30 inches high they've nearly overgrown the carts they stand on, and their 6 oz. kettles can pop 15 cups per batch. " e current machine takes about 6 minutes to pop a batch," says Fienup. " e older machines were larger, slower to heat, and set on homemade carts." e carts, handcrafted by skilled Lions, are missed, but running a fundraiser for this many years demands dealing with change as it crops up.

DOWN ON THE CORNER

e biggest changes have involved the fundraiser's location. e Marshalltown Lions are grateful for their spot at the local Hy-Vee grocery store, where they've been for the past three years. "Having a good spot everyone comes to is important," says Fienup. "We were at the Marshalltown Mall for years, but there was less and less foot tra c." A Marshalltown staple like the Hy-Vee made for the perfect new location, and the Lions quickly became established there. "[e popcorn stand] is the rst thing you see as you walk up to the grocery store," says April Long, director of the Marshalltown United Way Senior Citizens Activity Center, who has worked with the Lions on service projects. "It's a local tradition," says Fienup. "Once you smell the popcorn, you know we're there."

It wouldn't be buttering anyone up to say this project carries a lot of weight. e Marshalltown Lions use at least a full 50-pound bag of raw corn every Saturday. at's comparable to the amount of popcorn made on an average day at many multiplex movie theaters. Erika Melchor of Marshalltown's Animal Rescue League, who has volunteered with the Lions, notes how many people were already waiting for their popcorn as soon as they started. "We kept selling popcorn non-stop," she says. Fienup and Roberts estimate they pop 200 to 250 pounds of corn in a month. at's impressive, but more a-maize-ing is the number of programs that popcorn funds.

SOWING SEEDS

Popcorn money contributes to a wide eld of charitable initiatives in Marshalltown. e Lions oversee the local implementation of the Lions KidSight USA program, which screens children—over 700 this fall, according to Fienup—beginning school for eye disease. ey also provide eyeglasses to residents in need through a Lions Eye Bank, as well as recycled hearing aids with the help of Iowa's Wolfe Eye Clinic. "Every $130 buys a pair of glasses for a child or a hearing aid," says Roberts. Popcorn money helps raise funds for many di erent services, including the local Emergency Food Box, Meals on Wheels, and Marshalltown Fire Department. Roberts and Fienup estimate their club spends anywhere from US$20,000 to US$24,000 per year in charitable giving.

e popcorn itself shows up at more places than just the Hy-Vee on Saturdays. It's a favorite at many local events, including Marshalltown festivals like the annual Holiday Stroll in November and Bee Ridiculous Day, as well as larger events like Iowa's famous RAGBRAI bicycle ride and festival. If an event is happening in Marshalltown, the Lions are there, often with the machine in tow. e Lions and their popcorn are "just an absolute xture in the landscape of Marshalltown," says Long.

Marshalltown is an active, neighborly city, but it's faced some tumultuous years. e city has been besieged by a series of natural disasters, including a devastating EF3 category tornado in July 2018 and a similarly destructive derecho, a straight-line windstorm whose winds reached 99 mph, in August 2022. Both storms caused widespread damage throughout the city, striking historical buildings, lower-income housing, and the Iowa Veterans Home. "Marshalltown's been through the ringer," says Long. " e Lions and other service groups helped it recover." e Marshalltown Lions and other local organizations helped clean up debris, repair damaged buildings, and plant trees to replace the 3,000 that were lost to the storms.

ROWS OF PLENTY

e Marshalltown Lions don't limit this shared work to emergencies, but collaborate with other service groups on a regular basis, like with the popcorn fundraiser. ese "guest poppers," as Fienup and Roberts call them, include representatives from the United Way Senior Citizens Center, Marshalltown Kiwanis Club, Marshalltown Public Library, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa, Marshalltown Youth & Shelter Services, Animal Rescue League of Marshalltown, and the women's health organization Guiding Star. Joining the Lions at their corner of the Hy-Vee gives them the opportunity to seed awareness of their organizations and share in the funds raised that week by the sale. "It's really impressive how they've reached out to the other organizations to bring everyone together for the mutual bene t of the entire community," says Long.

> "I've never lived anywhere where there's such a spirit of cooperation and volunteerism and collaboration."

Sharing Saturdays is bene cial for the Lions, who maintain all these services with 23 active members. "It's a scramble all the time to ll shifts," says Fienup, who schedules Saturday volunteers. "Saturday is a tough day to get volunteers. If we can't nd someone that week, I put my hand up." Roberts jokes, "We're getting older. ere aren't many of us left who can carry 50-pound bags of popcorn!" e Lions' work is still thriving, though.

POPPING UP TO HELP OTHERS

e Marshalltown club also tends initiatives rst planted by defunct service clubs, including the eyewear and hearing aid collection programs. "We have a presence in so many charitable activities here," says Fienup. He's also a board member at the Senior Citizens Center, which holds a public Trivia Night in conjunction with the Lions.

e Lions' popcorn is also available freely at movie nights at the Marshalltown Public Library, hosted by the local Big Brothers Big Sisters. "We have a lot of underserved kids at the movie nights," says Library Director Sarah Rosenblum, "[e Lions] are very supportive towards the library." at level of support is sown into the soil of Marshalltown, Rosenblum notes. "I've never lived anywhere where there's such a spirit of cooperation and volunteerism and collaboration."

A stalk of Iowa corn grows, on average, 8 feet in a year. If one grew for the entire existence of the popcorn fundraiser, it would be 376 feet high. e Lions' work continues growing in Marshalltown, and the city's response has always been open-hearted. Roberts notes with admiration how often people will give the Lions more than the US$2 cost of popcorn. "Some people who don't want a bag will give us money anyway, and some will buy them for kids who come in the store," he says. "It makes you feel good to give and to see people giving."

GOLD RUSH

Land provides bounty that brings community together

BY JOAN CARY

More than 100 years ago, Mother Earth supplied so much iron ore in Michigan's Upper Peninsula that Ishpeming, Michigan was a boom town. e population was over 13,000, mines employed many, and the economy was robust. ey even had an opera house.

But over the years, the industry changed, employment and population gures dropped, and houses were left empty and tattered as miners moved on.

Now Mother Earth supports the struggling town's rebirth, gifting them a new focus and a renewed sense of community.

In many ways, the town of 6,400 has struck gold.

In Ishpeming, Michigan, weekly community days bring families together, weeding and watering their communal gardens and learning how to cook the food they grow.

> “Their efforts are giving the community a unique character, warmth, and vibrancy,” says Mayor Lindsay Bean. “What Dan and PCF are doing for the community of Ishpeming is simply amazing.”

SOWING

Today, lush gardens thrive on abandoned Ishpeming lots. Weekly Community Days bring families together for summertime cooking demonstrations, and then to help water and weed the gardens. Fifth graders munch on raw vegetables they grew in their Farm-to-School Garden, and this past summer, more than 3,000 pounds of locally grown produce was distributed to families. But it wasn’t always this way.

The U.P. imports 93% of its food from an average distance of 3,000 miles away, relying heavily on transportation networks and fuel, says Ishpeming Lion Dan Perkins. But he hopes to change that. And unbeknownst to them, it’s the children of Ishpeming who planted the rst viable seed to help him do that.

It was the spring of 2013, and the little kids in Perkins’ neighborhood were standing around by his backyard, partly bored and partly because he’s a friendly guy, always outside doing something with tools. Sure enough, he was planting potatoes.

Questions followed: “What are you doing?” “Can we help?”

A lifelong gardener and the owner of a metal roo ng company in town, Perkins was soon teaching them how to dig a garden and plant “taters” as his father taught him when he was 10. But what he and the kids didn’t immediately realize was that they were getting far more from this experience than just a break from late-day boredom. “They were learning how to provide healthy food for their family. They were doing something for their community,” says Perkins. They were connecting.

In the months that followed, like-minded Ishpeming residents, including his wife, Lion Pam Perkins, shared his vision of a healthier community with nutrition education and access to locally grown food. And with their support, he founded Partridge Creek Farm (PCF), a nonpro t educational farm that is growing, well, like a weed.

Ishpeming Mayor Lindsay Bean says after years of tough times, their town is rebuilding, and PCF is a large part of the revitalization taking place.

“Their e orts are giving the community a unique character, warmth, and vibrancy,” says Bean. “What Dan and PCF are doing for the community of Ishpeming is simply amazing.”

GROWING

Progress has been steady, one shovel at a time. In 2014, Perkins teamed up with the Grace Episcopal Church to lease their vacant downtown lot, and 100 volunteers helped build their rst garden, the beautiful Incubator Garden with beehives and a hoop house. The Ishpeming Lions replaced 120 feet of broken sidewalk on the site, later voting to make PCF a club project. Later still, PCF became a District 10 project.

In 2017, PCF partnered with the Ishpeming Elks Lodge. Elks and Lions worked together building another large garden for the community on Elks’ land. And on Earth Day that same year, the owners of Carpet Specialists in downtown Ishpeming o ered the nonpro t their empty side lot for yet another community garden.

“Dan Perkins is so passionate when it comes to this, to helping the community. We were just trying to help him out,” store manager Deborah Niehaus says. “Gardening is not hard, but it can be overwhelming. What the kids learn now will help them later. It’s good for them.”

In 2019, PCF sta and friends converted a blighted downtown lot where three houses once stood into Inspiration Orchard with fruit trees and berries. Past International Director Jenny Ware and her husband, Je , members of the Bay de Noc Lions Club in the U.P., were among Lions from four area clubs who came to help.

Perkins, environmental chair, and second vice district governor for Single District 10, says Lions have given far more than free labor.

“I have never felt the wind behind my back more than I do with the support of the Lions,” he wrote in a letter to fellow members. “You have cheered this idea and supported me in every way imaginable—from the donations and memberships to physical help when building gardens, to being the good friends who celebrate with me when the job is done. You have always had my back.”

NURTURING

PID Ware says PCF has changed the way people make friends. “It’s exciting to see it grow from one garden on a single lot, to all these partnerships. With the happiness it brings the residents, and the education it brings to the children, I foresee it growing for years.

In 2013, children gathered around Lion Dan Perkins‘ backyard as he dug potatoes. He has since partnered with Lions and local businesses to create multiple community gardens.

It has been rewarding but not easy with hours spent applying for grants, setting up partnerships, and building a dedicated sta while also maintaining the gardens.

Thirteen miles west of Lake Superior and Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Ishpeming became known for mining iron ore a necessity for steel making, not gardening. The soil is thin and rocky, and winters are freezing, snowy, and windy, putting them in the USDA's Zone 3. That means, says Perkins, that the growing season is short.

But the will of these gardeners is strong.

PCF gardens are boosted by the nutrient-rich vermicompost they make using food wastes that Perkins and sta collect every week from restaurants and NMU cafeterias. With the added nutrients and worms, they can grow an abundance of produce for their town.

Through a PCF-Ishpeming Public Schools partnership, fth- and sixth-graders get in the act with 28 weeks of Farm-to-School education that includes the school garden and healthy cooking classes, says PCF Director May Tsupros. Tsupros, a teacher who previously developed school gardens in needy Chicago neighborhoods, is "brilliant," says Perkins. "We were just hobbling along until May came."

Pam Perkins, who owns the Rare Earth Restaurant & Cafe downtown with locally grown food and U.P. art originals for sale, has been her husband's quiet strength. "[She has been] supporting me from when this was just us helping kids who showed up in the backyard, inviting them in for dinner and teaching about cooking with fresh garden vegetables," he says. The couple also host the popular Tuesday Music Nights at the restaurant, bringing families together for fun.

INVITING

Billy Mercer, a single, disabled dad with two children, Dylan, 9, and Boyana, 4, celebrated Dylan's ninth birthday at Music Night with the Perkins. Mercer's PTSD limits his outings, his work, and his nances, and for a long time his family struggled to feel a part of the town. But that began to change when Dylan was 8 and his dad saw him with another boy tossing sand into an irrigation tank at Inspiration Orchard across the street.

The next day, Tsupros was at the orchard leading a children's summer class, and Mercer walked his son over to "right the wrong." Instead of shaming the little boy, Tsupros showed him how he could help his community by watering the pumpkin plants every morning and evening and making sure the pollinator plants for their honeybees were cared for. Then she invited him to stay and join the class.

"He was invited to be a part of, rather than apart from," remembers Mercer. "Her gift of teaching led us to become participants of the summer community days."

It was also a stepping stone for Mercer, helping him regain his sense of community, he says. "I'm starting to grasp the sense of community that I didn't want to be a part of. Instead of running from something, I am now running to something."

He continued to go to the garden with his children and became aware of what his children had been missing, he says. "At the garden they are learning to be givers, not takers. The plants produced pumpkins for the community children to paint, but also friendships that otherwise would have been nonexistent.

"They know that everybody is working together for the common good there. It's been a blessing for us, and I couldn't think of better people to be with."

At every PCF garden a colorful handmade sign tells visitors the rules: "Respect your self. Respect others. Respect the Garden."

In short, says Tsupros, that means, "Take care of yourself. Respect others. Be kind. And respect Mother Earth. Everything we need comes from the earth. She does so much for us."

REAPING

In September, on the school's rst week after summer break, fth graders eagerly visited the garden they planted in the spring, weeding the onions, and hanging on the words of PCF education coordinator Emily Bateman who crouched beside them, later o ering them radish slices to sample. Reviews were mixed. Weeks later they gathered there to collect the harvest. It's PCF tradition that all fth graders take their fall harvest to the Fifth Grade Farm Stand to sell to the community.

The farm-school program is so popular with the school and the families that PCF sta this year decided to o er it to the youngest students at Birchview Elementary. On a cool, windy day, volunteers came from all around to help Perkins erect fences and build twelve raised beds two for each grade that students will plant in spring. Excitement grew as the children put their hand stamps on their garden frames, then joyfully topped the soil with handfuls of PCF vermicompost.

Now the Ishpeming community awaits spring and the completion of PCF's largest project, a 3.75-acre Community Care Farm they broke ground on last fall next to Ishpeming Middle/High School and Jasperlite Senior Housing. With deep community investment through planning, grants, multiple partnerships, and local donations, they will provide vegetables for the seniors and the school cafeteria, but also give a voice to two more segments of their community.

"We can only do this with strong collaborations and good education," says Perkins. "We want to help create in Ishpeming an example for the rest of the country of how a small town can take control of its destiny and make the society it wants to live in right here and right now. We've made a real impact on this place and the real payo seems to be in the community built around this. We don't leave anybody at the station."

"Gardening is not hard, but it can be overwhelming. What the kids learn now will help them later. It's good for them."

Collaborations make the gardens work. In Ishpeming, everyone is invited to help.

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By Annemarie Mannion

It's not the sun, surf, and swaying palm trees that Lion Bill Smith remembers most about attending his rst Lions International Convention in Miami Beach in 1973, it's the trading pins.

If you've ever been to a Lions event, you've probably seen one, two, or two hundred of them—tiny, colorful metal brooches sporting designs ranging from patriotic to whimsical, and all centered around Lions.

For decades Lions have used the pins as a kind of currency, trading them, collecting them, and displaying them proudly in their homes and on their Lions vests.

True collectors are always on the hunt. But what exactly are they looking for when they go shing for the pin of their dreams?

How it started

Smith, 92, a member of the Fairfax Lions Club in Fairfax, Virginia for 55 years, has been collecting and trading pins for more than ve decades and is one of about 800 members of the Lions International Trading Pin Club, which was founded in 1973 at that very same convention in Miami.

 e group began with fewer than 50 members from 11 states and districts and now claims members from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, most provinces of Canada and 18 other districts and multiple districts from around the world. Personal collections can number in the hundreds of thousands.

A little pin history

It all started in 1929, the rst year Lions put out a 100% attendance pin, says Kent Clovis, immediate past president of the International Pin Trading Club.

Trading pins as a hobby took o in the late 1950s and 1960s when Lions started exchanging them as a way of breaking the ice at conventions—a practice that continues today.

"Handing another Lion a pin that references where you come from is more personable than a business card," says Clovis, a member of the Stroud Lions Club in Stroud, Oklahoma. "Even though we may not speak the same language, we can still make a connection by trading pins."

"When you went to a convention back in the day, everybody would be walking around looking [at other Lions'] jackets and vests to see what pins were there," adds Lana McCaulley, a member of the Mechanicsburg Lions Club in Mechanicsburg, Pa. and secretary of the International Pin Trading Club.

 e earliest pins were made of materials that didn't last, such as cardboard or leather, and thus are rare nds, highly sought after by today's pin traders and collectors.

" at's what makes them valuable," says Larry Shaull, a pin trader and member of the Stewartstown Lions Club in Stewartstown, Pa.

Over the years, the materials evolved into plastic and then into aluminum and metal, which are used today.

Pin types

Pins can be made by individual Lions, clubs, state organizations, and districts. It's not known exactly how many pins are produced every year, but Smith estimates it's in the "thousands upon thousands" range.

> “ Whatever topic you’re interested in, you can 6 : 0 5 @ ; : -”< 5 : ú

All 50 states and multiple districts within the U.S. and Canada produce at least one state or province pin each year to commemorate the site of the annual Lions Clubs International Convention.

In addition, almost every country or geographical area within Lions International issues pins.

But it doesn’t stop there. All of those individuals, clubs, and districts may also produce di erent series of “prestige pins” designed with a chosen theme.

Some past themes have been farming/gardening, with pins that might feature tractors, scarecrows, or pumpkins; a circus/carnival theme featuring a circus train, or a trapeze artist; or even a Wizard of Oz theme with Dorothy, the Tin Man, and more.

“Whatever topic you’re interested in, you can nd it on a pin,” says Clovis. e seven-set Wizard of Oz pins, which includes Dorothy and her little dog, Toto, were produced by Lions in Kansas in 1983 and are among Clovis’s favorites.

Shaull, who works for a pin manufacturer, says the process of designing pins is simple. It starts with roughing out an idea and then sending it to a manufacturer who has an artist that creates a design.

While the process is fun, there are some pin design rules to follow. Number one rule? Keep it simple.

“You put a whole project on a pin and you lose peoples’ interest pretty fast,” Shaull says. “Keep it simple. Don’t try to write a book on a pin. You need something that is easily recognizable.”

Hauling them in

To keep traders abreast of what’s out there in the vast sea of Lions pins, the International Pin Trading Club produces an annual catalog of the latest designs that typically includes between 2,000 and 4,000 pins.

Only pins that are at least ve years old can be sold, but the annual catalog is helpful to traders looking to add to their collection; or just looking. “Some pins are so rare that I’ve never seen them,” says McCaulley. “But I know they exist because they’re in the catalog.”

“It’s amazing to see some of the designs of the pins and the creativity of the Lions who make them,” says Clovis. “Some are really intriguing.”

Annual pin trading swaps are a chance for pin traders to make trades, hunt for the ones they’re missing, and build camaraderie.

e sorts of pins that traders are interested in varies by person.

Joseph Trezza, a pin trader and member of the Antioch Lions Club in Antioch, Calif., already has about 100,000 pins. “So, I try to limit my collecting to one pin per state per year,” he says.

He displays pins that are rare or special to him in frames mounted on the walls of his home, and keeps others stored in boxes or on pads of foam.

One of his prized pins is a 1982 Oregon state pin that features an O in either white or green encircling a meadowlark. While Trezza has both, the one with the white O is more rare because fewer of those were made.

Describing his pins, he jokes, “ ey are all over the place. My wife says ‘You have to get them out of here.’”

Smith, on the other hand, collects pins featuring the American ag.

“I never in my wildest dreams would have thought there were so many Lions pins with the American ag on them,” he says. “I can go to a pin swap where there are a hundred people, and I will easily come home with 50 to 60 American ag pins.”

Smith has about 3,000 American ag pins, along with pins featuring Santa Clauses, lighthouses, and sailboats. He estimates his entire collection contains about 40,000 to 50,000 pins, which he keeps in 900 glass trays on custom-made racks.

Smith, who worked for the federal government and then as an antiques dealer before retiring, spends about six hours a day on scanning photos of his pins, marking o from a master list the ones he’s acquired, organizing them, putting them away and winnowing out the ones he wants to trade.

Trading them out

e trading process at a swap is simple. Traders lay out the pins that are up for grabs on tables for others to scour in search of those elusive pins they want to snag.

One particularly coveted pin is known as the Colorado snow ake and was hand-made in 1972 of metal with points that were liable to break.

“ ey were so delicate. ey didn’t survive,” says Shaull about what makes that pin so desirable.

Another rare nd is the Pennsylvania Keystone pin that was fashioned after the commonwealth’s nickname. It was made of plastic and last sold for US$800.

e rst pin produced in Virginia sold at a swap in November 2022 for US$700. e pin, known as the ‘ at l’ was made in 1960. It features an outline of the commonwealth and a less elaborate Lions insignia than is used today.

While trading pins doesn’t have to cost the participants anything, the swaps often organize pin auctions to raise money for charitable causes.

In June 2022, the International Trading Pin Club presented a check for US$70,000 to Lions International—funds that were earned over the previous two years at their auctions.

Individual swaps may also include a service component, such as collecting canned goods for those in need.

A family a air

McCaulley started trading pins with her husband, Tim, in the 1970s. ey even put an addition on their house to hold their pins and some other collectibles. Tim passed away in 2021, but McCaulley still has the pins.

“ e pins are conversation pieces,” she says. “When someone comes into your home, they want to know everything about pin trading.”

Trading pins was a family a air for the McCaulleys when their daughter, Erica McCaulley, was younger. On weekends they’d pack their pins and head o to a swap. When they rst started they had enough pins to ll a shing tackle box. Eventually, they could ll their whole car.

But it wasn’t really about the pins.

“We certainly didn’t have a lot of pins to start so it has always been the friendships we enjoyed,” she says.

Hunting and trading pins was also a way that Clovis connected with his grandson when he was younger.

“It was a good thing for us to do together –before he discovered girls,” he says.

Clovis, who helps design between 12 and 25 pins a year, says it’s exhilarating to track down a pin he’s long been wanting, but the friendships among traders provide the greater thrill.

The white whale

After pursuing the hobby for many years, going to swaps “is like a family reunion,” says Clovis.

For Smith, it’s less about the pins themselves, and more about what they represent. “I remember the camaraderie and friendliness of the pin traders and their enthusiasm,” he says. “ at’s what got me started. ey gave me handfuls of pins and I was o and running.”

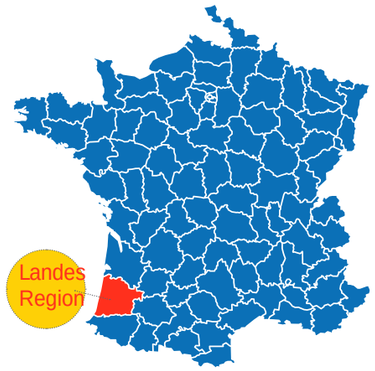
While trading is their focus at a swap, plenty of time is spent laughing over meals, playing cards, and just catching up with one another.

In fact, traders say it’s the friendships that continues to spur their interest in trading pins.

“I’ve often bragged that I can go to any state, call someone up in a pin club and have dinner or visit with them,” Smith says.

“Everybody has a story about a great trade or a great friendship they made,” McCaulley says.

Pining for a bit of fun



Lions in France throw a popular event for a unique sport

B E i Kasdi

Have you ever been inspired to throw a pinecone? If you have, and if you've gotten any distance with your throw, you may want to consider heading to France to compete, where Lions have made it their mission to bring not only the sport, but the world championships, to their hometown of Biscarrosse.

After a three-year break due to a storm in 2019 and COVID in 2020 and 2021, the World Pinecone rowing Championships were back on for the Lions Club Pays De Born in Biscarrosse. Located in the Landes Region on the southwestern coast of France, the area is home to the Landes Forest, which is the largest maritime pine forest in Europe.

Hence all the pinecones suitable for throwing.

In this particular region of France, a sport called Pelote, in which players use the palm of their hand to hit a ball, is quite popular. You might say this skill comes in handy when throwing pinecones. But not all the nearly 400 competitors in the 2022 championships were locals. Participants came from all over France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Great Britain, and even Ecuador.

ough it isn't really a surprise that so many people know about the unique sport. e World Pinecone rowing Championship is not new. e popular annual event dates back to 1998 and local radio stations and newspapers regularly cover it, dispatching reporters and photographers to document the fun. Held every year on the last evening of July, it's regularly featured in the list of o cial summer activities for the region, drawing tourists who are curious to see exactly how far a pinecone can be thrown.

To get in the spirit of things, all the organizers wear traditional white Landes out ts, red scarves, and Landes or Basque berets. An announcer keeps the crowd engaged while traditional Landes music plays in the background throughout the evening. e whole ordeal is quite festive.

Participants of all ages can compete and are divided by gender into eight di erent age groups. Only Landes pinecones can be used in o cial competition. Competitors throw one (or two) pinecones as far as possible on a Basque pelota court. e pinecones must weigh in at 120 grams (4.2 ounces) plus or minus 10 grams (0.4 ounces), and measure 14 centimeters (5.5 inches) plus or minus 1 centimeters (0.4 inches) to be used in competition.

e throwing eld, called a "Pignodrome" ("pigne" means "pinecones" in French) is approximately 50 meters (164 feet) long. Each competitor is entitled to two consecutive throws. e thrower stands in the throwing area, called a "Pignon", and throws one or two pinecones as far as possible along the Pignodrome.

ILLUSTRATION BY JEREMIAH WALLIS

e throwing distance is then measured, and the best throw is recorded on a scoreboard for everyone to see. While only two throws can be made at any one time, competitors can return to launch cones as many times as they wish by returning to the registration line.

Sixteen world champion titles are at stake, one each for boys and girls, in eight di erent age groups. A chief referee, called "Pignolet", guarantees compliance with the regulations of the event. At the end of the competition, the best performances in each category are rewarded with trophies: 16 golden pinecones on varnished pine wood base (one for each champion of each category), two ceramic mega-pinecones for champions in all categories (men and women), and two crystal pins for the record holder.

In the most recent event, throwers and spectators alike were enjoying themselves so much that o cials had to do a bit of convincing to close down competition at midnight, but not before the evening produced two new world record holders.

Solen Friteyre, competing in the girls aged 10 to 14 category, threw a pin at 29.23 meters (95.90 feet), beating the previous record of 28.13 meters (92.30 feet). And Marius Petitpre, in the boys aged 0 to 4 group, beat the previous record of 9.20 meters (30.18 feet) with a throw of 10.46 meters (34.32 feet).

e proceeds from the night go to ongoing and future Lions Club Pays de Born projects, including equipping the beaches with devices allowing people with reduced mobility to swim, replacing the bus for a local nursing home, helping establish an Alzheimer's day center, and creating a reception center for young people with autism and their caregivers in partnership with the Bisc'Atypique association.

United in Kindness

by Elizabeth Edwards

When the war in Ukraine started in March 2022, thousands of Ukrainians fled and crossed the border into Poland and other countries for safety and security.

"The days leading up to the Russian invasion, everyone had on their nerves," recalls Yaroslav Jasznik, a Ukrainian citizen. "Everyone was expecting something bad, but actually no one had ever expected that it would be that disastrous and that full scale."

Jasznik, 29, lived in Kyiv, Ukraine, his entire life, but when the invasion began and after an artillery shelling about 15 miles from his home, he developed a plan for his family to leave. After a three-week journey, Jasznik, his wife, Ivanka, and their three young children arrived in Krakow, Poland, after crossing the Polish border.

The Jasznik family is only one story of thousands of families that fled Ukraine in search of refuge. When a humanitarian crisis of this magnitude happens, Lions and Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), are among the first to offer help.

To date, LCIF has awarded 53 grants totaling more than US$2.8 million in 17 countries to support Lions' projects to help Ukrainian refugees. Funds ensure Lions are there to cover a broad spectrum of refugee needs, including immediate survival needs, transitional needs for mid- or long-term settlement, and support for services to help them integrate into their new communities. The grant funds will support more than 230,000 refugees.

"Lions and LCIF should continue to help us because we have a lot of refugees in need," said Lion Roman Monastyrskyy, a Ukrainian citizen and one of the Lions that answered the call to help his community.

Monastyrskyy, who helped with projects in Lviv close to the Polish border, remembered when the war started, and he began receiving calls from Lions in Poland, Sweden, France, and Lithuania asking how they could help. In the beginning, with the support of LCIF, Ukrainian Lions provided refugees with warm food, clothes, and medical supplies in schools and hostels in Lviv, and then they started transferring goods to families in the eastern part of Ukraine, where most of the conflict is happening.

Because of the increased need in some areas, LCIF awarded Lions in Poland the largest amount of grant funding, totaling US$1,289,789. Lions in Ukraine have received the second largest amount, US$895,000, to support refugees who remain in the country.

While LCIF grant funding is helping provide comfort to the refugees forced to leave their homes during this immensely difficult time, there are some challenges.

PDG Katarzyna Gebert, one of the Lions leading projects in Poland, says it is difficult implementing projects for the people of Ukraine because of their trauma and great sadness after their war experiences.

"Tears in women's eyes, trembling voices, children's sad faces, perfunctory stories about the atrocities they experienced or witnessed—the emotional sphere, the close with the reality of war, suffering and the terrible fate of people whom Lions provide support is something unprecedented," she said.

Together, Lions and LCIF can provide continued hope for refugees by donating to LCIF's Refugees and Displaced Persons Fund, which will help ensure that Lions are always there to help support refugees during their time of great need.

"Lions International do a great job supporting people of Ukraine who flee from the conflict," Jasznik said. "That really makes everyone safe and truly makes a difference."

To learn more about the continued effort and to watch a video, visit lionsclubs.org/UkraineResponse.

A Smile for Sight

BY ELIZABETH EDWARDS

Sight is one of our most valuable senses. It allows us connect with the moments in life and with each other

After a premature birth, twins Kaya and Alime were both diagnosed with an eye disease called retinopathy of prematurity, and they needed treatment to protect their sight and prevent blindness.

Their parents, Ibrahim and Nilufer, traveled more than an hour and a half from their home to the city of Izmir, Turkey, to find help for their children. Thanks to care provided by ophthalmologists at the first and only children's hospital in the country, Kaya's treatment is completed, and he is healthy. Alime continues treatment at the hospital.

The twins are only two examples of more than 15,000 children that will benefit from the Izmir Pergamon Lions Club's project annually from support from Lions in District 118R and a US$10,050 Matching grant from Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) to purchase advanced eye equipment.

Lions in Izmir call the project SMILE because they are determined to make someone smile by helping give the power of sight. They even created a special mascot, called Lionopticool. The small stuffed Lion helps make children more comfortable during a vision screening, and represents their dedication to vision.

Lions provided the eye equipment to the Izmir Dr. Behcet Uz Child Disease and Pediatric Surgery Training and Research Hospital, the first and only children's hospital in Turkey. The hospital opened in the 1940s and serves the entire Aegean Region, which is about a quarter of the population of the country.

Throughout the project, Lions in Izmir also raised awareness about the importance of regular eye checkups for infants and children.

"Eye health is underestimated around the world, and the necessary precautions for preventable visual impairments are unfortunately not sufficient," said Faika Evrim Uysal, executive project manager. "As Lions clubs, we take this matter very seriously. Sometimes a project can do many things to help raise awareness and protect and improve more people's eye health."

Helping support children's eye care is essential because the deterioration of children's eye health can impact their success in school and their future.

In the fall 2022 school year in Turkey, Lions and ophthalmologists started screening eyes with LCIF grant-supported portable eye equipment in schools and orphanages. If the screening indicates a child needs advanced care, they are referred to a health care provider.

"In order to make our communities healthier, more conscious, more sustainable, and happier, as District 118 R Lions, we undertake life-changing projects for infants', children's, and women's health; and we do all of this together," said Teoman Akcali, immediate past district governor.

Ever since Helen Keller inspired Lions to champion the cause against avoidable blindness in 1925, Lions and Leos have served and advocated for blind and visually impaired people. Worldwide, about 2.2 billion people have a vision impairment. At least 1 billion of those cases could have been prevented, according to the World Health Organization.

Nearly a century later, this long-standing mission continues.

Learn more how you can support vision grants and can help make a child smile: lionsclubs.org/LCIFvision.

The Power of Sustainability Partnership helps restore local communities

BY ELIZABETH EDWARDS

Enel North America embarked on a new environmental partnership with Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) to help make communities healthy and sustainable and protect our planet.

As a leading developer and long-term owner and operator of renewable energy projects in North America, Enel and its more than 1,500 employees are dedicated to helping protect and restore communities.

In the spring of 2022, LCIF and Enel, the world's largest private renewable energy operator, started an ambitious tree-planting initiative in coordination with two Lions Clubs in York County Pennsylvania, USA.

As part of the project, Lions and Enel employees came together and planted nearly 600 new trees. The trees were planted at William H. Kain Park in York, Marge Goodfellow Park in New Freedom, and at the Dallastown Lions Community Park in Pennsylvania, USA. Additionally, container seedlings were passed out at the "Go Green in the City," York County's family-friendly festival that celebrated local sustainability.

"Trees help make communities healthy and sustainable. In the same way, our solar projects planned for York County and across the Commonwealth will support communities with clean energy and new economic growth," says Joel Harrington, director of public policy and institutional affairs at Enel North America.

Enel plans to continue the partnership to support Lions environmental initiatives throughout select locations in North America, which are an essential part of a healthy community and people. "We're excited to partner with Lions in championing local sustainability efforts," says Jesse Puckett, director of sustainability projects & community affairs for Enel North America.

As a renewable energy company, Enel is invested in restoring the environment by helping with the negative impacts of climate change and air quality concerns, Puckett said. It's this holistic approach that sets Enel apart in our industry; by enhancing bio-diversity and environmental principles, by protecting the environment, and promoting sustainable products, he says.

Together with Lions and LCIF, Enel can improve the social and environmental conditions of the regions where they operate, and, through creating shared value, help employees give back.

"The partnership with Lions and LCIF helps Enel further serve our local communities and be a champion for a better tomorrow," Puckett says.

CLUB NEWS

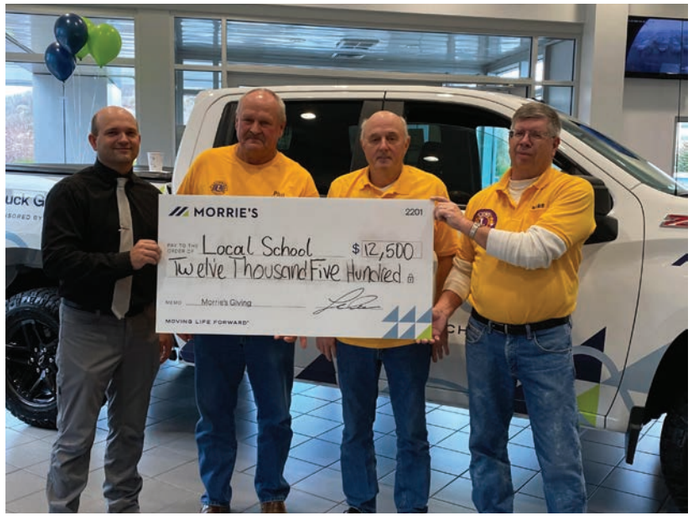
Jefferson Lions in **Texas** celebrated the opening of their annual Enchanted Forest with a lighting ceremony featuring 100 decorative Christmas trees, right after the town's Christmas parade. Jefferson Lions Club president Peggy Walker said, "It's a Hallmark Christmas kind of thing for our community."

The **Stirling and District Lions Club** in **Ontario, CAN**, is collecting cigarette butts and sending them off to the company, TerraCycle. TerraCycle turns the cigarette butts into plastic pellets to be used for various recycled products including shipping pallets, ashtrays, and park benches. The club also collects pop cans.

The **Emporia Lions Club** in **Kansas** donated US1,000 for the Salvation Army's red kettle campaign and volunteered to ring bells at local sites.

In **Indiana**, the **Heritage Lions** are working with Changing Footprints to gather shoes for the disadvantaged. Changing Footprints. a volunteer, non-profit organization with five distribution locations in Indiana, has collected more than 500,000 pairs of shoes over 17 years. Damaged athletic shoes are converted into playground padding or running tracks through the Nike Grind program.

In **Wisconsin**, the **Norwalk Lions Club**, along with many area businesses, sold raffle tickets for a truck drawing at Morrie's Auto. Proceeds of US$12,500 went to local schools.



Norwalk Lions had a truck raf e to support local schools.

The **Mountain Home Lions Club** in **Arkansas** prepared for its 70th Annual Mountain Home Lions Auction event with more than 500 items donated by local businesses.

The **Prospect, Ohio Lions** collected 1,978 used eyeglasses and sponsored the annual NASCAR dinner and auction to provide funds for up to 10 scholarships for graduating high school seniors.

The **Oxford Lions** in **Pennsylvania** partnered with the **Avon Grove Lions** to do eye screenings at the Elk Ridge Elementary School in Oxford. Lions screened about 80 students who missed out during the pandemic.

Avon Grove Leos collected more than 800 stuffed animals.

The **Avon Grove Leos** in **Pennsylvania** collected 800-plus stuffed animals through the Raise Craze fundraiser. Students donated gently used stuffed animals to the Orphan Grain Train, and Leos delivered the stuffed animals and spent the day packing almost 200 boxes that will be shipped to areas affected by natural disasters.

The **Elburn Lions** in **Illinois** host a free community spaghetti dinner on the fourth Tuesday of every month, welcoming all with spaghetti, meatballs, garlic bread, salad, and dessert.

In **Connecticut**, the **Terryville Leo Club** members from Eli Terry Junior Middle School placed flags on the graves of veterans at Hillside Cemetery in honor of Memorial Day.

Glen Ellyn Lions worked kitchen duty to help the Children's Resource Center.

Glen Ellyn Lions in **Illinois** helped support the Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center Thanksgiving celebration at two elementary schools, providing turkey legs at one, and pizza at the other.

In **Kansas**, Lions Club International Director Deb Weaverling helped secure enough Bombas brand socks for each student in the Basehor-Linwood school district, Bonner Springs Elementary School, and families who are served by the Basehor Linwood Assistance Services. Lions clubs in **Basehor, Tonganoxie** and **Leavenworth** received 4,000 pairs of socks for distribution through her efforts.

A common Cape Breton practice is to stock that fridge and freezer just before a big storm hits, but in the case of post-tropical storm Fiona, that plan-ahead practice led to widespread spoiled food as the powerful storm knocked power out across the island, rendering fridges and freezers useless. With help from a US$10,000 ($13,700 Canadian) LCIF grant, the **Glace Bay Lions** in **Nova Scotia**, were able to help 130 people in the Glace Bay area replenish the food that was in fridges and freezers when Fiona hit.

In **Iowa**, the Lake City Lakesters Car Club and the **Lake City Lions** cohosted the Annual Water Ski Days Weekend Car and Tractor show, marking their 32nd year.

The **Fargo Lions Club** in **North Dakota** gifted "The Spirit of the Sandbagger" monument to the City of Fargo in honor of the club's 100th anniversary. The monument, a sculpture archway that stands along the Red River, honors the men and women who fought numerous Red River floods to save their community, most recently in 1997, 2009, and 2011. Volunteers created walls of sandbags all over the city to protect homes, businesses, and schools. The artwork was envisioned by Lion Mike Benson whose home was impacted by the flood of 1997. Lions raised more than US$200,000 for the project and it includes nearly 100 different lighting shows to compliment the developing riverfront.

In **Idaho**, the first Boise Bench Blood Drive was a success when **Boise Bench Lions** exceeded their goal. Twenty-five units were obtained from 23 donors which will be distributed to assist potentially 75 lives. **Meridian Lions** supported the project.

For over a quarter century the **Greenfield Lions** in **Indiana** have sold silk flowers for Memorial Day. The patriotic floral display of red, white, and blue was designed to grace the gravesites of those who died serving their country. The club supports a wide variety of local causes.

In **Indiana**, Old Jasper Day and the **Jasper Lions Club** Strawberry Festival returned to the Jasper RiverWalk. Carriage rides, face painting, music, and strawberry desserts welcomed the summer season to Jasper.

Camp Kno Koma, a summer camp for diabetic children in West Virginia, received donations totaling US$7,000 from Lions, including US$6,000 from **West Virginia Lions in Wheeling, Moundsville, Wheeling Island, Dallas, Elm Grove, Warwood, Mount Olivet, West Liberty**, and the **Ohio County Virtual Club**. **District 29L** Lions added another US$1,000. Camp Kno Koma began in 1950 and has grown from 33 campers to more than 160.

In **New Hampshire**, at the annual Bennington Rhubarb Festival, the Rhubarb Hollering Contest awards the person loudest to yell, "Come Get Your Rhubarb!" **Bennington Lions** run a corn hole tournament. There is a 100-percent rhubarb pie baking contest, and a rhubarb and spring flower arrangement contest. Prizes are also awarded for rhubarb artwork and photography, and for rhubarb growers. Fresh-squeezed rhubarb lemonade sales support a new playground for the elementary school while giving folks a treat during rhubarb trivia.

The **Red Wing** Lions in **Minnesota** spent a Saturday at Camp Pepin cleaning up the Lion's Den that is sponsored by the club. The volunteers raked leaves, cleaned gutters, washed windows and screens, and tidied up the inside.

In **Ohio**, the **Bellville Lions** donated a low-vision magnifier to the Bellville branch of the Mansfield-Richland County Public Library. It will help those with vision difficulties see photographs and printed materials more easily.

The **Mendota Lions Club** in **Illinois** hosted a fishing rodeo for children ages 3 to 15 at Lake Mendota. Every child won a prize and got a hot dog, chips and a drink for lunch.

CLUB NEWS

In the second year of their planting project with the City of Calgary, **Lions Clubs** in **Calgary** made a commitment to the city to plant 50,000 trees in recognition of the Canadian Centennial. The Lion members, approximately 500 strong, in 20 Lions clubs in the city of Calgary, planted roughly 5,200 seedlings in Thorncliff and Falconridge during COVID restrictions.

The **East Hampton Lions Club** in **Connecticut** donated US$50,000 to the Stony Brook Southampton Hospital as part of a goal to raise $30 million. Lions are raising money in their community to establish a free-standing satellite emergency department in East Hampton, N.Y.

For their 100th birthday, the **Cap Baker Lions Club** in **Michigan** hosted a First Friday Art Walk at the Welcome Center of Grand Rapids around the Cap Baker Lion drinking fountain. The event featured cupcakes, a ROAR contest ($100 top prize to be donated to the Grand Rapids charity of the winner's choice), a display of Cap Baker Lions Club photos and memorabilia. and an opportunity to visit with Lion members.

In **New York**, the **Lockport Lions** donated US $2500 and attended a Dining in the Dark event. Lions also participated in "Celebrate Community" in support of the "Lockport New Beginnings" youth mentoring program, supplying ice cream to the community, vendors, volunteers, and participating area clubs.

In **Florida**, the **Lions Clubs in East Volusia County** are collecting more than 1,000 used eyeglasses each month. Glasses are cleaned, sorted, packed, and sent to the Florida Lions Warehouse. Missionaries going to other countries are provided the glasses free of charge, and damaged frames are shipped to a facility in California that extracts the metal and sends payments to the Florida Lions for use in their community service projects.

The **Lakeview, Minnesota Lions Club** hosted its annual Fly-In Breakfast serving eggs, sausage, pancakes, milk, orange juice, and coffee. Pilots in command and children under 6 could eat for free. Attendees were invited to bring in used glasses and hearing aids and had the opportunity to view a variety of planes flown in by area pilots. Some pilots offered rides for a fee of about US$25.

In **Pennsylvania**, the **McKeesport Lions Club** took part in the annual SS McKeesport Commemoration, Arbor Day tree distribution, a blood drive, the U.S. Postal Service Food Drive, helping place flags at more than 5,000 veterans' graves at McKeesport-Versailles Cemetery, and more. The Lions' Summer Concert Series at the Lions Bandshell offers a free concert each Sunday evening.

The **Snellville Lions Club** in **Georgia** invited their community to a 70th anniversary brunch in September. The club of 33 organizes many fundraising efforts including White Cane, Snellville Fall Festival, the Annual Golf Classic, and Pecan and Popcorn Sales.

The Visalia Lions in California donated US$1,000 to help restore the town's WWII Greatest Generation mural.

The **Visalia Breakfast Lions** of **California** made a US$1,000 donation to the Visalia Veterans Committee. The Visalia Veterans Committee is raising funds to restore the "WWII Greatest Generation" mural located just south of their town.

October 29 was Rose Day for the **Freeport, Illinois Lions** who delivered a dozen roses to lucky recipients. Lions sold tickets for roses in advance at US$20 a dozen.

Spectators of all ages, some in costumes, lined the streets of Pine Grove for the 75th annual Holiday Classic Parade on Oct. 15. Organized and sponsored by the **Pine Grove Lions Club** of **Pennsylvania**, more than 25 floats were judged, making it one of their biggest parades. The Pine Grove Lions were joined by Lions from the Porter Tower, Tri Valley, and Wayne Township clubs. Pennsylvania Lions District 14U Governor Lisa Leon rode in the parade in an antique car.

After three years without it, the **Fort Bragg-Mendocino Lions** in **California** were able to bring their much-loved carnival back to Fort Bragg. The Lions had been halted by Covid, and then lost their usual spot. They found another location on the coast and with help from more than a dozen Lion volunteers and the VFW, they pulled it off. The carnival has been a major fundraiser for the Lions so they can continue to provide their community services on the Mendocino Coast.

Nearly 1,900 new teddy bears have been donated to the Agrace Hospice Care Dori Bear Program by members of the **McFarland Lioness/Lions Club** in **Wisconsin** over the last 17 years. McFarland community member Doris Klubertanz was the inspiration for the program, collecting teddy bears throughout her life. When she died in 1994, her family donated her collection to Agrace and established the Dori Bear Program, bringing comfort to Agrace Hospice Care's patients and their family members.

In **Pennsylvania**, a major fire in October 2021 destroyed the community building that housed the historical society as well as the Lions Club and all the supplies needed to put on the **Dauphin-Middle Paxton Lions**' Carnival – a tradition going back more than 60 years. Lions knew they could throw in the towel, but they refused. With help from other organizations, including the Dauphin-Middle Paxton Home Association, they made it happen.

The **Eden Prairie Lions and Lioness Lions** in **Minnesota** collected 2,343 pounds of food and about US$1,700 in cash donations for the PROP Food Shelf during World Service Day on Oct. 8. All profits made during Lions' fundraisers are donated to help with public safety, scholarships, social and community services, vision, hearing, diabetes and other foundations, animal rescue, and nature centers.

The **Avon Grove Lions** in **Pennsylvania** set up an information booth at the Canine Partners Fall Festival. The Lions handed out information about Lions, and books from the Avon Grove Lions Book Barn were given to children, in addition to lollipops from the Avon Grove High School Leos who assisted with the children's games.

The **Vandergrift Lions Club** in **Pennsylvania** continues their successful gently-used hospital supplies donation program. The Club offers dozens of hospital supplies on loan or gifted free of charge to individuals in need of assistance with mobility or in need of health care items. The most in-demand items are shower chairs and walkers. They have served more than 500 people in the Alle-Kiski Valley.

First known as the Discovery Bay Lionesses in 1983, 24 women in the Discovery Bay Lions Club in **California** wanted to branch out to be more active in their community. The group reached 40 members and chartered themselves in 1992 as the **Byron Delta Lions Club**, now more than 70 members strong. They hosted a luau with proceeds going to Lion and community projects.

Shelter Island Lion president Jennie Adler presented a check for US$20,000 to CAST leaders Cathy Demeroto and Mary Kanarvogel in New York.

The **Shelter Island Lions Club Foundation** in **New York** presented a check for US$20,000 to CAST — the Center for Advocacy, Support and Transformation. The CAST On Wheels mobile food pantry and resource center comes to Shelter Island twice a month.

A new club, the **East Gull Lake Camp Confidence Lions Club** in **Michigan** had a launch party on the beach. The new club will be partnered with the camp, focusing on creating events for individuals in the community that provide opportunities to give back. Confidence Learning Center is a nonprofit outdoor education and recreation camp serving people of all ages with cognitive and physical disabilities.

In **Minnesota**, the **Hamel Lions** teamed up with the Corcoran Lions and teens from Wayzata High School to create and execute the hair-raising show at Haunted Acres. Proceeds go to local food shelves and help with heating costs for those in need during the winter. Last year the clubs raised around US$30,000 for these community causes.

CLUB NEWS

In **Texas**, the **Ysleta Lions Club**, along with the **Five Points Lions Club and Executive Women Lions Club**, held their 12th annual school uniform swap and included complimentary eye screenings and hearing tests, US$5 haircuts, and US$10 immunizations from Immunize El Paso. Those with clean, gently worn school uniforms, or school uniforms that children had outgrown, donated at the event. The Ysleta Lions also award a scholarship to a high school senior.

At the **Frederick Fusion Lions Club's** first Charter Night in **Maryland**, PDG Margarito "Och" Ochoa explained how the idea for a multicultural club began with a vision screening at the Asian American Center of Frederick. The Fusion Lions Club believes to be the only Lions club in the region charged with a multicultural/ diversity mission.

In **New York**, the **Lyndonville Lions Club** closed out the first week of July with their 13th Annual Community Appreciation Concert. The free concert is to thank all those who attended their Fourth of July celebration.

In **Tennessee**, the **Lexington Lions Club** has been busy. Since 2020, the club has built six benches and placed them in strategic areas around town, purchased and placed hand sanitizing stations in all city and county schools, and customized shopping carts for short people for Dollar General and Save-A-Lot.

The **Freeport Lioness Lions** in **Maine** had a successful Midcoast Humane Shelter shower. Many needed items and food were delivered along with a monetary donation.

The **Lemon Grove Lions** in **California** hosted a cornhole tournament with proceeds benefitting Fisher House San Diego where families of patients receiving medical care at Naval Medical Center San Diego are offered a "home away from home" at no cost.

In **Colorado**, the **Loveland Lions Club** appeared at the Loveland City Council meeting for a belated proclamation in honor of the club's 100th anniversary. They recognized its low-cost eye exam programs and its decades of operating the city's Buckhorn Northern Railroad at North Lake Park.

The **James City Lions Club** in **Virginia** presented four graduating high school seniors with college scholarships totaling US$6,000. The scholarships are based on academic achievement, leadership, extracurricular activities, and community service. They are made possible through a variety of Lions fundraising activities.

The **Noblesville Lions Club** in **Indiana** hosted an Information Open House on a Wednesday evening at a local café to share news about their club with the community.

In **Illinois**, the **Buckley**, **Ashkum**, and **Onarga Lions Clubs** combined to sponsor a fundraiser featuring a dueling piano group. Proceeds went to the Seeing Eye Dog Program.

Cucamonga District Host Lions, with Lion Vivian Shiffmanmka, "The Basket Queen" at the helm, provided 625 Easter baskets to low-income students at Los Amigos Elementary School in **California**.

The **Rutherford College Lions** in **North Carolina** built two Blessing Boxes and placed one at Connelly Springs Town Hall and one at Rutherford College Town Hall. They keep them stocked with non-perishable food items. The Lions also partner with local food banks at two churches where members help with food supplies.

The **Folsom City Host Lions** in **California** honor their member, Lion PDG Don Ring of District 4C5, who received the Ambassador of Goodwill award.

When Aurora rescue mission Wayside Cross Ministries asked the public to donate bottled water, **Aurora Noon Lions Club** in **Illinois** responded with 1,800 bottles. The water is needed during the hot summer at Wayside Cross Ministries' Master's Touch Men's Recovery Center, Lifespring for women and children, street outreach through the Elgin Wayside Center, and the Aurora youth baseball league and day camps provided by the Urban Youth Ministry.

Aurora Noon Lions in Illinois delivered 1,800 bottles of water to Wayside Cross Ministries.

The **Crescenta Valley Lions Club** in **California** was awarded a grant by the **California Lions Club** to replenish the community garden at St. Luke's of the Mountains Episcopal Church. Since the development of the garden in 2012 the CV Lions have worked with the St. Luke's Food for Justice program to grow and provide fresh fruits and vegetables for those in need. CV Lions also hosted two workdays to kick off the garden project.

In **Missouri**, the **Maryville Host and Pride Lions** are joining with a diabetes educator to bring forth the importance of diabetes prevention and management. The educator and Lions members have created the Lions Diabetes Champions program to help get the word out. Eighteen Lions have stepped up to fight this pandemic by becoming Lions Diabetes Champions for the community.

The **Owendale Lions Club** in **Michigan** hosted its annual Corn Roast that began in 1969 when charter member Edmund Good Sr. came up with the idea. For 53 years, the Lions have hosted this fundraiser and invited everyone, including other Lions clubs, hoping for the chance to interact with different Lions Clubs in and out of District 11-D2. They served locally grown sweet corn, hot dogs, bratwurst, and beverages. A US$10 donation helped the Lions support community projects.

The **Crestline Lions** in **Ohio** completed their 2nd annual Fall into Service Project at the Little League Complex in Crestline. The project consisted of scraping and painting the concession stand and bathroom facility at the complex, and seven Crestline Lions participated.

The **Frostburg Lions Club** in **Maryland** held its annual yard sale to benefit Camp Merrick in Nanjemoy. The 320-acre camp on the shores of the Potomac River in southern Maryland is owned and operated by the Lions Clubs of District 22-C and funded by Lions Clubs in the Washington, D.C., and Delmarva area, grants, private donations, and rentals. The weeklong camping experience is for children ages 6 to 16 who are diagnosed diabetic type 1 and children who are hearing or visually impaired.

The Kiwanis, Rotary, Zonta, and **Lions Clubs of Cheyenne** teamed up to sponsor a two-day food drive to support three local food banks. In **Wyoming**, an estimated 86,000 residents struggle with food insecurity, and in Laramie County, approximately 11% of households struggle with food insecurity, with the number increasing to 14% for those households with children.

Crestline Lions in Ohio xed up the concession and restroom facility at the Little League Complex as a Fall into Service project.

The Navarre community festival drew a crowd to the Navarre Community Center in **Florida** for live music, food, a pie auction, local vendors, displays, and a car show. The festival raised funds to help replace the roof on the Navarre Community Center, which is housed in a former grade school building owned by the **Navarre Lions Club**. The event was a joint effort between Agri-Trails Co-op, the Navarre Lions, and two 4-H clubs.

In **New York**, the **Cuba Lions Club** has supported the Chamberlain Park Playground Project with a US$2,000 donation to help purchase a swing for children with special needs. The purchase will be made possible through a matching grant received from the Brandel-Murphy Youth Foundation. The effort to update and replace Cuba's Chamberlain Park Playground was spearheaded by the Cuba-Rushford Central School 2019 Lego Robotics Team.

The **Stillwater Noon Lions Club** in **Oklahoma** vision screened 36 Afghan adults and children who were resettled in Stillwater, and 87 Special Olympians at the Oklahoma State Games.

The robotics Team ECH, supported by the **Asotin Lions** in **Washington**, participated in the 2022 International Seaperch Challenge, finishing fourth in the mission course and seventh out of 61 teams competing in the middle school class. They have already decided to return next year and come back with a trophy. Their fall activities include a monthly STEM night and a mini-ROV workshop at the local Boys & Girls Club.

CLUB NEWS

The **Seal Beach Lions Club** in **California** hosted their 6th annual Sailing with the Blind and Visually Impaired event, partnering with the Seal Beach Yacht Club where the Lions hold their monthly meetings. This year's event included 10 boats, both sailboats and powerboats, and 54 blind and visually impaired guests. Lions served them breakfast before going out on the boats, and then a "burger bash" when they came back to the yacht club. They had 32 volunteers, consisting of Lions, Yacht Club members, and Leos.

The **Lions Club of Sarasota, Florida**, bestowed one grant, three Helen Keller awards, and screened nearly 700 children heading back to school. UnidosNow, a Sarasota region non-profit organization to "elevate the quality of life of the growing Hispanic/Latino community through education" will utilize its US$5,000 Lions Club of Sarasota grant to provide scholarships to high school seniors. Eye Center South, Gulfcoast Eye Center, and University Eye Care doctors and staff were honored with the club's Helen Keller award for providing needed eye exams to more than 1,000 Sarasota County residents with low incomes. In partnership with Hope4Communities at Day4Hope back-to-school events, Lion volunteers from seven clubs provided vision screenings for 674 children, medical and dental exams, personal care items, a haircut, a photo, a backpack filled with school supplies, and gift cards for clothes and shoes.

In **Connecticut**, the **Hamden Lions** and members of other District 23A clubs enjoyed a successful "fun"draiser where 27 Lions gathered to create their own sunflower painting guided by a local artist.

The **Bossier City Lions Club** in **Louisiana** put on their 69th Football Jamboree. It takes more than 500 volunteer hours to do this, bringing six area high school football teams together. Not only does the jamboree bring in funds to support the initiatives of the Bossier City Lions Club, but it also brings the community together for a night of high school football.

Louisiana's Bossier City Lions put in 500 volunteer hours to host their 69th Football Jamboree for six high school teams and lots of fans.

The **Narragansett, Rhode Island Lions** celebrated the 50th anniversary of their Blessing of the Fleet, and a 10-mile road race with 2,940 registered runners, walkers, and wheelchair athletes. Along with a three-day seafood festival and the traditional blessing in the commercial fishing port of Point Judith, the event is the Narragansett Lions' biggest fundraiser of the year.

The **Falmouth Maine Lions Club** continued their project to park cars for sporting events at The Iris Network lot in **Portland, Maine**. The Lions park cars at about 100 games during the year, raising about US$70,000. Members of the National Federation for the Blind help by collecting the fees.

In **Oregon**, the **Dalles Lions Club** helped the Salvation Army and St. Vincent DePaul with their annual "Shop with a Hero" program. Heroes were from the local city police department, sheriff's office, state patrol, and fire department. Fifty-seven students signed up and each was given a US$100 gift card, a bag of school supplies and a goody bag from the local Fred Meyer store.

In **Illinois**, the **German Valley Lions** had a Drive-Thru Fundraiser selling ribeye sandwiches, porkchop sandwiches, beef hotdogs with chips, applesauce, a cookie, and a drink.

The **Colts Neck Lions Club** in **New Jersey** hosted their 28th Annual Pancake Breakfast, serving hundreds of patrons for just US$3-$5. Proceeds will help build a Braille Trail in the Monmouth County Parks, enabling the sight impaired to be in nature and identify their surroundings.

In **West Virginia**, heavy rain flooded two counties affecting infrastructure and more than 100 homes. In response, the **Lions of 29-I Disaster Relief Team** joined other organizations to help residents remove mud and debris from their homes and property.

The **Weymouth Lions Club** in **Massachusetts** raised money by teaching tennis lessons to people from 10 to 99. Proceeds from the lessons went to pay for eyeglasses for students in the town schools and Massachusetts Lions Eye Research.

The Marysville Evening Lions in Ohio donated money and time to the Hope Center.

The **Marysville Evening Lions Club** in **Ohio** donated US$2,500 to the Hope Center, an organization that houses a furniture bank, clothes closet, personal needs pantry, and community kitchen. Lions also helped stuff 258 bags for Marysville Blessings in a Backpack, helping to ensure children do not go hungry on the weekends.

More than 30 years ago a member of the **Bowness Lions Club** in **Alberta**, **CAN**, was integral in starting what is now an annual tradition, the Bowness Lions Stampede Pancake Breakfast and Parade. After a two-year Covid shutdown, they enthusiastically served pancakes, sausages, and an energizing renewal of community cohesion to several thousand people in July. In September, the Lions donned their aprons again to create a 'western-themed evening' for local seniors and their families, serving up pancakes, sausages, and beans as well as toe-tapping entertainment. The event helped raise spirits and money for the Seniors Centre.

Lions from throughout District 23A **Connecticut** joined the **Monroe Lions** in celebrating the formal opening of a new playground called The Wolfe's Den. Monroe Lion donated US$105,000 toward the park. Signs at the park not only carry the Lions logo but will also include a QR code which will route all inquiries to the district's website. This will show input from various clubs in the entire District and be hyperlinked to other Lions websites.

The **Lexington Lions Club** in **Kentucky** proudly recognizes three generations in their club. Lion Charlie Gray became a Lion in May of 1968. Charlie's son, Jeff, joined Lions two years ago, and Lion Jeff's daughter, Alexis, became a Lion this year after working at the Lexington Lions Club Bluegrass Fair.

Members, family, and friends of the **Portage Lions Club** in **Michigan** participated in the 2022 My CureSearch Walk to raise funds for children's cancer research. The club raised US$825.

The **Westerville Lions Club** in **Ohio** partnered with the Green Havens Living facility in a successful recycling initiative. Lions took on the Bags into Benches project where plastic film is made into solid composite benches by Trex, and the community response was more than Lions imagined. They have donated 12 benches in their community.

In **Arkansas**, the **Van Buren Lions Club** marked its 100th anniversary with a Centennial Banquet, but also chose to partner with the City of Van Buren to construct the Van Buren Lions Club Mayor Gene Bell Park in town. The park will have a playground, benches, and picnic tables.

The **Forest Hill Lions Club** in **Toronto**, Canada, which is celebrating its 70th year, continued to sponsor and support Little League Baseball through the North York Baseball Association for underprivileged kids. Children ages 5 to 16 are eligible to play. The league consists of 34 house league teams, including a "Rep" program for a more advanced level of competition for another 26 teams. Games are played in Ontario, Canada, and maintained by the North York Baseball Association grounds crew.

Forest Hill Lions in Toronto gladly support the North York Baseball Association for underprivileged kids.

The **Mankato Area Lions Club** in **Minnesota** hosted its fifth annual Diabetes Rally to help find a cure for Type 1 diabetes. The event featured family-friendly games, informational vendors, guest speakers, and a 1.6-mile walk. In 2021, the Mankato Area Lions raised more than US$40,000. All proceeds go to local non-profit organizations like the Minnesota Lions Diabetes Foundation and Camp Sweet Life.

LIONS INTERNATIONAL

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FOR INTERNATIONAL ELECTIONS AT LCICON 2023 BOSTON

SCAN ME

ASSIGN YOUR VOTING DELEGATE TODAY.

Club secretaries, or other duly authorized officers, must assign their voting delegates using MyLCI by July 5 at 23:59 U.S. Central Daylight Time for the 105th Lions Clubs International Convention which starts on July 7, 2023.

Remember: Voting delegates must be registered for the convention.

BOSTON 2023