

FEBRUARY 2026

Lions Insight

DISTRICT 35L
Information
Newsletter



Florida Lions of District 35 L

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District Governor Message

Searching for Your Lion Heart

How many times do you try before giving up in a difficult situation?

A Lion Heart doesn't count attempts — it counts purpose. And purpose is what keeps us trying again.

We try when a fundraiser doesn't meet its goal the first time, and instead of walking away, we regroup, rethink, and run it again — better than before.

We try when membership invitations are declined, knowing that one "no" today may become a proud "yes" tomorrow. Every invitation planted is a seed, and Lion Hearts understand that seeds take time to grow.

We try when a service project feels overwhelming, when the need is bigger than our resources, and yet we show up anyway — because someone out there is counting on us.

We try when a meeting is small, when energy feels low, and when progress seems slow. We keep showing up, because consistency builds momentum.

We try when life itself is heavy, when personal challenges tug at our strength — and still, we serve. That is the quiet courage of a Lion.

A Lion Heart does not know the meaning of giving up.

Difficulty is not a stop sign — it's a reminder of why we started.

As long as there is a need in our community...

As long as there is a hand to hold, a child to help, a vision to protect...

We try again.

Because that is who we are.

Because that is what Lions do.

In Lionism We Serve,

Suzi Rodgers





MEMBERSHIP

CONTEST

Lions Family,

I am excited to announce a district-wide **6-Month Membership Net-Gain Contest** designed to strengthen our clubs, expand our service, and bring fresh energy into Lions of District 35-L. As we all know, *more hands mean more service*—and together, we can spark meaningful growth.

Here's the Challenge:

From **January 1, 2026 through June 30, 2026** every club will work toward a **positive net gain in membership** **. Whether that means bringing in new members or re-engaging former Lions. (Transfers “in” are not part of this contest.)

What's in it for Your Lions Club?

1st Place

1. A membership patch for your club banner and patches for each Lion in the winning club who has sponsored one or more new members during the contest period.
2. Your club will receive \$10 for each new member.
3. Your club will be highlighted in our district 35 L newsletter
4. Your club will be featured on our district 35 L website.
5. Your club will have bragging rights for the entire Lions year.



2nd Place

1. Your club will be recognized with a certificate
2. Your club will receive \$5 for each new member.

3rd Place

Your club will be recognized with a certificate.

What's in it for Each Lions Club Member?



Glad you asked.....

1. The Lion sponsoring the largest number of new members in our district will receive "The Carl Harrell Award "
 - a. A patch for their Lions Vest.
 - b. Winner name will be added to the new member drawing for \$250
2. Each Lion bringing a new Lion to a club (or another club in our district) will have their name placed in "The most Lions recruited in District 35 L" drawing during the same 6-month period.

(Awards will be presented at the 1st District Advisory Meeting in the 2026-2027 Lions year.)

How your club and members can get started:

- Host a membership night or invite-a-friend meeting
- Highlight your club's work on social media
- Engage new members quickly with meaningful roles
- Reach out to past Lions—you'd be surprised how many are ready to return
- Celebrate your successes and share your stories with the district

Why this matters:

Our communities need Lions more than ever. Growing our membership means expanding our capacity to serve—more vision screenings, more food drives, more support for youth, veterans, and families in need. When we grow, *our impact multiplies*.

Let's show our communities what Lions can achieve when we work with purpose and passion. I believe in each of you, and I know we can achieve exceptional results over these next six months.

Thank you for your leadership, your heart for service, and your commitment to the future of Lionism.

In Lionism We Serve,

Suzi Rodgers
District Governor, District 35-L

****Net gain is the total increase or decrease in your club's membership during the contest period. It is determined by using this simple formula:**

Net Gain = New Members Added + Reinstated Members – Members Dropped

In an event of a tie all club/members will be awarded.





DISTRICT 35-L MEMBER ORIENTATION!

LEARN CONNECT SERVE



FEBRUARY 19 • 6:00 PM CENTRAL TIME

Join Us via Zoom!



New Members
Welcome!



Discover the Power
of "We Serve!"



Get Ready to
Make a Difference!

District 35L is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: 2026 February Member Orientation

Time: Feb 19, 2026 06:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81396831346?pwd=zs4zL6RpV6laOVEMcDmd14ReeJcm3g.1>

Meeting ID: 813 9683 1346

Passcode: 620129



Statutory Responsibilities of Lions Organizations

As a friendly reminder, there are certain annual statutory responsibilities that all civic organizations in Florida need to be mindful of. Each Lions Club should establish who within their organization is responsible for attending to these.

Florida Corporate Annual Report

- It is due between January 1st and May 1st each year
- Visit sunbiz.org to update your organization's officers and their information
- \$61.25 per non-profit organization (if your Lions Club has a separate Foundation, a report will need to be filed for each)
- Penalties may apply if late

Solicitations of Contributions Registration

- Issued by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (they will assign a registration number)
- Due on or before the expiration date of the previous registration (the Department will send a renewal package approximately 30 days prior to expiration)
- Fundraising activities must comply with certain disclosures as specified on the registration

990-N Annual Tax Filing

- Online at IRS.gov
- Requires an Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Due on the 15th day of the fifth month after the close of the tax year (November 15th for fiscal years ending June 30th)

Annual Elections

- **Nominating committee:** The president shall appoint a nominating committee which shall submit the names of candidates for the various club officers to the club at the nomination meeting. (At this meeting, nominations for all offices to be filled in the succeeding year may also be made from the floor.)
- **Nomination Meeting:** Shall be held in **March** of each year or as determined by the board of directors.
- **Election:** An election shall be held in **April** or as determined by the board of directors. Notice of the election shall be published to each member of the club at least fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the date of election. (No nominations accepted at this time).
- All officers and members of the board, other than directors, shall be elected annually and shall take office on **July 1st**.
- The Secretary shall promptly report the newly elected officers to the International Office within 15 days of the election. No later than June 15.
- For more information on Elections and Requirements of Officers check your Club Constitution and By-laws. If your club does not have a Club Constitution and By-Laws check out the [Standard Form Lions Club Constitution and By-Laws](#) on lionsclubs.org and adopt them as a club so you have guidelines to follow.
- Required Officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer
- Optional Officers: 2nd Vice President, Assistant Secretary, Assistant, Treasurer, Membership Chairperson, Service Chairperson, Marketing Chairperson, Program Coordinator, Club LCIF Coordinator, Lion Tamer, Tail Twister

Advisory Meeting January 24, 2026



CABINET MINUTES

NORTHEAST FLORIDA LIONS HEARING AID BANK, Inc.

Florida Lions District 35-L Update

All Lions clubs in District 35-L are encouraged to get involved! Every club in the district has the opportunity to have representation on the Board of the Northeast Florida Lions Hearing Aid Bank, Inc.

Lion Sue Hooten, current President, has appointed a **Nominating Committee** to present a slate of officers for the upcoming term, including President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

◆ Nominating Committee

- Lion President Sue Hooten, Chair
- PDG Bobby Wright
- Cabinet Secretary Brittney Young
- SVDG Susan Oliva

 The slate will be presented and voted on at the next Quarterly Meeting:

Thursday, April 9

 7:00 PM ET | 6:00 PM CT

We hope many clubs will choose to participate. **Any Lion interested in serving as an officer is asked to contact a member of the Nominating Committee by the end of February.**

At this time, the Hearing Aid Bank will not be refurbishing used hearing aids. Instead, we will partner with Hearing Centers utilizing the Starkey Cares Program. As this reorganization moves forward, clubs will be updated on how they can participate.

Our goal remains clear: to provide a strong, effective hearing program for the District 35-L community.

Together, we can continue to serve those in need.

We Serve.



FLORIDA LIONS DISTRICT 35-L

 **Northeast Florida Lions
Hearing Aid Bank, Inc.**

All Clubs Can Have Board Representation

 **Officer Slate Vote: April 9**

 **Quarterly Meeting: 7 PM ET | 6 PM CT**

 **Interested Lions: Contact Nominating Committee by end of February**

Providing hearing services to the District 35-L community

We Serve.

Providing hearing services to the District 35-L community

NORTHEAST FLORIDA LIONS HEARING AID BANK, Inc.

HISTORY

In 1971, Lions Club International elected to work with the hearing impaired. They chose to call this "Speech and Hearing".

District 35-L adopted this program in December 1983 in the form of a Hearing Aid Bank. The involvement and procedures were quite simple: solicit used aids from the Public, refurbish them and issue to the hearing impaired that were unable to afford this luxury. A governing board was formed and in the Lion year 1983-1984, the first officers were elected.

By-laws were adopted on November 13, 1983, with the organizational name of Northeast Florida Lions Hearing Aid Bank.

The First Bank Coordinator, Lion Charlie Petrelli, served until 1995. He maintained the inventory and coordinated all the testing of donated aids with the Jacksonville Hearing and Speech Center. Lion Jim McGarry continued as Bank Coordinator until July 2002. Lion Roger Palmer assumed the position until January 2004. The current "Keeper of the Bank" is Lion Shirley Shuler.

Lions Emmett Usher, Charlie Petrelli and K.K. Kramer were among the forerunners of the Hearing Aid Bank. A most active member of the Hearing Aid Bank, Lion Don Sharow, became Treasurer of the Bank in 1987 and continued until his death in 2004.

In 1990, the Hearing Aid Bank worked with The Closed Caption Institute of Washington, D.C. to furnish television closed caption decoders to the deaf students attending the St. Augustine School for the Deaf and Blind. During Christmas 1990, the Bank was able to present 125 students with decoders. \$11,745.00 was donated by the Clubs of District 35-L to make this happen! This success was brought about by club involvement and hard work by a lot of members.

Over the years, quarterly meetings have been held in various locations. However, since 1996, the meetings have been centrally located in Palatka. Each club within District 35 L is permitted to appoint two members to serve on the Bank Board.

There were five Area Coordinators that work with clubs in their respective areas. These are Ocala, Palatka, Gainesville, St. Augustine, and Jacksonville. Each coordinator developed a relationship with local hearing aid specialists in their area to encourage their assistance in keeping the procurement of aids at an affordable level.

This continued until the pandemic in 2020-2022. The last quarterly meeting of the Board was on 9/20/2022. Donations from clubs stopped in 2023. At the District Cabinet Meeting in November 2025, the possibility to refresh the Hearing Aid Bank was discussed. SVDG Susan Oliva was appointed to spearhead this effort. A Quarterly meeting of the current Board was held on Jan. 7, 2026, via Zoom.

Lion Sue Hooten, the current President, appointed a Nominating Committee to present a slate of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The Committee is: Lion President Sue Hooten, Chair; members are PDG Bobby Wright, Cabinet Secretary Brittny Young, SVDG Susan Oliva.

This slate will be presented and voted on at the next Quarterly meeting, scheduled for Thursday, April 9th at 7 pm ET, 6 pm CT.

We hope that many clubs will want to participate, and we ask anyone willing to serve as an officer to please contact the Nominating Committee by the end of February.

At present, we will not be refurbishing used hearing aids, instead, we will make use of the Hearing Centers that use the Starkey Cares program. As this reorganization progresses, we will let the clubs know how to participate. We need to offer a hearing program to the District 35 L Community.

 <p>Area 1E</p>	<p>Lions Club International MD-35 Florida Regional Lions Leadership Institute</p>	
	<p>Life Enrichment Center 4991 Picciola Road Fruitland Park, FL 34731</p>	<p>March 19-22, 2026</p>
	<p>Check in after 3:30 Thursday - Depart Sunday 11:30</p>	

<p>Name _____</p> <p>Badge Name (if different) _____</p> <p>District _____ Club _____</p> <p>Highest Office Held _____</p> <p>Current Office if any _____</p> <p>Mailing Address _____ _____</p> <p>Phone _____</p> <p>Email _____</p> <p>Have you ever attended a RLLI? Y _____ N _____</p>	<p>Institute Topics:</p> <p>Opening Session Diversity Lions Fundamentals Motivating Club Members Personal Mission Statement Public Speaking Time Management Working in Teams Global Membership Approach Success Plan District Success Setting and Reaching Club Goals</p>
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<p>Registration Fee of only \$200 includes:</p> <p>Lodging 3 Nights Eight Meals (Thu Din through Sun Bkfst) Instructional Materials Friday Night Campfire / Fun Night.</p>	<p>Please inform us of any special needs or diets.</p> <p><i>Lodging Accommodations Double Occupancy</i> (Single Occupancy available add \$75) Roommate (if applicable - list below)</p>
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<p>Registration Cut off is <u>January 15th</u> <u>February 5th!</u></p>	<p>Make Checks Payable to: Lions of Florida MD-35 Mail Checks and Registration to: Lion Vivian Henegar 9069 High Point Blvd. Brooksville, Florida 34613</p>	<p>Checks must be received NLT February 15th.</p>
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Lions of Florida and the South East come and enjoy 3 days of Lions Learning, Lions Fellowship, and Lions Enrichment with 30 Lions from MD-35 and beyond. You will experience a Lions event you will remember for years to come. You will go home energized and ready to help Lead your Club and District to success while making lifelong friends. Sounds like when you were a kid at camp, well you could be right. All for the **LOW** price of only **\$200**. Any questions? Call Lion Vivian at 810-444-4109. Reserve your spot now before they're gone! **Registration ends January 15th, 2026.**



How does the challenge work?

- Register on NexTrex.com to obtain access to the Trex Portal. Report recycling totals at my.trex.com
- Weigh, record and attach pictures
- Deliver collected plastic films/bags to a participating retailer for recycling (see *list*)
- 25 participating organizations are randomly selected each quarter and rewarded with a gift, valued at \$500
- Each 250 pounds is an entry into the drawing

What does Trex provide?

- Up to three recycling bins
- Posters
- Each participating organization receives a gift from Trex when they reach the first 250 pounds (annually), valued at \$100

What can I win?



Trex Bench



Solo Stove



Life-size Jenga



Life-size Connect 4



Pop-up Theater

Stores prefer small deliveries of plastic film for recycling. Please contact the store prior to delivery for larger amounts.

What can be recycled?

All plastic must be clean, dry and free of food residue.



Grocery bags



Bread bags



Bubble wrap



Dry cleaning bags



Newspaper sleeves



Ice bags



Plastic shipping envelopes



Ziploc & other reclosable food storage bags



Cereal bags



Case overwrap



Salt bags



Pallet wrap & stretch film



Wood pellet bags



Produce bags

For official sweepstakes rules and to register
please visit NexTrex.com

2025-2026 Excellence Awards updates

Applications will **NOT** be necessary for the 2025-2026 award cycle. Awards will be distributed by Lions International to clubs that meet the updated criteria and eligibility requirements. You will find these listed below.

Club Excellence Award criteria

The Club Excellence Award acknowledges the dedication and legacy of service within individual clubs and is the foundation for excellence awards presented to Zone Chairpersons, Region Chairpersons and District Governors.

Membership

Induct a minimum of two or 20% new members, whichever is greater (not including transfer, reinstated or charter members). Eligibility is determined based on the club's membership count on June 30th of the previous Lion year.

Or sponsor a new Lions club.

Service

Report a minimum of four service activities to Lions International. **Three** of these activities must show participation in each of the three International Weeks of Service.

Leadership

Report **newly elected club officers in Lion Portal by May 15** of the current Lion year.

A minimum of 10% of the club's members complete any three courses in the Lions Learning Center.

The club president for the current Lion year must not have served more than two consecutive terms.

A minimum of two or more club officers (president, vice president, secretary or treasurer. Of which, one must be the club president) complete Club Officer Training (online with the Lions Learning Center or in-person as reported by a GLT coordinator in Learn) between May 1 – December 31.

Donations

Contributed to LCIF a minimum of the club's membership total on June 30th of the previous Lion year, multiplied by US\$20.

About the environment

The environment is our home

The earth sustains human life. Our environment is more than a background: it's our home. And we're committed to caring for it.

12M

Hectares of
forest destroyed
each year*

6-7M

Number of premature
deaths annually caused
by air pollution*

1/3

Amount of
generated waste that
is not safely managed**

17M

Metric tons of plastic
entered the ocean in 2021.
Projected to double or triple
by 2040.†

*UNEP

**World Bank

†United Nation's Sustainable Development report, 2022



11 APRIL

**DISTRICT 35L MINI
DISTRICT CONVENTION -
TALLAHASSEE**

1-2 MAY

**MD 35 SPRING
CONVENTION - ORLANDO**

2026
LIONS
EVENTS

SAVE THE DATE!

ONLINE DIRECTORY

Month of February

AMD/Low Vision Awareness Month

American Heart Month

National Cancer Prevention Month

National Children's Dental Health Month

February 2

Ground Hog Day

February 4

World Cancer Day

February 5

Disaster Day

February 14

Valentine's Day

February 15

International Childhood Cancer Day

February 16

President's Day

February 23-24

Mission 1.5 Worldwide Reporting Day

February 23

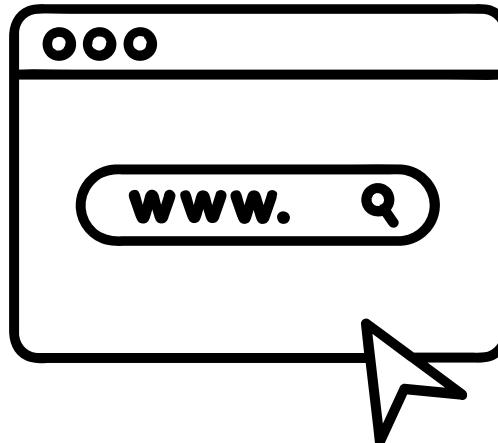
World Peace and Understanding Day



LIONS ONLINE RESOURCES

WEBSITES

- lionsclubs.org
- LCIF Website
- lionsvirtual.org
- Lions Portal
- Lionsmd35.com
- district35L.com
- district35i.com
- district35o.com
- district35n.com
- lionsdistrict35n.org



YOUTUBE

- Lions International
- @LionsVirtualLive
- @USLionsRock
- Lions Video Center

FACEBOOK

- Lions International
- LCIF
- Lions USA
- Lions Virtual
- Global Lions Forum
- Lions of Multiple District 35
- Florida Lions District 35-L
- Florida Lions District 35-I
- Florida Lions District 35-O
- Florida Lions District 35-N





The benefits of being a Lion

Becoming a member of your local Lions club benefits your community and you.

- **Make a difference**

There are over 48,000 Lions clubs around the world. Each one is filled with people like you who've decided to take action and serve others. Collectively, Lions make a global impact through their community service.

- **Serve with pride**

Lions feel a great sense of satisfaction from doing what is at the heart of all Lions clubs – serving others. You will have the opportunity to give your time, share your talents, help your community, and feel proud knowing you change lives.

- **Build your network**

As a Lion, you develop relationships with the people in your club and also the local leaders you collaborate with in service. You can also network with Lions in your district and around the world who are serving their communities, just like you!

- **Gain Lion credibility**

There are Lions in over 200 countries and geographic areas who share your passion for service. Gain the respect that comes with being part of a global organization known for its contributions to humanity for over 100 years.

- **Develop new friendships**

Feel a sense of belonging with the other members of your club, as well as the over 1.4 million Lions around the world. Through the MyLion App, you can connect with other service-minded men and women locally, regionally and internationally.

- **Show your leadership**

As a Lion, you gain access to our online learning management system, where you can sharpen your leadership skills. You will also have the opportunity to lead within your club and gain valuable, practical experience for use in your personal and professional life.

- **Receive global support**

Every Lion and every club is supported by a global network of volunteers, the Lions Clubs International staff, and the Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), which provides grant funding to support the compassionate work of Lions, empowering their service and addressing the needs of their communities both locally and globally.

Visit weserve.org to see how becoming a Lion can change your life.

To get involved in your community, contact:



Lions Clubs International



DISTRICT 35-L PRE-CABINET MEETING

Date: January 24, 2026

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Location: Falling Waters Lions Club
New Life Fellowship Church, Chipley

Members Present:

DG Suzi Rodgers, 1VDG George Niles, 2VDG Susan Oliva, Sue Hooten, Brittny Young, , PDG Greg Seltzer, PDG Bobby Wright, Denise Williams, PDG Tony Stefanowicz, PDG Lou Jones, Mike Poweleit, PCC Stanley Rodgers

1) Call to Order - DG Suzi Rodgers

2) Invocation - IPDG Greg Seltzer

3) Approval of Previous Minutes

The Chair noted that the prior minutes should be separated into two sections (an in-person meeting and a Zoom meeting).

- **Motion:** IPDG Greg Seltzer
- **Second:** Denise Williams
- **Result:** Motion carried.

4) Disaster Trailers: Status, Equipment Needs, Storage Plan, and Next Steps

The group discussed two district disaster trailers (one originally kept at Lion Brittny's home; another acquired from Palatka New Vision Club).

Key updates and decisions:

- **Trailer registration/title status:**
 - The new trailer is registered, has a tag, and the title is in the name of the District.
 - The smaller trailer does not require a title (due to size), but its tag/registration is in the District's name.
- **Road readiness / tires:**
 - Tires appear in good condition and not dry-rotted, but are original (trailer noted as 2017).
 - Plan to have a tire shop inspect to confirm they are roadworthy.
 - Strong recommendation from members: consider replacing tires due to age/date codes.
- **Needed outfitting items (examples discussed):**
 - Spare tire, jack, and stabilizer stands/leveling supports
 - Tie-down solutions: straps (~\$50 range discussed), and potential need to add rings/anchor points
 - Wheel lock (preferred "boot"-style lock) and continued use of hitch lock
 - Inventory review of what is currently inside (tents and other items noted; a list may be posted on the trailer wall)
- **Storage plan:**
 - Discussion supported housing the newer trailer at High Springs (on Denise Williams private property), to reduce theft risk and keep it accessible.

- **Operational plan:**
 - Keep both trailers for disaster response but outfit them intentionally so they can be deployed regionally without unnecessary hauling.

Action Plan / Timeline:

- Lion Brittny Young and Lion Denise Williams will coordinate and return in April with a proposed list and estimated costs.
- Build-out and purchasing target: April–June, ahead of hurricane season.

5) Communications Equipment: Generators, Charging Stations, and Connectivity (Starlink / Satellite Options)

Generators

- A member shared a generator example used for research comparison:
 - Approx. 8,000 watts
 - Dual-fuel capable (propane + gasoline)
 - Electric start + pull start
 - Estimated cost around \$1,000
- The group emphasized sizing generators based on what needs to be powered.

Phone charging station

- Charging stations discussed ranging \$30–\$50, supporting multiple USB ports.
- Concept: trailer-based public/relief charging capability (users bring their own cables).

Starlink / Connectivity

- Discussion focused on using Starlink as a Wi-Fi hotspot capability for disaster relief communications.
- Cost discussed as approximately \$165/month, with the understanding service may be activated/deactivated as needed (subject to plan rules).
- Two Starlink sizes discussed:
 - Smaller unit: supports ~20 connections
 - Larger unit: supports ~40 connections
- The group discussed the benefit of providing connectivity for civilians to contact family during disasters, noting many response agencies do not offer public Wi-Fi access.

Action Item

- Lion Brittny Young will research satellite phone vs. hotspot/Starlink options, including the best fit for disaster operations.+

6) Insurance Discussion: Trailer vs. Cargo/Contents Coverage

The meeting discussed insurance complexity for district-owned trailers and contents.

Key points:

- Insurance needs may require two separate coverages:
 1. Physical damage (the trailer itself)
 2. Cargo/contents (equipment inside)

Action Item

- Identify an appropriate commercial insurance agent experienced with trailer + contents coverage and clarify allowable use.

7) Disaster Relief Funds: Balances and Permitted Uses

Financial figures were shared:

- Disaster relief fund balance: a little over \$55,000
- Disaster relief spending this year: \$5,580
- Disaster relief income this year: \$100

8) Hearing Aid Bank Update and Revitalization Plans - 2VDG Susan Oliva

Correction to prior minutes

- 2VDG Susan Oliva noted a correction needed: it is not "Northeast Florida Hearing Foundation"; the correct name is NORTHEAST FLORIDA LIONS HEARING AID BANK, Inc.

Program status and governance

- A meeting occurred in early January; a nominating committee was created to select:
 - President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer
- Financials and minutes were referenced; some materials were pending distribution.

History document

- A historical summary (beginning around 1971) was shared, showing longstanding activity and prior balances. This will be placed in the newsletter

Modernization approach

- The group discussed that refurbishing used hearing aids is outdated due to technology changes.
- Plan discussed: partner with Starkey (and also awareness of other providers such as Miracle-Ear, especially for children).
- Approximate program cost referenced as \$300 (application/fee discussed).
- Discussion emphasized that final decisions will be made once the new board is seated, aligned with bylaws.

9) New Club Development / Extension (Ocala Area)

An update was given regarding new club development efforts in Belleview.

- Canvassing and outreach planning targeted for February.
- A club branch. Was discussed for the Crestview Club in Baker

10) Ponte Vedra Funds Disposition (Restricted Membership Funds)

The group discussed \$495 in funds collected for a club effort in Ponte Vedra. Individuals who requested refunds had been addressed; remaining contributors had been contacted with no response.

- Motion: IPDG Greg Seltzer - Use the \$495 to support the GET (Global Extension Team) for this year's extension work; transfer funds accordingly from restricted/designated category into operating/general funds and apply for GET purposes.
- Second: 1VDG George Niles
- Vote: All in favor; motion carried.

11) District "Entities" (Charitable Partners) and Reporting

DG Suzi Rodgers reported no feedback was received on proposed district entities, and indicated the district would align with Lions International designations for the remainder of the term.

Discussion points:

- Concern that removing "parade of checks" recognition may reduce giving; counterpoint raised that public comparisons discouraged smaller clubs.
- Emphasis that clubs should report donations through the service portal so totals can be tracked consistently.
- Suggestion made to revisit entity vetting and applications in a focused/special meeting, especially ahead of the next term.

12) Grants Recap (LCI Grant Funds) – In Progress

The Chair reported the grants recap paperwork was about $\frac{3}{4}$ complete and awaiting a few signatures.

Total: \$12,250, allocated as discussed:

- \$1,500 each to Ronald McDonald House locations: Pensacola, Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Gainesville
- \$1,250 for reading glasses (Bosch referenced in transcript; exact recipient name unclear)
- \$2,500 to "Paynut Companions" (name unclear in transcript; needs verification)
- \$2,500 to Leader Dogs

Action Item

- DG Suzi Rodgers to finalize signatures and submit/complete the recap documentation.



13) District Policy & Procedure Manual

PCC Stanley Rodgers reported progress on a district Policy & Procedure Manual, based on an initial draft by John Hart.

- The drafting stage is complete; now in the “what’s missing / edits / review” stage.
- Plan: finalize after incorporating feedback and bring forward for approval in time for the next term.

14) Electronic Voting Update (Statewide Practice)

The group reiterated prior adoption of electronic voting and noted statewide direction:

- All four districts will vote electronically over the same three-day window.
- Results remain confidential until the official announcement date.
- Delegate eligibility requires a unique email address in the portal; communications to clubs will emphasize this.
- Reminder: districts must use either electronic voting or paper ballots—no mixing in the same election cycle.

15) Club Status Concern: Defuniak Springs (Delinquent Dues / Membership Cleanup)

The group discussed Defuniak Springs’ low membership and delinquent balances caused in part by old members not being removed from the portal.

- A payment plan had been proposed including current term dues; payments were not made as agreed.
- The group discussed whether to pursue closure/charter surrender versus continued efforts, noting the president’s personal circumstances and contributions elsewhere.
- Action Item: PDG Lou Jones will speak directly with the club leader regarding next steps (payment compliance and/or charter status).

16) Adjournment 10:07 AM



District 35-L Cabinet Advisory Meeting – Minutes

Date: Saturday, January 24, 2026

Location: New Life Fellowship Church Chipley, FL

In Attendance: Alachua (1), Chattahoochee (2), Chipley Falling Waters (5), Crestview (7), Fleming Island (1), Gulf Breeze (1), High Springs (1), Jacksonville RAW (1), Live Oak (1), Ocala (1), Ocala 200 (1), Orange Park (1), Palatka New Vision (2), Pensacola (1), Quincy (1), Tallahassee (2), Turkey Creek (1)

1) Call to Order

- Invocation by IPDG Greg Seltzer
- Pledge by Lion Lisa Mitchell, Crestview Lions Club
- Welcome, Falling Waters Lions Club President, Lion Brittny Young
- Introduction of our head table, 2VDG Susan Oliva
- Roll Call, Cabinet Secretary, Lion Brittny Young

2) Approval of Prior Minutes

Members were advised that minutes from the 11/15 cabinet meeting (High Springs) were available on the website and also the December Newsletter

3) Treasurer's Report (Lion John Hopkins)

Reporting period: Year-to-date through December (first half of the Lions year).

Key points reported:

- Income collected: \$18,814.00 against a budget of \$44,820 (~40% collected; noted target would be closer to 50% mid-year).
- Only 40% of district dues have been collected this Lion Year.

Motion: Approve the Treasurer's financial report.

- Motion made PDG Lou Jones
- Seconded 1VDG George Niles

4) Pre-cabinet meeting and online voting Updates - 1st VDG George Niles

Key updates from the pre-cabinet discussion:

- Disaster Relief Trailers: District now has two trailers.
 - One to be located in Chipley.
 - One to be located in High Springs (still being finished/stocked).
- Northeast Florida Hearing Aid Bank to be addressed by Susan.
- New Club Development: Continued efforts to establish new clubs and recruit younger members.
 - Mission 1.5 emphasis continues through June 2027.
 - Encouraged visibility and service ("yellow vests") to retain and attract members.
- Grant allocations: Mention of grant funding allocated to Leader Dogs and other supported organizations (total grant dollars referenced but unclear in notes).
- District 35-L Policies & Procedures Manual: Reported as coming out shortly.
- Electronic Voting: Announced that voting will be electronic this year; encouraged clubs to ensure proper delegate assignment and readiness.
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5) Global Service Team (GST) - 1VDG George Niles

A major focus was placed on logging service activities in the Lions portal, noting that many clubs performed holiday projects but did not report them.

Action encouraged:

- Club officers (secretary/president) to enter service hours and projects (Thanksgiving/Christmas, hunger projects, etc.) into the portal so LCI can reflect district impact and inform resource allocation.

6) Training & Orientation (February)

- Orientation training to be scheduled in February (date TBD).

7) Membership Items - DG Suzi Rodgers

- Membership contest details shared with copies provided; members directed to online posting if missing.
- New District Governor's Achievement Award for New Lions
 - Newly approved and effective now (date on form referenced as January 7, 2026).
 - Must be completed within a new Lion's first year.
 - Noted as a multiple district form, usable beyond District 35-L.

8) Communication & Resources - Lion Brittny Young

Items provided and discussed:

- MD35 membership materials order form (QR code and web path) for presidents/secretaries to order brochures/posters/materials.
 - Confirmed: no shipping charges; materials typically arrive within about a week; multiple languages available.
- RLLI (Regional Lions Leadership Institute):
 - Shared as a strong leadership development opportunity; approx. \$200 fee referenced.
 - Encouraged carpooling and club sponsorship when possible.
- District communications: Members instructed on how to resolve missing district/MD emails (unsubscribed, spam, etc.); offered help to reset.
- Social Media & Websites: Encouraged following:
 - Florida Lions District 35-L Facebook page
 - Lions of Multiple District 35 Facebook page
 - Florida Lions history page (private approval)
 - Websites: lionsmd35.com and district35l.com for calendars, newsletters, resources, directories, archives.
- Discussed the need to expand beyond Facebook (Instagram/TikTok) to reach younger audiences; noted that posts can be scheduled in advance.

9) Electronic Voting Presentation (Stan Rodgers)

- Electronic voting approved in constitution/bylaws; all four districts will vote electronically.
- Voting access tied to email and LCI portal.
- Delegate process remains the same: delegate forms completed by club officers; verified by credentials committee.
- Ballot distributed and available during a three-day voting window (selected by governors).
- Explained ranked/preferential voting process for races with multiple candidates (no runoffs).
- Reminded clubs to verify and update member email addresses.

10) Club "Bragging Rights" / Reports

Several clubs shared service and fundraising updates, including (high-level, as captured in notes):

- High Springs, Orange Park, Ocala, Gulf Breeze, Pensacola A1C Avengers, Crestview, Palatka New Vision, Chattahoochee, Turkey Creek, Lynn Haven 2,

11) Diabetes Screening / Diabetes Awareness Foundation Updates - Judi Seltzer

Key changes and reminders:

- Screening form revised:
 - Blood pressure moved to the top; all screening clubs must take BP.
- Equipment: BP monitors can be purchased locally (~\$25–\$35 referenced).
- Critical compliance:
 - Patient signature and screener signature required; forms may be rejected if incomplete.
 - Supplies must be ordered two weeks in advance (Dr. Callahan noted as supply contact)
- Screening schedules: Screening dates must be sent to Lion Greg Evans (and flyers encouraged for calendars).
- Certification / Recertification:
 - Recertification required (annual)
 - Training may be offered at MD-35 Conference in May
 - Fundraiser: Diabetes Foundation Super Bowl squares fundraiser referenced; Super Bowl date noted as Feb 8; squares \$100.

12) Lions Saving Sight - PDG Bobby Wright

- Announced rebrand from Florida Foundation for the Blind to **Lions Saving Sight**
- Emphasized website accuracy, readable fonts, proper application completion, and tracking of cases/billing to reduce liability risk.
- Reported **surgery costs increasing**; significant spending this year

13) Guest Speaker: Lion Lou Barnes, a member of the Ocala Lions Club and a major volunteer for VOSH Southeast Vision Mission Work

- Speaker began from the Lions perspective on eyeglass collection and noted many clubs already know basic drop-box setup.
- Shared that they track monthly totals and maintain approximately 20 drop boxes in Ocala (including optometry offices, the public library, the blood bank, and multiple tax offices) to credit participating locations.
- Introduced VOSH (Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity) and described their local partnership/support from Lions (including a connection with Orange Park Lions Club).
- Explained the processing steps for donated glasses:
 - Initial inspection for obvious damage (scratches, broken frames, missing lenses) and separation into a scrap pile vs. usable pile.
 - Use of a lensometer to read prescriptions and classify readers (speaker noted keeping 13 classifications of reading glasses).
 - Cleaning method: placing glasses in mesh bags and running through a dishwasher.
 - High magnification items (above ~3.50) and negative prescriptions are handled separately for mission purposes.
 - Sunglasses are collected and kept only if non-prescription.

Collection / Distribution Highlights (as reported by speaker):

- 2025 collection totals shared included:
 - 8,600 pairs from speaker's club, 6,000 from Eastport Lions Club, and 5,700 from Orange Park Lions Club.
- Eastport Lions Club support described: 18 members meet twice per month to inspect, lensometer-read, clean, and bag glasses; they also remove packaging and bag new glasses to assist.
- International distribution figures shared:
 - Pre-owned: 16,846 glasses and 5,774 sunglasses.
 - New readers/frames: 19,250.
 - Total shipped internationally (as stated): 41,870.
- Speaker also donates locally in Ocala (example given: providing approximately 500 pairs every three months to Interfaith/homeless support) and to select thrift shops that support community causes (hospice, Veterans Helping Veterans, Operation Shoebox, etc.).

Scrap / Recycling Discussion:

- Speaker stated prescription glasses are typically not reused due to low likelihood of matching prescriptions; readers are the most reusable category.
- Scrap glasses are sent to a recycling partner (California referenced); proceeds help cover operational expenses (example shared: shipping ~20,000 at a time yields about \$1,300 back; scrap proceeds cover facility rent).
- Discussion included clarification that some areas/clubs pre-sort readers before forwarding (example cited: Alabama Lions clubs sending primarily usable readers after pre-sorting).

Mission Trip Report (Guatemala and Other Trips):

- Speaker shared mission trip experience in Guatemala:
 - Clinic days described as long, with early start and 12-hour work days.
 - Target for one week was 750 eye exams; reported completing 1,200+ in five days.
 - Surgery goal was 150; reported completing 200+ surgeries.
 - Speaker served as a helper and assisted with preliminary vision screening using an "E" directional method; translators were used as needed.
 - Noted that mission teams transport equipment and bring a large supply of glasses (example: ~3,000 pairs taken).

- Clarified that for some trips prescriptions may be made locally (example: Guyana), and for others prescriptions are brought back to the U.S. for fulfillment and then delivered.
- Speaker recognized volunteer ophthalmologists/optometrists and described notable patient cases from the trip (vision restoration examples shared).

Q&A / Club Discussion:

- Multiple questions focused on:
 - What happens to prescription glasses vs. readers.
 - Whether clubs should sort glasses before delivery and whether sending through the speaker's process differs from other district/state recycling routes (conclusion: end result is similar; proceeds support operations).
 - Approximate lensometer cost shared as \$1,000–\$6,000 depending on model/condition.
- Speaker indicated contact information would be provided through Suzi/district distribution.

14) Closing Remarks - DG Suzi Rodgers

DG Suzi Rodgers shared that her first six months as District Governor have been challenging and that she has felt discouraged at times due to limited communication and feedback from clubs. She spoke candidly about "failure," emphasizing that Lions should not try something once and quit, but instead evaluate what didn't work and try again with improvements. Using personal examples, she stressed perseverance, noting that persistence builds trust and results over time (including her home club's effort to get a newspaper story published after three years).

DG Rodgers encouraged members to keep showing up and serving—reminding everyone that repeated effort is how Lions create impact. She urged clubs to keep trying new approaches, stay committed, and lead with "Lion heart," because service matters to real people: children needing glasses, students needing support, seniors needing care, and communities needing help during disasters. She closed by asking clubs to reflect, reorganize if needed, and continue moving forward as part of Lions International's mission.

Adjournment

Adjournment time not stated in notes. Meeting continued into speaker presentations and follow-up discussion.