



Tales from the *Pride*

Lions District 35 I Newsletter February 2026

District 35 I: Governor Linda Gregory

Editor: Jan Kunka readinthehead1@aol.com

February District 35I Service Project

Being Helpful to our Seniors **Paula Paquette**

While it's wonderful to live into our 80's and 90's and even beyond, the challenges that accompany aging are becoming more and more complex and challenging. They may seem insurmountable, but, with a little help from our friends, we can survive and thrive!

As Lions, we have much to contribute to the lives of aging Lions Club members, community members, and the institutions serving our elders.

With advances in healthcare, nutrition, and healthy living programs, more and more people are living into their more senior years. But the challenges can be many. We may lose our ability to drive. We may lose a spouse. Medical appointments may be more frequent. Vision, hearing, and mobility issues may be prominent. We may find ourselves isolated, or at a distance from our families. Depression and fatigue can enter the picture. We might not be able to do everything we used to be able to do. Acute illness (heart disease or cancer) can happen. Chronic illness (diabetes or hypertension) can affect us more. Income can be diminished, especially if there is a death of a spouse. And, let's not forget knee and hip replacements, cataracts, glaucoma, arthritis, etc.

How can we be helpful as Lions? What projects can our Clubs do?

First and foremost, I believe that as Lions, we need to look around our Clubs and see if there are **members** who are facing challenges with issues of aging. Has one of your Lions been absent? Has an aging Lion been hospitalized? Has one of your more senior Lions had a surgery? Does someone need a meal delivered, a prescription picked up, a ride to a doctor's appointment?

If someone in the Club can assist, that's wonderful. If a Lion member can't help, you **CAN** assist by arranging for a County transport ride for someone to an appointment, with scheduling an Uber or a Lyft for someone, with arranging for an Uber Eats delivery, by getting a delivery of something necessary through Amazon, or by picking up and dropping off some groceries.

One of the primary issues that we encounter as we age is that we might not be familiar with newer technologies or how to find and implement things on our phones or computers, so we're not familiar with how to use Uber, Lyft, Amazon, or the County's transportation program. **Lions can help with this!**

How can we support the seniors in our communities?

As we age, we might transition from our homes -->to a smaller residence -->to having help come to our home -->to moving into an assisted living situation -->to moving into a nursing home (institution).

Lions Clubs can be a tremendous support to both assisted living facilities and nursing homes and to the persons residing in them.

- Many Clubs do **card-making projects** – sending greeting cards for birthdays or other occasions to residents. The facilities are more than glad to provide you with a list of first names to personalize your messages.
- Lions Clubs can **volunteer at activities** happening at their local assisted living or nursing home facilities. There are Bingo's, sporting days, special events days, games days, and many others. Most facilities welcome outside groups to volunteer!
- Your Club can choose to purchase and **donate a specific piece of equipment** or an activity item such as a Wii set to a facility for use by all the residents there.
- A Lions Club can do **vision and hearing screenings** at assisted living facilities, adult day care facilities, or at nursing homes.
- Members of your Club can participate in **Secret Santa gift giving** for the holidays for the residents of your local facilities. Sometimes, other agencies purchase gifts for seniors and your Club can support that effort.
- Your Lions Club can **be in touch with your community's police or fire department to see if they know of any senior person still living in their home who might not have family in the area**. You can see if your Club can fill any needs for that person.

- Your Club can **sponsor a tea or games day** or some other event for your local seniors. Caregivers or family members, if they know about it, will gladly attend.
- You can **provide your Club's information to area visiting nurse and homecare agencies**. They will be glad to know about vision, hearing, and diabetes screenings you may be planning, and about any other supports your Club may be able to provide.
- **Don't forget the pets of aging people.** Our loyal pets sometimes end up in difficulties if the owner can't provide for their care any longer or, perhaps, can't afford the food and care they need. Your Club may be able to help.
- **Check in with churches, synagogues, other agencies in your area** to make sure they are aware of the Lions Club.

In Conclusion

Aging and how we navigate it can be challenging and complex. But, our days and weeks, as we age, can be filled with joy and happiness as we come to have more time to do the things we most enjoy, and even just to relax.

With a little help from our friends, we can navigate any challenge.

As Lions, we have so much to offer!



Each month, one of your 25-26 District 35I Service Chairs is promoting a **Project** for all of the Clubs in the District to act as a Team to achieve a common Service Goal for that month. The Service Chairs can also assist Clubs in developing individual projects that meet the local needs for the club's community.



Disaster Relief Lion Ken Murphy **Veterans** IPDG Patty Jean Strong



Humanitarian Lion Jennifer Maillard **Elder Citizens** Lion Paula Paquette



Childhood Cancer Lion Diane Clifton **Vision** PCC Penny Gregrich



Mental Health Lion Paula Paquette **Environment** Lion Jan Kunka



Diabetes Lion Diana LaSpina **Reading** Lion Loretta Barksdale



Hunger Lion Kathy Lawless **Hearing** SVD Drew Ogden

District 35I YTD Totals

of Activities # of People Served

	Vision	265	70815
	Hunger	51	14451
	Diabetes	18	448
	Environment	21	4999
	Childhood Cancer	27	2846
	Humanitarian	167	72812
	Youth	66	13797

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Who's Who in District 35I



District Governor

Linda Gregory

E-mail: Linda092355@gmail.com

Companion in Service: MD 35 CC Jimmy Gregory



1st Vice District Governor

Beverly Flynn

E-mail: Lionbevflynn@aol.com



2nd Vice District Governor

Drew Ogden

E-mail: drewogden@aol.com

Members of DG Linda's Administrative Team

Cabinet Secretary: responsible legal filings, attendance, and minutes.

Christine Malone E-mail: lionchristinemalone@gmail.com

Cabinet Treasurer: responsible for billings, charges and financial records

Tom Mavor E-mail: tmavor@wclions.org

The following Lions have been appointed by District Governor Linda Gregory to serve District 35I in the following roles:

Global Leadership Team Coordinator

PCC Gary LaSpina

Global Service Team Coordinator

Lion Tim Foreman

Global Membership Team Coordinator

PDG Paula Beach

Global Extension Team Coordinator

CC Jimmy Gregory

Other administrative chairs can be found in the Club Directory 25-26

Online access: <https://www.district35i.com/d-i-official-directory>

PDG Judy Galm: Sunshine Chair...

send card requests to galmjudy@gmail.com

Lion Dave Blauers : Chaplain

Please send names & pictures of members who have passed away to dmblauers@gmail.com

Message from DG Linda Gregory

February is often called the month of love, a time when we celebrate kindness, compassion, and the bonds that bring people together. While Valentine's Day is a hallmark of the season, for Lions, love is more than a sentiment—it's a call to action.



Love in Action: The Lions' Way

Lions Clubs around the world embody love through service. Every project, every time we volunteer, whenever we help others...it is a reflection of the Lions' core belief: that caring for our communities is the highest form of love. Whether it's providing food for families in need, supporting disaster relief efforts, or organizing vision screenings for children, Lions put love into practice every day.



Service That Makes a Difference

This February, Lions are especially focused on reaching out to those who need it most. Around the world, Lions are organizing blood drives and supporting local shelters. Here in District 35-I, we are focusing on assisting some of our most vulnerable citizens, our seniors. Whatever Lions choose to do, our service projects are designed to uplift and empower. [Lions understand that love is not just about grand gestures—it's about the small acts of kindness that, together, create lasting change.](#)



Building a Legacy of Compassion

The impact of Lions service goes far beyond one month. By consistently showing up for our communities, Lions build a legacy of compassion and hope. Our work inspires others to join in, creating a ripple effect of generosity and goodwill.

As we celebrate February, let's remember that [love is best expressed through service](#). The Lions invite everyone to be part of this movement—whether by volunteering, donating, or simply spreading kindness in everyday life. [Together, we can make February—and every month—an opportunity to show love through action.](#)

I'm so proud to be a part of this great organization. And I'm especially proud to be serving alongside you, the Lions of District 35-I! Together, we serve!

Message from 1VDG Bev Flynn

Leadership Opportunities: Your Path to Making a Bigger Impact

You Don't Need a Title to Be a Leader

If you're a Lion who shows up to meetings, participates in service projects, and cares about your community, you already have what it takes to lead. You might not realize it yet, but Lions International has created pathways for you to step into leadership roles—no matter where you are in your Lions journey.

The best part is Leadership in Lions isn't about climbing a corporate ladder. It's about discovering your potential and using it to serve others.

Start Where You Are

Your first leadership opportunity might be closer than you think. Every Lions club has committees, and every committee needs people who care.

Why committees matter:

- You get to focus on something you're passionate about (membership, service, fundraising, etc.)
- You work with a small team, making it less intimidating than club-wide leadership
- You develop skills in planning, communication, and teamwork
- You make a real difference in your club's success

Our Lions Clubs are getting ready for their club elections.

Every Lions club needs leaders at every level.

Consider running for one of your club officers. These positions aren't just titles—they're opportunities to shape your club's future:

- **Club President** - The visionary who guides the entire club
- **First Vice President** - Often focuses on membership and prepares to lead
- **Second Vice President** - Supports club operations and special projects
- **Secretary** - Manages communications and keeps things organized
- **Treasurer** - Oversees finances and budgets
- **Tail Twister** - Builds camaraderie and keeps things fun
- **Lion Tamer** - Ensures meetings run smoothly

The Unexpected Benefits –

Here's what happens when you step into a leadership role as a Lion:

- **You grow as a person**
- **Discover strengths** you didn't know you had
- **Build confidence** in your abilities
- **Learn to work with people** different from you
- **Develop resilience** and problem-solving skills

JUST SAY YES!

When an opportunity comes your way, take it. You're ready for more than you think.

A Message to Grassroot Lions

You might think leadership is for someone else—someone more experienced, more confident, more polished. But that's not how Lions works.

Lion's leadership is built by ordinary people like you who care about their communities and are willing to step up. You don't need a fancy background or years of experience. You just need to show up, care about the mission, and be willing to learn. The world needs your leadership. Your club needs your leadership. Your community needs your leadership.

Your Leadership Story Starts Now

Every great Lions leader started exactly where you are—as a Grassroot Lion wondering if they had what it takes.

They did. And so do you. Where there's a need, there's a Lion. And that Lion could be **YOU**—leading your club, your district, and your community toward a better future.

Do you have a leadership story to share? We'd love to hear how you stepped into a leadership role and what you learned. Send your story to our newsletter editor, Lion Jan Kunka at redinthehead1@aol.com, and inspire other Lions to take their next step.

Greetings From 2VDG Drew Ogden.

It's great to be a Lion!

Just a quick reflection for the first half of the year that has brought new Lions into the clubs of District I and MD35.

This will always be one of our key goals because it is not only important to grow our clubs, but to expand our public relations and to grow our **BRAND**.

Being a Lion means different things to different individuals.

It's important to touch potential new members, by sharing what **Lions** bring to communities and by describing how we can help others that are less fortunate.

Please take the time to discuss how your club's growth can best serve others in your community. There are several ways that a club can share with the public the many ways that **Lions** serve the community.

Each club could develop a **simple threefold brochure** that can be personalized and handed out to prospective members. (Just remember to update yearly or as needed). This is an easy option to improve our presentations. Let's face it; not all of us are great at selling, "**Joining The Lions.**" I do get that, but sometimes it takes being uncomfortable with something to make us better at it. If I can help, please reach out to me to assist with this, as I have a feeling we will hear more about it in the future.

When your club is doing something in your community, please **take the time to send a quick press release** to the local news station. This simple step may get your club noticed in your community and help draw people that want to give something back to join our efforts and clubs.

Finally, look at **other organizations that we can partner with** to "**Do More Together**". Not all Lions are exclusively Lions. They may be members of a professional organization or church or a focused charitable group. These are examples of other organizations that are often willing to work with us.

Let's end this with a "ROAR" I wish everyone a successful 2026.

Editor's Note...My club (Lions Club of Bradenton) downloaded a template from Lions International... It was a fillable PDF and I substituted a picture from our file and filled in information where needed. Very Important is the Dept of Agriculture Charitable Solicitations number. An example is at the end of this newsletter.

Club Zones act as a Team. United in Service

Zone 1: Arcadia Centennial, Frostproof, Lake Placid, Lake Wales, Sebring Breakfast, Wauchula **Zone Chair: Lion Diane LaSpina**

Zone 2: Brandon, Fishhawk, Plant City, Sun City Center, Tampa Downtown, Tampa North **Zone Chair: Lion Bridgett Zickefoose**

Zone 3: Dade City Hispanic American, Hudson Bayonet Point, Lutz Land o Lakes, Wesley Chapel, Zephyrhills **Zone Chair: Jim Kilby**

Zone 4: Clearwater, Gulfport, Largo, Palm Harbor, Safety Harbor, St. Petersburg **Zone Chair: Lion Teri Barnett**

Zone 5: Bradenton, Englewood, North Port, Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda, Sarasota, Venice **Zone Chair : Lion Jeff Myles**

Zone 6: Cape Coral, North Fort Myers Noon, Fort Myers, Fort Myers Beach, Sanibel/Captiva **Zone Chair : Lion Jennifer Maillard**

Zone 7: Bonita Springs, Naples, Everglades City **Zone Chair: Lion Steve Schultz**



How many Lions can you see serving our youth at the lake beside the Bass Pro Shop?



*Venice Lions serving
enjoying the shade
at the "Van of
Valor"*



*Rescued Golden Retrievers at the
"Venice Mutt Strut"*

*Largo Lions w/
certificates from Johns
Hopkins*



*Punta Gorda
supporting
Alzheimers
research*

Editor's Note : Our clubs do many projects "behind the scenes" because no camera was available.. I went to the Portal and discovered several clubs doing a great job in serving their community!

Thank you ... For all of your service listed below:

Frostproof Lion 401 people were provided vision service

Bradenton 7 service activities including feeding the hungry, vision screening and serving the youth by assisting with hearing screening

Clearwater served by providing vision services

Englewood fed the hungry

Fort Myers Beach served children with cancer, fed the hungry as well as other humanitarian service

Hudson/Bayonet Point service addressed hunger in their community

Lake Placid served 50 people with an environmental project as well providing vision service for 100 people

Naple Lions Club service focused on Vision

Lions from Greater Zephyr Hills participated in 3 vision projects that served 942 people and a hunger project serving 167 people.

If I missed some January projects...make sure that they are reported in the Lions Portal

What Lions Are Not

Fifty years after the first Convention in Dallas, Edward M. Lindsay, the Golden Anniversary President of Lions International, realized that the best way to define Lionism was to explain what it was not. In an address delivered to the annual U. S. State Department Foreign Policy Conference for Nongovernmental Organizations, President Lindsey said.

We are not a political organization

Yet among our members will be found leaders of all political parties and factions. Our Constitution prohibits activity in a partisan political way, yet it carries a positive mandate that each club should provide a forum for the free and open discussion of all matters of public interest.

We are not a social club,

Yet we are directed to take an active interest in the social welfare of our various communities, for only in this way can we realize the full potential of our influence in developing the moral fiber of our societies.

We are not a fraternal organization,

Yet we have found that “people” of all faiths, all religions, all nationalities, all races can come together in an aura of mutual understanding, resulting in strong bonds of friendship and good fellowship.

We are not a youth organization,

Yet Lions Clubs sponsor more Boy Scout troops than any other organization. We participate in so many youth programs and projects in this nation and abroad that it is hard to determine if the dog is wagging the tail or the tail is wagging the dog.

We are not a welfare organization,

Yet over the years, in good times and bad, countless thousands of less fortunate people have been the recipients of the generosity of Lions. Whenever human suffering has been found, the flexible purposes of Lionism have made it easy for Lions to respond generously and with open hearts.

We are not a sports or recreational agency,

yet thousands of boys have been thrilled with Little League programs and many other activities built around the training of the minds and bodies of our youth, both boy and girls.

We are not a religious body,

yet the precepts we live by are familiar to the doctrines of the world's spiritual bodies, and the motivation of our activity, resulting in thousands of complete projects, is deeply rooted on the age-old philosophy of "Love Thy Neighbor," found in some form or another in the dogmas of all religions.

We are not a medical or health organization,

yet our clubs have performed miracles in this wide panorama of community and individual service.

We are not an educational foundation,

yet thousands of students are today in schools built by Lions. In Mexico, for example, almost a thousand public schools have been built and equipped by Lions.

And there is another thing we are not: **We are not a United Nations.** *Yet we are an instrument of peace.* Lionism, born while the world was aflame, has grown strong under the nourishment of freedom and liberty, and the effort for peace which we intend to make will be directed along those traditional concepts, for we believe that there can be no meaningful freedom without peace and no lasting peace without freedom.

Some faint hearted ones may say, "Why are you doing this? Why do you think Lions International should attack this problem when even great and powerful nations have failed through the ages?" Our answer is simply this: "We are not so naïve, so immature, as to think our effort alone will unravel this tangled mess, but we are confident we must make the effort. We must make our contribution, and so must you."

Taken in its entirety from: Kittler, Glenn D (1968) *The Dynamic World of Lions International; The Fifty-Year Saga of Lions Clubs*, New York: M. Evans and Company, Inc. pp 21-23

Lions History & Traditions

Lions Vest

A new apparel item in the 1951 club supplies catalogue met with wild success and became a Lions icon.

The “**No. A-28 Vest,**” made of wool gabardine in Lions gold with Lions purple trim, was advertised as “the newest Lions apparel for convention, bowling and meeting wear.” It sold for US\$1.75. Members saw the vest as a unique way to show their Lions pride in public. It remains a perennial bestseller. Over 10,000 vests are shipped annually worldwide. Pins, badges and other Lions regalia are displayed on their trademark vests.

Lions vests have undergone many changes in design and materials. The original vest was a short-waisted, bolero-style garment designed to be worn with a dress shirt and necktie. In 1960, satin replaced wool as the fabric. The standard vest was redesigned in 1973 to extend below the beltline and pockets were also added.



As more women joined the clubs in the late 1980s and 1990s, a specially-tailored women’s vest debuted in 1997. And for disaster relief efforts and potentially hazardous community service projects—such as cleaning up roadside litter—a line of emergency vests in bright yellow or orange, some with reflective stripes, was added in 2011.



Along with the emergency vest, many 21st century options are Polo Shirts and T-shirts. In the spirit of “Your club your way”, eye-catching shirts with tropical themes, contemporary lion graphics and humor are popular ways to demonstrate Lion Spirit.





Florida Lions – District 35-I



Have You Checked Out Our District Website?

www.district35i.com

- District Calendar
- Up-to-Date Announcements
- District Resources
- News & Updates for Lions

Your go-to source for the most current
District 35-I information

Bookmark It Today!

Member Benefits

There are many reasons to become a member. As a Lion, you'll:

- Help your community and gain valuable skills
- Make an impact on people's lives –locally and internationally
- Learn to be a leader – and lead a respected organization
- Network with men and women in your community and Lions around the world
- Energize your life and have fun. You'll grow personally and professionally. And you'll know that what you do is worthwhile and appreciated.

Lions Club Membership Interest Form

I am interested in learning more about

Lions membership.

Please contact:

(*Contact information*)

Or give this interest form to any (*Club Lion*)

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Postal Code _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____



Ready to Help, Worldwide

Whenever a Lions club gets together, problems get smaller. And communities get better. That's because we help where help is needed – in our own communities and around the world – with unmatched integrity and energy.



Meeting Times & Location:

To find our e-Clubhouse Web site
GOOGLE: Club

QR Code

Be A Lion

The Global Leaders
In Community Service

Club name
Lions Club

Club # Chartered

Mailing Address:

Revised 6/1/25

**MORE
VOLUNTEERS
In MORE PLACES
Than Any Other Service
Club Organization**

Club Name

SERVES

(Area served)

Our projects include:

(Describe major projects)

Project 1

Project 2

etc

The _____ Club
supports the following:
(Put in names of organizations)

Lions Saving Sight Foundation

www.floridalionsfoundation.org

One Hundred Percent of Donations
from the Public to Lions Clubs must be
used to serve the community.

Club Name

FL Dept Agriculture Reg. #

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND
FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED
FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES
BY CALLING TOLL-FREE (800-435-7352) WITHIN
THIS STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY
ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR
RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE."

Note:
The information above is
required on any information
used to solicit funds from
the public in the
State of Florida

When it comes to meeting challenges,
our response is simple: We serve. In
205 countries, in hospitals and senior centers,
in regions battered by natural disaster, in
schools and in eyeglass recycling centers,
Lions are at work, helping, leading, planning
and supporting. Because we're local, we can
serve the unique needs of the communities
where we live. And because we're global, we
can address challenges that go beyond
borders.

We want everyone to see a better tomorrow.
That's why we support sight programs and
services including vision screenings, eye banks
and eyeglass recycling, providing eye care
services to those at risk of losing their sight,
and raising donations through fundraising
campaigns like Campaign SightFirst II.

We believe everyone deserves a healthy
life. From providing health programs that focus
on hearing loss to supporting efforts to control
and prevent diabetes, we're working to improve
the health of children and adults around the
world.

We empower the next generation. Whether
it's providing volunteer and leadership
experiences in a Leo club or sharing a
message of peace through our Peace Poster
contest, our youth programs invest in the future
by reaching out to young people.

We serve local communities – and protect
the planet. From performing hands-on service
projects to providing emergency assistance as
well as participating in environmental
programs, we improve our communities and
protect the environment.