



Tales from the *Pride*

Lions District 35 I Newsletter

August 2025

District 35 I: Governor Linda Gregory

Editor: Jan Kunka readinthehead1@aol.com



August District 35I Service Project

Humanitarian: Projects that “Hug Your Heart”

Lion Jennifer Maillard



Lions have always done humanitarian projects that they’ve just put into “other category” – BUT **it’s time to change.**

Humanitarian efforts can overlap with other categories such as youth, environment, hunger or any other areas we support. I look at humanitarian as projects as projects that “**hug your heart.**” For August I am giving two suggestions but please don’t limit it there if the suggestions do not work for your club. As a reminder you must put service into the portal for your club then let me know you did the project & reporting.

I am looking at children and their needs as school is approaching. Find a local school, community center or any other similar. Once your choice is made buy school supplies for them to hand out at open houses or other event they may be hosting. Think outside the box when looking at supplies – some schools are more underprivileged than others and they hand things out like socks, shoes, shirts (remember some must wear uniforms). Check with your local center to see what they the most. Walmart and other stores will at times donate school supplies such as pens, pencils, paper, crayons, glue, markers, etc. Though this could also work under “youth” – it’s more of a **hug the heart** project because you can imagine a child using what they need and not feeling out of place because they might not have the required items. Right now both Target & Walmart have school supplies on sale from .25 and up, they also have backpacks from \$5, \$7 and up.

If the above project doesn’t fit your club then make cards signed by your club to give to senior citizens home, abuse counseling facility or similar. Cover all holidays from New Years to birthdays, and Halloween to the 4th of July. **Everyone wants to feel loved and remembered and sometimes something as simple as a card can do that.**



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Each month, one of your 25-26 District 35I Service Chairs will promote 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



Humanitarian Lion Jennifer Maillard



Childhood Cancer Lion Diane Clifton



Mental Health Lion Paula Paquette



Diabetes Lion Diana LaSpina

Military/Veterans

Lion Patty Jean Strong



Hunger Lion Kathy Lawless

Elder Citizens Lion Paula Paquette



Vision PCC Penny Gregrich



Environment Lion Jan Kunka



Youth/Reading Lion Loretta Barksdale

Hearing SVD Drew Ogden



JULY 2025

of Activities # of People Served

| | | | |
|---|------------------|----|-------|
|  | Vision | 11 | 1315 |
|  | Hunger | 1 | 100 |
|  | Environment | 0 | 0 |
|  | Diabetes | 1 | 2 |
|  | Childhood Cancer | 1 | 177 |
|  | Disaster Relief | 0 | 0 |
|  | Humanitarian | 8 | 11415 |
|  | Youth | 5 | 1840 |
|  | Mental Health | | |

Editor's note: More than 8 District 35I Lions volunteered at LiCon. Put your hours in as "Humanitarian" unless you were at one of the cause specific service activities. (for example: Organizing socks to be distributed)

2024-2025 A Roller Coaster Ride!



What was it like to be District Governor: by IPDG Patty Jean Strong

August already! Where does the time go? The older I get, the faster it seems to go. C est La Vie!

Our new Newsletter Editor has asked for a few words from me, so here goes.....

In a nutshell, the years leading up to District Governor of District 35-I was a Roller Coaster. Starting slowly following the election as a 2nd Vice District three years ago to now as I become the Immediate Past District Governor. The uphill climb on this Roller Coaster was slow and easy. I thought, “yep, I have this”.

The 1st hill was the massive amount of training needed. Private instruction with PCC Gary Nieskes was the best! Add in more training by PCC Greg Evans and PDG Jacquie Tripp one on one with my fellow newly elected 2nds. Now we throw in the online classes required by Lions International, Zoom Meetings etc. RLLI and ALLI were outstanding. The best was going to USA Canada Forums. What a great training on all kinds of topics they offer.

See where this Roller Coaster is going? Slowly up hills, around corners, and dipping down again. Some were kind of scary, and others were thrilling. Hearing your name and position called out at conferences and conventions was humbling. Meeting Lions from all over the world, How cool is that? The many mentors that I had I will be forever thankful to.

As we all know, Advanced Glaucoma is taking my eyesight. I can not pass a vision test any longer. So I would never have been able to get on this roller coaster if not for my SEEING EYE LIONS! Without them this ride would never have been possible. 4 years these individuals have been there for me. Heart, Heart, Heart!



The next giant hill was going to Australia for DGE training and an International Convention. The 3rd Plenary Session where we took our Oath of Office and had our ribbons pulled. What a thrilling ride!!!!

Then my year begins. Visiting clubs, doing projects, laughing with other Lions. Working with my Team. Then the Fall of 2024 happens. Three Hurricanes devastate parts of District 35-I. How do I ask for LCIF Grants? I found out quickly. Lion Linda had to do the biggie! An MCAT! I was in the hospital unfortunately. But your New District Governor stepped up and climbed that hill for all of us and those in need benefitted from her tenacity. The post hurricane roller coaster ride was something else! Who needed what? Lions Bev Flynn, Drew Ogden and many others helped us climb up that hill. We are on the down side of the roller coaster right now, Whew. But be vigilant.....we are once again in Hurricane Season. Our roller coaster is just gliding along gently now. But be certain of this, my fellow Lions that hill is looming ahead of us, somewhere.

Several Saturdays ago many Lions gathered together at the Englewood Lions Club House to bid me a fond farewell. Good Food, Great Lions gathered together. My heart was warm. My rollercoaster car was approaching the gentle glide into the stop.

So to all the Lions out there who think this rollercoaster is a journey you might wish to take I say GO FOR IT! DO YOUR HOMEWORK AND GET YOUR LIONS RESUME FILLED UP WITH ALL THE OFFICES, TRAINING AND STAMINA YOU HAVE. You will not regret it. **Good Luck to you all.**

IPDG Patty Jean Strong is handing over the gavel to incoming DG Linda Gregory.. but PJ will be the 25-26 District 35 I Tail Twister...She is looking for a replacement gavel!

The festivities hosted by the Englewood Lions Club started with Lion Drew's Fireball Toast. PCC Chip had Patty Jean repeat his instructions on how to be a successful PDG. PDG Bill Ringlestein provided comic relief with his "Rent a Dog" story. Now that Patty Jean is also a PDG..."for \$10 for a whole day she will sit around and bark". Fellow Buffalo Bills Fan, PCC Gary Nieske wore full regalia while (check the photos that follow) administering an oath of fealty to the Bills. MD35 secretary PDG "Obi Ewan" explained that Patty Jean is now a "pidgeon" which is a PDG in Training. Her genealogy was explained by "a Cousin from the Meade side of the family"

Representatives from clubs honored PDG Patty Jean with donations in her name to LCIF. Personal gifts were presented by several individuals. PCC Penny Gregrich shared tears with her "sister by a different mother" when she presented a beautifully inspired plaque celebrating Patty Jean's years as a Lion.

After the "Roasts" PDG Patty Jean honored the contributions made by the Lions on her team. She also thanked her "seeing eye drivers" for all of the road trips to clubs, conferences and conventions. Addition stories were told.. such as the evening that Patty Jean, Penny & Linda served as "mane & tail" ambassadors to the elegant fancy dress International Convention reception hosted by the British Lions.

If you missed out on the opportunity to laugh, share stories and shed a few emotional tears...Wait a year....DG Linda will be our next IPDG.







Message from
DG Linda Gregory
E-mail: 092355@gmail.com

Here's Your Sign

Several years ago there was a lot of drama going on around me at work. It was NOT my drama. But the situation evolved people I cared deeply about and, in order to distance myself from the chaos, I had to step away, not from the people, but from the madness. As time went by, I began to remind people, "This is not my circus. These are not my monkeys!" as an explanation for why I will not become embroiled in whatever is happening that threatens to consume me. This story will be pertinent in a moment.

Anyway-on July 17th I was thrilled to be part of the massive Swearing-In Ceremony of District Governors that was part of the International Convention in Orlando. I guess I kinda expected there to be an instant change of some sort. You know-like a magic moment where you feel transformed into someone wise and capable. Well-it didn't happen. No magic knowledge was imparted. No omens from the cosmos, no voices from on high (okay if I'd started hearing voices, they might have come to lock me up...so perhaps that was a good thing!) Still-everything kept on going like before. My luggage still had to be packed to come home. I still had to drive myself back to Tampa. Life was the same...or so I thought.

On July 18th my husband and I had to be in Wesley Chapel and I walked past a car. Now-you need to remember my story from above. As I walked by that car, I noticed a sticker on its back window (I compulsively read everything....cereal boxes, signs, bumper stickers and, yes, window decals). I had to read it twice! It said, "Oh darn! Turns out this is my circus and those are my monkeys!!" I just about fell out! I had been looking for a sign in the wrong place! Still-no omens from the cosmos or voices from on high...but maybe my sign was on the back of an SUV at Wiregrass Mall in Wesley Chapel??

Today I went to Moffitt Cancer Center for Day 47 post Bone Marrow Transplant follow-up with my husband. It's a routine weekly thing we do. I've been in the BMT unit probably 75 times over the past 3 years. There was a sign on the door today that I never saw before (or I never noticed before!) "Kindness begins here". Now doesn't that sound like a Lions' sign? And here it is on the door that I've been through countless times and have never noticed before.

Again.....a Sign.

A reminder that kindness matters and caring is important.

These two signs have really made me think. How many times do we look for big changes, big signs that we are doing it right? Big signs that point us in the right direction? A big neon, flashing sign that screams, "YES!" And how many times are the small signs there all along that are telling us this is the direction you need to be headed. This is right...go this way. Keep doing what you are doing. You're making a difference. Keep caring. Keep on getting involved. Maybe we need to be looking at the small stuff more.

Lions of District 35-I: I am so proud to be part of the team of Lions here in our District. Our team is going to do amazing things this year....together!

Are you ready?

**Be on the lookout for your sign.
It could be anywhere!**



Celebrating the Heart of Lions Service

At the **heart** of every Lions Club is a group of dedicated individuals who lead with compassion, act with courage, and serve with purpose. Our members are more than volunteers—they are visionaries, change-makers, and everyday heroes committed to building a better world.

Across our district and beyond, Lions are pouring their hearts into projects that reflect their personal passions and meet the unique needs of their communities. From organizing vision screenings and food drives to supporting youth leadership and environmental cleanups, every project tells a story of service, dedication, and love for humanity.

What makes our service so powerful is the passion behind it. Whether it's helping veterans, feeding families in need, mentoring students, or protecting the planet, Lions bring unmatched energy and heart to everything they do. These are not just projects—they are missions with meaning.

I am proud to serve alongside each of you. Thank you for the passion you bring to your projects and the hope you bring to those in need. Together, we are making an impact that will be felt for generations. You are truly the superheroes of your communities. **Remember our Lions are the strongest voice for new membership!**

**Believe in Lions and Share the passion.
1VDG Lion Bev Flynn**



2VD Governor

Drew Ogden

E-mail: drewogden@aol.com

Editor's Note: Lion Drew was an integral part of the host committee, serving in multiple categories. Everywhere I turned he was there.

THANK YOU Lion Drew.....Congratulations on your Presidential Award!

Tales from the Treasurer, Lion Tom Mavor

tmavor@wclions.org

There are a lot of bragging rights that Lions enjoy because we make the promise that all of the funds raised from the public are returned to the public. As treasurer, one of your jobs is to keep the numbers separate. To help you here is the definition from the LCI Policy of what public funds are.

Definition of Public/Activity Funds. Funds raised from the public are the net earnings of income raised from activities open to the public, public contributions, bequests and money accumulated from invested public funds.

Note the key word “net” because it is important. That means you take all of the direct expenses from the fundraiser out of the proceeds and what remains is Public money.

Definition of Administrative Funds. Administrative funds are contributions from Lions through dues, fines, advertisement revenue, rental fees and other individual Lions contributions. These funds may be used for either public projects or for internal Lions use such as meeting and convention expenses, incorporation fees, audit fees, newsletters, bulletins and other club and/or district operating and administrative expenses.

If you invest public money and make a return, that money is public money too.

Clubs don't generally have an issue raising money that is going back to the community, what we have difficulty with is having enough money to operate a proper club. This is true of small clubs more than the larger clubs. There might be people who will disagree with me on this, but I believe we can sell advertisements and rent facilities with that money going to the Administrative fund. I also believe you can encourage businesses to sponsor the club members to cover their costs. You can promote them as sponsors at events and at your meeting nights. What we do is important and it costs money to have an organization like Lions. LCI dues are going up and the cost of operating the club is not going down. You are going to have to find money from somewhere.

You can't run a fundraiser for club expenses outside of getting the money from our own Lions who are already overburdened. You cannot arbitrarily skim money from each fundraiser either although there are rules for mixed use property expenses.

Be honest, be transparent and serve your club with pride. Thank you for your service and feel free to email me any questions you might have.

A short Message from PCC Bill Ringelstein

Clubs with Foundations, I recommend that you order several copies of the new "Compliance Guide for 501(C)(3) Public Charities". It is under Publication 4221-PC from your friends at IRS. This information may keep your Club Treasurer out of jail !

There has been renewed interest in Lions Clubs establishing 501c3 tax exempt Foundations using the IRS 1023-EZ form that is cheaper, much easier and faster than the old IRS 1023 form. Most Lions Clubs are eligible to use the shorter version. Although LCI Legal provided considerable information for using the old long 1023, they do not plan on providing any help for the EZ version.

So now that LCI is not going to be a resource, I intend to publish an updated "1023 EZ Cook Book". It will have all the resources needed to successfully establish a tax exempt Foundation for your Lions Club. It will be available on-line only, free to all Lions Clubs and sign-up details will be in the next issue of this Newsletter. You can e-mail me with any questions.

**PCC Bill Ringelstein
Punta Gorda Lions
biljreanr@embarqmail.com
PCC Bill Ringlestein**

Multiple District and District Events Calendar

DATE:

8/9 Summer Council of Governors

8/16 Cabinet Meeting Sun City Center (see complete announcement in this newsletter)

There will be an opportunity to participate in the assembly of 100 homeless outreach backbacs!

10/17-10/18 Fall Conference Florida Hotel Orlando

10/25 Cabinet Meeting Largo

1/10 Winter Council of Governor

1/31 Cabinet Meeting Lake Placid

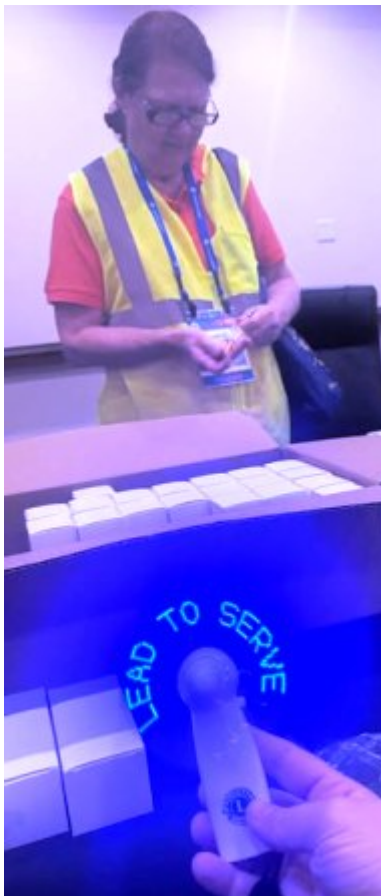
3/7 Spring Council of Governors

4/11 Mini Convention Englewood

5/1-5/2 MD Convention Florida Hotel Orlando

2025 Lions International Convention: Orlando

Dress code for volunteers who were herding BIG Cats known as Lions!

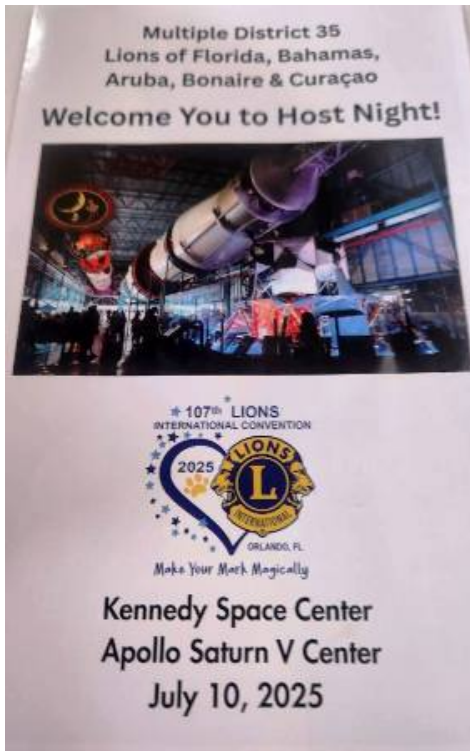


How many more boxes of fans and translators need batteries?

Only another seven thousand!



Host Night at Kennedy Space Center



Presidential and Leadership Medal recipients from 351



Presidential Awards: PDG Paula Beach, PCC Blair Kunka, PDG Gary LaSpina, VDG Drew Ogden, PID Rod Wright

Leadership Awards: PCC Penny Gregrich, Diane LaSpina, and one more to be presented later.

DGE School "Celebration" Party



Aliens dropping
in ...
Any one have a
Lions
Application?



Center pieces created by Lion
Volunteers...breaking thousands of
glow sticks

"table top" Shuffle board was just one
of the many games.



Parade of Nations

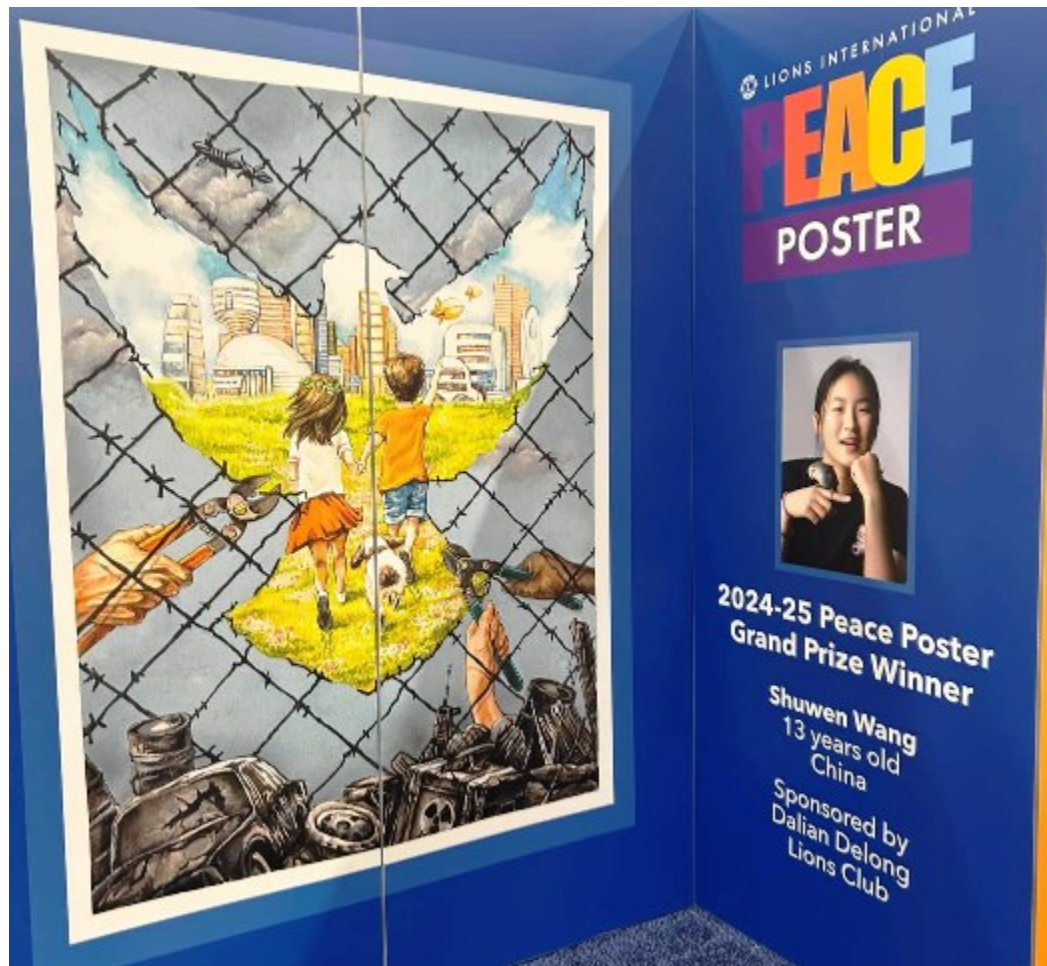




Link to 2 minute youtube video parade highlight. Don't Blink....DG Linda is in it:
<https://youtu.be/Xg7XQ3NpUZw>



International Peace Poster Winner



Michael Phelps

described the journey of learning to live with his mental illness that is manifested as anxiety and depression. His inspirational message emphasized the value of listening to people who may suffer as he does.



2025-2026
International President (IP)
A.P. Singh



IP Singh w/ PID Rod and PDG Paula

International 1st VP
Mark S. Lyon



International 2nd VP
Dr. Manoj Shah

Does any one recognize the car?



Pictures from the Presentation of the Flags of every Nation that has a Lions Club



Rock & Roar

Fundraiser for Project Right to Sight



And the 2025 LiCon is finally over ...

Those of us on the host committees would like to thank all of the volunteers from District 35I!

Loretta Barksdale, Teri Barnett, Paula Beach, Cindy and Dave Beardsly, Diane Clifton, Darby Doerzbacher, Kathy Doody, Harry & Mary Anne Eberly, Bev Flynn, Tim Foreman, Howard Freedman, Pamela Freedman, Judi Galm, PDG Bob Jenkins, James & Valeria Kilby, Richard & Barbara Klingsmith, Chip & Jan Kunka, Gary & Diane Laspina, Penny Gregrich, Cheryl Hall, Barbara McGillycuddy, John & Pat McGuire, Jennifer Malliard, Christine Malone, Tom Mavor, Drew Ogden, Paula Paquette, Rosemary Putnam, Eric Rumold, PID Rod Wright,

If I failed to list your name, the fault is mine....You are still a valued member of the volunteer team!

Lion Jan Kunka, "Tales from the Pride" editor

2025-2026 Officer Installations



North Fort Myers Noon



Venice Lions Club



Bradenton Lions Club

Fishhawk Lions Club



Plant City Lions Club



Melvin Jones awarded to Carlos Ramirez of Plant City Lions Club





DISTRICT 35-I CABINET MEETING

**NOT ALL HEROES
WEAR CAPES**

**945 NORTH
COURSE LANE
SUN CITY
CENTER, FL**

AUGUST 16, 2025

BREAKFAST BEGINS AT 8 AM

MEETING BEGINS AT 9 AM

COST: \$10 FOR BREAKFAST

- **CLASSES, INCLUDING CERTIFIED GUIDING LION RECERTIFICATION**
- **GUEST SPEAKER**
- **SERVICE PROJECT**
- **RAFFLE BASKETS (PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT MEMBERSHIP AND EXTENSION FOR THE DISTRICT)**
- **50/50**
- **BRING YOUR USED EYEGLASSES!**
WE WILL HAVE A TRAILER AT THE MEETING
- **DOOR PRIZES**

**ALL CLUBS ARE ASKED TO DONATE
A RAFFLE BASKET OR A DOOR PRIZE ITEM**

RSVP TO PCC BOB JENKINS (586) 295-5135 NO LATER THAN 8/9/25



📦 Bring your collected donations to our first Cabinet Meeting hosted by the Sun City Lions Club on August 16th.

[#LionsServe](#) [#DisasterRelief](#) [#District35I](#) [#LionsClub](#) [#WeServe](#) [#FoodDrive](#) [#FloridaLion](#)

GUIDING LIONS WANTED



**Are you ready to support new and
existing clubs?**

- **STRENGTHEN THE DISTRICT • HELP FELLOW LIONS**
- **BUILD YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

PDG Gary LaSpina

liongarylp35i@gmail.com • 863-617-5537

CONTACT US TODAY



Hosted by
The Church
of the Good
Shepherd of
Punta Gorda

Open to
the public!

10 am-2 pm August 16th, 2025

Family Health Fair

Bring the entire family(3 to 80+)for
an exciting day filled with fun
activities and a focus on health!

Join us as local Lions Clubs unite to make
a difference in our community!



Lions of District 35-I Lions Club
Punta Gorda Lions~Venice Lions Club~Fort Myers
Lions~Bonita Springs Lions~Cape Coral
Lions~Sarasota Lions~Port Charlotte Lions

FREE SCREENINGS by The Punta Gorda Lions Club

Hearing



Diabetes



Sight



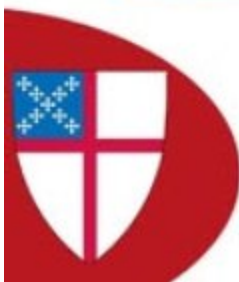
**Donate Blood at The Big
Red Bus!**



**Food
Trucks**

**F
R
E
E**

**Health information
Demonstrations
Community Resources**



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ACROSS AMERICA DAY

DECEMBER 13, 2025



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2025**

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Lions History & Traditions:

Emblem & Motto

When the Lions Clubs International was founded in 1917, Lions displayed both their pride and their sense of humor in creating the first Lions emblem

As for their pride, the lion in the emblem was based on a famous painting by the 19th century French artist Rosa Bonheur of a regal lion at rest in the wild. The painting's title, Old Monarch, become the nickname for Lions' earliest members and clubs.

As for their humor, the first emblem was also a pun. The emblem depicted the lion holding a club in its mouth with the word "international" emblazoned on the club. The play on the words "lion" and "club" and "international" was clever, but by 1919 Lions asked its members to come up with a more polished logo.

At the 1919 convention, there was a move to change the symbol, but a young attorney from Denver, Colorado rose to speak. His name was Halsted Ritter. "The name Lions stands not only for fraternity, good fellowship, strength of character and purpose, but above all, its combination of L-I-O-N-S heralds to the country the true meaning of citizenship:

LIBERTY, INTELLIGENCE, OUR NATION'S SAFETY."

How does LCIF choose the causes and projects to support?

LCIF chooses projects that are in our four main areas of focus: providing disaster relief, supporting youth, saving sight, and meeting humanitarian needs. Grants are available to Lions for projects in these areas, according to the specific criteria within each grant program. Additionally, LCIF partners with appropriate organizations to achieve larger goals in these areas, such as [Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance](#), [Special Olympics](#) and [The Carter Center](#). These partnerships are entered into under the direction of the LCIF Board of Trustees.

Does LCIF offer grants for individual assistance? (scholarships, medical expenses)

LCIF supports large-scale projects that address unmet humanitarian needs for entire communities. These projects are led by local Lions who identify the need, develop the plan of action and carry out the project.

LCIF does not have a grant program that supports individual assistance. These requests are more appropriately directed to the local Lions who often have programs in place to support these types of requests within their communities.

“The ABC’s or “ACDGLMIPRSTVZ’s” of Lions International organizational structure.

ID and PID

ID stands for **I**nternational **D**irector

An **ID** shares the general responsibility for the management of the business and affairs of Lions International. The **ID**’s have the legal duty to use reasonable care and diligence and must act within the scope of authority conferred upon them.

An **I**nternational **D**irector is one of the small number of Lions who have been entrusted with the responsibility of giving leadership and direction to the world’s largest and most successful service club organization.

An **ID** should be available to help districts solve local problems, assist Lions Clubs International in the resolution of problems with the districts, and give guidance and motivation to local Lions and their leaders.

If you attend a Multiple District conference you will have the opportunity to meet and talk with one of the Directors who usually serve as a Key Note Speaker. There are several **PID**’s who now live in District 35 I who share their experience as District Advisors including **PID**’s *Buster Hall (Arcadia Lions Club)*, *Roderick Wright (Zephyr Hills Lions Club)*.

Quick Quiz: What is a **PID**? (hint: **P** is for **P**ast)

Word Jumble:

LYBTRIE

EILGNCEIELTN

RUO

TSNIANOO

YAETFS

?
