

Dog Guide DOC



Future Dog Guide DOC is now set for recall to the puppy training facility in Breslau, Ontario. Lion Fran MacFarlane and her husband fostered Doc for 10 months in Innerkip. Their grandchildren Mac and Coleton helped to socialize the dog. Doc, a Standard Poodle, will be trained at the Lions Foundation of Canada in Breslau. He may be placed in the Canine Vision, Hearing Ear Dog or Special Skills Dog Programs. Doc has been a great family friend and will be a great Lions Foundation Dog Guide.

Submitted by Lion Fran MacFarlane

Canada Day Parade

Members of the Cambridge Highlands Lions Club, District A15, joined with the Galt Cambridge Lions to march in the Canada Day Parade in Cambridge, the largest Canada Day Parade in Canada. This year due to the nice weather it attracted a very large crowd and a lot of children were happy to receive one of the 800 lollipops that we threw out to them.

Submitted by Lion Louise Reeve



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Five Reasons for Lions to Believe in Our Future

Lions are optimistic people. We believe in a bright future. That's partly because we know we can help shape the future in a positive way through our service.

But there is more reason than ever to be extremely optimistic and very enthusiastic about the future of Lions. Let me explain just a few reasons why.

Lions have shown through SightFirst what we can do when we pool our resources, energies and abilities. Through SightFirst, we've saved 30 million people from blindness. We built or expanded 300 eye hospitals, clinics and wards through SightFirst. We've done 7.3 million cataract surgeries. We've trained 345,000 eye health care professionals. We'll save the sight of millions more thanks to Campaign SightFirst II.

Here's another benefit of the campaign: we learned a great deal on how to organize Lions in a common cause. We are transitioning that knowledge and structure to a Global Membership Team. We'll exert the same kind of organizing success to membership growth. I've appointed 41 Lions to this Global Membership Team. This is at least a three-year

effort. We learned from Campaign SightFirst II how effective continuity is when trying to achieve a very ambitious goal. With the Global Membership Team, we aren't starting from scratch. The team will work with the MERL teams already working on membership. They'll work with council chairs, of course, and everyone else. We're very excited about this new approach. We hope to have new members beating down the doors of our clubhouses to get in!

LCIF was named the No. 1 NGO or non-governmental organization by the prestigious Financial Times in 2007. I've known since I became a Lion that we're the greatest service organization in the world. I'm happy to tell you that the rest of the world is beginning to notice and giving us our due. Our No. 1 ranking is a reason to feel proud—and to invite others to join us as Lions. Let's be proud of who we are and what we do and never hesitate to let others know that we are an organization you want to be part of. We're a great group of people doing great things. We need to say to others: Won't you join us?



We Lions are attractive. People want to be part of us. Kenneth Behring, a U.S. philanthropist, and his foundation, the Global Health and Education Foundation, gave a \$7.5 million gift to Campaign SightFirst II. That shows just how much Lions mean to others and how we can attract support.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, a Lion, nominated Lions for the Nobel Peace Prize. This is a wonderful recognition of the importance of the service done by every club and each Lion. Our individual miracles of service add up to a spectacular contribution to our communities and the world community.

So take pride in being a Lion and be very optimistic about our future. We've done great work and our service grows stronger as time passes.



Sid L. Scruggs, III
2nd Vice President

Take Pride in Our Service

Among the many wise things Helen Keller said was this: "I long to accomplish great and noble tasks. But it is my chief duty to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moved along not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker."

Helen Keller was not describing Lions when she made that statement, but she very well could have been. Daily, we Lions perform those humble tasks of service that uplift our neighbors and improve our communities. Our projects may not end up on the front pages of major newspapers, although many should because our various acts of service do produce spectacular results. We work without much fanfare or calling attention to ourselves, but what we do is irreplaceable.

This year President Al Brandel is shining the spotlight on Lions as everyday heroes who do achieve miracles through service. I encourage each of us to take pride in what we do and to rededicate ourselves to greater service. We may not have great tasks to perform, but we can do those small tasks in a great way. That's what everyday heroes do. Let's keep making those miracles happen.



Mahendra Amarasuriya
Immediate Past President

Keeping Our Focus

Lions Clubs International Foundation provides grant funding for Lions' four key areas of focus: preserving sight, combating disability, promoting health and serving youth. Under Core 4 grants, LCIF provides grant funding for programs to address these four core focuses.

In our feature story this month you'll read about LCIF's 10-year partnership program with Habitat for Humanity. LCIF has provided Lions clubs with funds to help construct homes for the disabled. We are happy to have helped 1,000 families become more independent.

Low vision and diabetes screening programs fall under the sight area of Core 4 grants. Funds have supported the expansion of low vision services to underserved populations and improving availability of affordable low vision aids and devices. LCIF has also developed the Core 4 preschool vision screening program to detect amblyopia (lazy eye) at an early age and prevent the disease.

One of the best-known LCIF children's programs is Lions Quest. Teachers are trained in the model program, which they then adapt to their local school needs. Through LCIF Core 4 grant funding, Lions are able to develop new programs to reach underserved populations and address unmet needs in their communities. LCIF is your foundation.

Visionary Devices

New Technologies for the Blind Increase Their Independence



The Trekker allows the blind to travel outside of their normal comfort zone.

by Anne Ford

Steve Booth's first experience with technology for the visually impaired was less than auspicious.

When Booth, who is blind, was about six years old, the Fitchburg Community Lions Club of Massachusetts joined forces with the local police department to purchase a Braille writer (a machine similar to a typewriter that allows users to communicate in Braille) for him. His parents, who wanted to surprise their son with the device, made arrangements to pick it up at the police station.

What they hadn't counted on: their little boy freaking out when he heard they were going to see the police. "They're practically dragging me," he remembers, "and I'm protesting 'No! I won't do it!' Finally they had to tell me, 'Look,

you're going to get something! You're not going to jail!'"

Nearly 50 years later, it's Booth's turn to help make assistive technology for the blind accessible to people who need it. Now a Braille specialist for the National Federation of the Blind as well as president of the Baltimore Host Lions Club, he worked with his club a few years ago to help donate BrailleNotes—small computers that allow Braille users to access e-mail, word processing programs, and the Internet—to visually impaired high school students. "I thought, 'The Lions gave me something. I should give something back,'" he says.

BrailleNotes are just one of many technological devices that are expanding Lions' abilities to help blind and visually impaired people perform the functions that sighted people

take for granted: use a computer, read a menu, navigate a city street. While older methods such as Braille writers, white canes, and Leader dogs are anything but obsolete, learning about the newer options available can help Lions make the most informed decisions possible when considering donation requests.

One of the hottest assistive devices on the market is a small instrument with a big name: the Kurzweil-National Federation for the Blind Mobile Reader, or K-NFB Mobile Reader. Small enough to fit into a shirt pocket, the Reader combines the functions of a cell phone and a digital camera with technology that converts text to speech. The user takes a photo of a printed document such as a restaurant menu, ATM receipt or even a dollar bill. In about 30 seconds, an electronic voice reads the text out loud.

"It's one of the most exciting pieces of technology that's come out," says Ramona Walhof, a blind person who is president of the Boise Capital Lions Club and past president of the National Federation of the Blind of Idaho. "It's really a major thing as far as making more information accessible."

As a tester for the Reader before it was released on the market, Walhof astonished her fellow Lions by demonstrating the device at a meeting. "I just took the restaurant's menu and read it, which I'd never been able to do," she says. If they like, users can then save that information in a file and transfer it to a computer later. Users with partial vision can also enlarge and highlight text on the device's screen.

The Reader's technology has actually been around since the 1970s when an inventor named Ray Kurzweil created the first reading machine for the blind. Unfortunately, it was the size of a tabletop and cost more than \$50,000, making it highly impractical for most individuals to own

(with the exception of blind entertainer Stevie Wonder, who bought one of the first to roll off the line).

Not until recently was technology advanced enough to make a portable, handheld model like the K-NFB Mobile Reader. And at around \$2,000, it's a comparative bargain. Still, its price tag is steep enough to put it out of the reach of many blind or partially sighted people who could benefit from it.

That's where clubs like the Little Elm Lions of Little Elm, Texas, step in. Last year, then-president Tony Licausi read an article about the Reader and showed it to affiliate member Tina Hager, who is the director of the Little Elm Public Library. She decided that the library should purchase one of the devices for patrons to use. Her club agreed to donate most of the cost, and in short order, thanks to the Lions' help, the library became what's thought to be the first institution of its kind in the country to own a Reader.

"We were very excited when the Lions club donated the money to purchase it, because it's definitely an asset to the library and the community," Hager says. Library patrons with visual impairment can now come in and "read a book, read an article, read a newspaper, anything," she adds. "It's really an awesome piece of technology." The library has also hosted demonstrations of the Reader for the Little Elm Lions as well as for other groups.

Last year the Brandon Lions Club of South Dakota partnered with the South Dakota Lions Foundation to donate a K-NFB Mobile Reader to Max Blaschke, a visually impaired student at Augustana College in Sioux Falls. "He [Blaschke] is very independent," says M.J. Knobe, the foundation's executive director. With the Reader, "he doesn't have to have another human being to help him with a menu or at the library."

But Blaschke has found another use for the device, too: helping him get from place to place. "It'll help you read a street corner sign, if it's not too far away, so you know where you are around town," he says. "The alternative would be asking someone for help or doing the best you can to read the sign, which can sometimes be a little bit difficult."

In another few years, the K-NFB Mobile Reader may gain the ability to even recognize objects and people. So, for instance, a blind person walking into a building would be able to locate the receptionist's desk, the elevators, and so forth, without asking for anyone's assistance. "Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing to not have to ask someone every time?" Booth says.

Still, even without object and face recognition, the Reader represents a tremendous advancement in technology for the blind and visually impaired. Its cell phone capabilities alone are a boon. As Booth points out, "Cell phones generally won't work for a blind person because they don't talk. Touch screens are a blind person's worst enemy. You can maybe place a call if you know the phone number, and that's about it."

"Unfortunately, most cell phones aren't accessible, because they depend totally on the screen," agrees Jay Leventhal, editor of Access World magazine. For users who don't need or can't afford the K-NFB Mobile Reader, he recommends cell-phone screen-reading products such as Mobile Speak, which uses text-to-speech technology to perform functions such as sending and receiving calls and text messages, checking for missed calls, managing electronic address books and even browsing the Internet. At about \$300, it's a relatively inexpensive option that Lions looking for products to donate should know about.

Another helpful device is the GPS Trekker, which combines speech output with GPS technology and digital maps to allow a blind or visually impaired person to identify his or her location and travel from place to place. Erica



BrailleNotes puts the world—the Internet—at the fingertips of those with vision impairments.



Ihrke, a technology and extended services manager and certified orientation and mobility specialist for Leader Dogs for the Blind, calls it “a powerful device to advance people’s travel skills.”

“People who are blind or visually impaired traditionally travel in areas that they’re comfortable with, following the same patterns or routes,” she says. “What GPS allows them to do is go out of that comfort zone and at the same time reduce travel anxiety. It tells you where you are. It tells you the name of the street you’re on. It tells you what the intersection is before you approach it. It gives you the ability to program routes to places that you’ve never been before. It gives you the ability, before you go someplace, to virtually explore the map so you can become more familiar with the names of the streets.” The Trekker’s software includes more than a million commercial points of interest such as restaurants and other businesses; it also allows users to program in customized points of interest, such as friends’ houses.

Potential buyers should take into account, however, that using the Trekker requires a fair amount of training. To that end, Leader Dogs for the Blind offers five-and-a-half-day

Trekker courses. “There is quite a bit of a learning curve with the Trekker because it has 39 buttons,” Ihrke explains. At \$1,700, it’s not cheap, either. Fortunately, just a few months ago the Trekker’s manufacturer, HumanWare, introduced a simpler, cheaper version of the device, known as the Trekker Breeze. It retails for about \$900 and features just nine buttons, making it more accessible to users who might not want or need the full functionality of the original Trekker.

Lions who have donated Trekkers or Trekker Breezes include clubs in Grand Rapids, Grand Haven, and Rockford, Michigan.

Neither device is designed to replace a guide dog or cane, Ihrke hastens to add. “GPS is an orientation aid. A cane and a Leader dog are mobility devices,” she says. “So GPS will never replace a cane or a dog, because those detect obstacles and help you make your way through the environment, where GPS just tells you where you are.”

Braille is another form of assistance that will never be replaced, says Ramona Walhof of the Boise Capital Lions Club. “There are a bunch of people who think Braille’s going to be obsolete because of technology. Braille will be obsolete the same time print is,” she says. “A kid can get through school without Braille, and a lot of them are. But they need Braille for spelling, math, punctuation, and you can’t do that with [devices that use] speech output only. And then the kids graduate from high school as terrible spellers, not very good readers, weak in math. We’d like to see clubs across the country help promote Braille.”

After all, it’s not as if Braille and technology are mutually exclusive. Walhof herself uses a BrailleNote—a small Braille-enabled

computer like the ones Booth’s club helped donate—and Blaschke uses one to take notes in his college classes. Unfortunately, Walhof says, many schools aren’t in a position to provide BrailleNotes for their students. Her club gets many requests for them because “the schools really have to struggle to come up with funds, and a lot of families just can’t afford it.” Again, these devices aren’t cheap — between \$3,000 and \$6,000. Lions who would like to donate BrailleNotes but have limited funds may consider partnering with another club.

Technologies such as K-NFB Readers, GPS Trekkers, BrailleNotes and the like not only help blind people function more effectively and independently but they also help their sighted acquaintances understand that there’s no need to pity or condescend to people with visual impairments. And by helping make these devices available to people who need them, Lions are helping to change the public perception of blindness. “It’s a more positive image of blindness you’re seeing in Lions clubs across the country,” Walhof says. “Yes, it’s a nuisance not to have vision. But it’s not the end of the world.”



How You Can Help

Is your club considering donating a device to a blind or visually impaired person? First, advises Steve Booth of the National Federation of the Blind, make sure you understand that person’s abilities and needs: “Do they know Braille? Do they have some useful vision left? How much?”

Next, consider contacting the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, which can help your club make informed decisions about products to donate. “I would encourage any Lions club to please work with us,” Booth says. “Ordinarily a Lions club can only go to the vendors, and of course they’re going to tell you their products are great. Well, there might be other things you might not know about. We work with clubs to help them find the right products to fill their donation requests.”

Visit the CNIB Web site at www.cnib.ca (or the NFB’s Web site at www.nfb.org), call 1-800-563-2642 or contact your local CNIB office.



Sleek technologies increase the freedom of the blind. BrailleNotes (top) is a small computer. The Trekker (center) combines speech output with GPS technology to increase mobility. The K-NFB Mobile Reader (bottom) reads aloud menus, receipts and paper money.

Highlights of the September 2008 Meeting of the Governor's Council

The first meeting of the 2008-2009 Council of Governors was held in Newmarket on Saturday September 6, 2008. The following represents the highlight topics of general interest discussed during the meeting:

Secretary – Council approved an application form, certificate of recognition and membership card proposed by the MDA Secretary for clubs wishing to recognize members by an MDA Life Membership. It was noted that the criteria for Life Membership amended at the May 2008 Council Meeting (eliminating the requirement to first be a life member of LCI) will require an amendment to the C&BL and be subject to a vote by the general membership at the MDA Convention.

Treasurer – The notification of club dues will be sent to each Treasurer by the end of September. Membership numbers will be based on LCI membership records as of June 30, 2008. The per capita dues will be shown as \$14.50 but will be reduced by \$2.00 per member to reflect the Temporary Administrative Dues Reduction approved during the May 2008 Council Meeting as a measure of reducing the MDA surplus..

MERL – The Regional Institute is planned for October 16-19 in Newmarket; the team will be giving a special training session in A5 in November and also a MERL workshop in Newmarket again in December. This workshop will include the involvement of the Global Membership Team.

Camp Liaison – This is a new committee chaired by PDG Peter McCague. The main purpose of the committee is to work in partnership with, and to provide a program linkage between the numerous camps associated with Lions throughout MDA and the 10 districts.

Convention Advisory – An exciting program for the 2009 MDA Convention in North Bay has been developed with a medieval theme and planning for the 2010 convention in Kingston is underway. It was mentioned that a bid to host the 2011 convention will be forthcoming from A4 in Ottawa. Governors Council approved the development of a formal bid to host the 2014 International Convention in Toronto. Information on the MDA convention program will be included on the MDA website.

Environment – The Environment Committee, under PID Art Woods, has been reinstated with the goal of promoting Lions clubs to become more involved in project activities benefiting the environment.

Hearing Conservation – Digital Hearing Testing continues to be a success. The Toronto School Board has committed to a hearing and vision screening program for its schools for a 3-year period.

International Advisory Committee – Upon the committee's recommendation the Governor's unanimously endorsed PID Wing- Kun Tam from China as their choice for 2nd VP for 2009-2010.

MDA Endorsed ID Candidate PCC Carl Young – The committee, working in conjunction with the MDA Promotion Chair, is looking into options for the MDA Breakfast, hospitality and other promotional activities at the International Convention in Minneapolis.

No Child Without – This comparative new partnership program between MedicAlert and Lions is gaining momentum within districts but it is noted that there are over 2,500 schools in Ontario waiting to be adopted by Lions Clubs.

Lions Foundation of Canada – The Purina Walk for Dog Guides is planned for May 31, 2009.

LION Magazine – The new Editor, Printer and Distributor of the Magazine effective Nov/Dec 2008 will be Thompson Printing. This change is made necessary due to resignation of current editor Lion Jim Tyler due to personal reasons. It was noted that Lion Jim's family has been involved with the magazine for almost 25 years.

Research & Long Range Planning – Recommended changes to the MDA Policy & Procedures manual to include the position of 2nd Vice District Governor will be made at the November Council Meeting.

Sight Conservation – The Knights of Lake Jo program has been reinstated by CNIB. A new program for the sale of optical surface cleaning wipes is being developed between CNIB and MDA and will provide fund raising opportunities for Lions Clubs. With the termination of the CSF II program, clubs are encouraged to increase donations to the joint CNIB/MDA Vision Screening Program.

Webmaster – A new MDA website is under development.

Global Membership Team (GMT) – The Governors Council approved the appointment of PDG Cathy Tyler (Bock) as the GMT Liaison for a 3-year period.

World Diabetes Day – MDA is contacting the corporations responsible for Niagara Falls and the CN Tower requesting consideration of lighting them 'blue' on November 14th in support of World Diabetes Day.

For more information, questions or concerns relating to these highlights please contact MDA Secretary Dave Voisey at dvoisey@rogers.com or 613-843-1687



Eberhard J. Wirfs
1st Vice President

Take Your Club to a New Level

You can't achieve great goals unless you aim high. A European writer once said, "To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream, not only plan, but also believe." Now is the time for our clubs to make great plans and achieve more than they ever have not only in serving others but also in building membership.

Complacency often can accompany success. We reach a certain level of competence or achievement and content ourselves with that. We fail to realize we can reach much greater heights. We go so high on the ladder of success and no further. But where would Lions be today if we were ever satisfied? Lions have become a global force for good because we always sought new challenges and set high goals.

So please evaluate your club and consider whether you can do even more. Especially active clubs are particularly adept at adding members; people are drawn to successful endeavors. Within a short time, a club committed to a new level of activity and purpose can become reinvigorated. It's fine to be a good club. But it's entirely possible to be a great Lions club.

Grants Awarded to Save Sight

The SightFirst Advisory Committee approved 19 grants totaling US\$4,752,293 in August.

Eight grants were approved for cataract surgery and screening campaigns to provide 125,000 cataract surgeries in Kenya, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Costa Rica over the next year. Cataract is the world's leading cause of preventable blindness. A cataract is a clouding of the lens in the eye that affects vision and can lead to blindness.

Through SightFirst, Lions have restored sight to 7.3 million through cataract surgery. Cataract is prevalent in both developing and developed countries. By age 80, more than half of all Americans either have a cataract or have had cataract surgery.

In India, Lions conduct the screening camps in rural, under-served areas and refer patients as needed for surgery at 208 Lions eye hospitals or Lions-affiliated hospitals in the region. Many of these facilities have received SightFirst funding for training of eye health care workers and equipment. Local Lions underwrite half the cost of the surgery, further leveraging LCIF funding and enabling more surgeries to be performed.



A patient in India's visual acuity is tested to determine if cataract surgery is needed.



Grants awarded at the August 2008 SightFirst Advisory Committee Meeting

Country	Project	US\$ Amount
India	Upgrade Jhargram Lions Eye Hospital	102,336
India	Upgrade Gauhati Lions Eye Hospital	64,177
India	Replace Equipment at M. Ram Reddy Lions Eye Hospital and Upgrade Satellite Center at Shamshabad	83,966
India	Upgrade B.Y.L. Nair Charitable Hospital's Department of Ophthalmology	176,597
Nepal	Purchase Outreach Vehicle, Ramlal Golchha Eye Hospital, Biratnagar	27,187
India	Cataract Screening and Surgery Campaign	132,375
India	Cataract Screening and Surgery Campaign	714,285
India	Cataract Screening and Surgery Campaign	44,125
India	Cataract Screening and Surgery Campaign	714,285
Pakistan	Cataract Screening and Surgery Campaign	59,840
Nepal	Cataract Screening and Surgery Campaign	324,500
Nepal	Cataract Screening and Surgery Campaign	324,500
Sri Lanka	Cataract Screening and Surgery Campaign	180,000
Madagascar	Cataract Screening and Surgery Campaign	400,000
Costa Rica	Cataract Screening and Surgery Campaign	54,000
Argentina	Upgrade San Camilo Ophthalmic Center, Berazategui	137,180
Undistricted	Support Activities at Lions World Sight Day 2008	18,530
Kenya	Cataract Screening and Surgery Campaign	290,000

Lions Rebuild Homes, Lives through Habitat Partnership

Little Jacob could not stand not knowing what was happening with the new home that was being built for him. He had been playing baseball that morning and had already circled the bases four times. The kids, even those from the opposing team, stopped and cheered him on. Jacob's new home will be more handicap accessible and even have a yard where he can play ball.

Jacob and his family in Idaho are just one of the many recipients of a new home that has been built through Lions Clubs International Foundation's partnership with Habitat for Humanity. The Lions of District 39-W, along with the local Habitat for Humanity affiliate and volunteers, prepared and planned for the blitz build for months. During the first week in June, the construction of Jacob's handicap accessible home marked the 1,000th house built through the partnership since it began in 2000. The home, which served a benchmark build for the partnership, was dedicated on June 6.

"This has been the most tremendous experience," said Darrell Hatfield, past district governor for 39-W. "It was an amazing project and I thank the Twin Falls Lions and Lions Clubs International Foundation for supporting and funding such a positive, heartwarming project."

LCIF has pledged \$12 million to Habitat for Humanity to build houses for individuals and families living with physical and mental disabilities. Funding from LCIF and Lions members has enabled families in the United States, South Korea, New Zealand, the Philippines, Zambia, Ivory Coast, Sri Lanka, Romania, Canada, Belize, India, Hungary and Australia to experience new freedom.

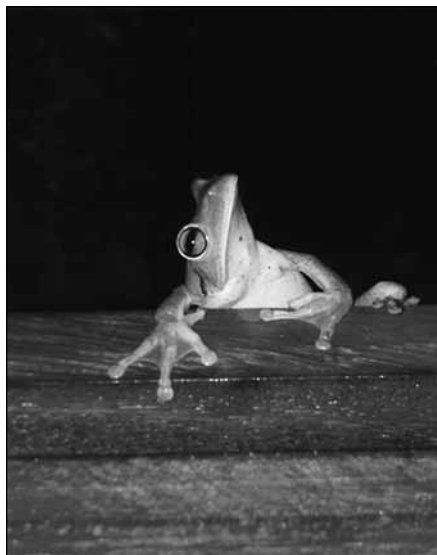
"Lions have long been serving the needs of the less fortunate in their own communities and worldwide," said LCIF Chairperson Mahendra Amarasuriya, "Through this partnership, we have been able to help more than 1,000 families have a better quality of life."

The homes and lives that have been rebuilt demonstrate the service that Lions provide to

populations in need. Combating disability is one of the four key focuses that LCIF Core 4 grants support. Through LCIF grants and the service of Lions from around the world, families like Jacob's are being given a new sense of hope for the future.



Shown are the Bohrn Roach family, along with Darrel Hatfield, past district governor for 39-W; Linda Fleming, a Habitat for Humanity director; and the lead contractors for the new Roach home.



Lions Environmental Photo Contest

Every Lion (from a club in good standing) can enter a photograph of his or her immediate surroundings into the club-level Lions Environmental Photo Contest. The purpose of the photo contest is to showcase the beauty of nature.

Lions can enter photographs of their environment in one of the following five categories:

- animal life (without people in the photograph)
- plant life (without people in the photograph)
- urban or natural landscape (without people in the photograph)
- weather phenomenon (without people in the photograph)
- Lions Environmental Miracle Workers - Lions performing an environment project

Winning club-level photographs can advance to the district, multiple district, and international competitions. This year's winners can be seen at www.lionsclubs.org.

*2008 Animal Life Winner
Valerio Konzen,
Estrella Lions Club, Brazil*

Tremendous Devastation, Great Assistance



Lions visit children in the hospital who were injured in the earthquake and distribute toys.

by Nicole Brown

The clock tower in the town center of Longfeng stands frozen in time, stopped at 2:28. That was the time on May 12 when the massive earthquake struck. It is one of the only buildings still standing in the area and a memorial to that fateful day when 5 million homes and 7,000 schools were destroyed. Sichuan Province in central China was the hardest hit, but a total of eight provinces in China were impacted, affecting 40 million people and causing an estimated \$147 billion in damage.

Similar to so many previous disasters, Lions rushed to help. Within 48 hours Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) committed a major catastrophe grant of \$500,000 to address immediate needs and provide medicine, clothing, blankets and temporary housing. LCIF approved a second major catastrophe grant in the amount of \$500,000 in June. Additionally, LCIF awarded a \$200,000 grant to Multiple District 101, Sweden, in June 2008 for a joint LCIF-Swedish Lions project to provide additional tents to relief workers and victims left homeless.

"I see the devastation and the need, families torn apart when loved ones died, and it makes me realize the hardships in my life are so little. I feel it is my duty as a Lion to help them," said Past International Director Wing-Kun Tam of Hong Kong, who is overseeing Lions' relief efforts.

Working with the Chinese Red Cross, Lions purchased 10 relief vehicles and ambulances. Lions from China and Hong Kong donated more than \$1 million in personal funds in addition to buying relief supplies and giving countless hours of their time. Lions erected tents, provided blankets and food, and helped build temporary schools.

Lions from Shenzhen drove three days to reach the affected area, working quickly to establish a makeshift school in 33 hours. They plan to work with the Chinese government to construct a permanent school and dormitory. A total of 360 students will benefit from the reconstruction

project that will be jointly funded by Lions and LCIF with the Chinese government. In Weicheng, Lions are rebuilding a kindergarten and primary school to benefit 1,500 students.

International President Albert Brandel visited the affected areas with Chinese Lions and met with government leaders to discuss future rebuilding during his first presidential visit in July.

"I went to a school, and I saw joy brought back to the faces of the children in the shadow of a school that had collapsed just a couple of weeks before where 13 of their classmates had died," he said. "But that day when I was there, I witnessed a miracle. I witnessed children singing, laughing, drawing, and sharing with us the artwork they had created. We did high fives, we hugged, and I cried a little bit."

Lions have donated 800 desks, school supplies and uniforms. They are working with psychologists to provide students with necessary counseling and art therapy. Parents and students gathered the day the president and Lions visited to give a round of applause to show their thanks. Students had created artwork that they gave as gifts of appreciation.

Lions are constructing a Lions Village in PengHua where the entire community was destroyed. They will help rebuild homes, a clinic, a school and water supply systems in partnership with the local government. In all, 66 families will benefit from the new village. In this community, the average income is less than \$1 a day and rebuilding would not possible without the Lions' assistance.

LCIF and Lions have experience in disaster relief, having mobilized more than \$20 million for the tsunami and Hurricane Katrina. Additionally, LCIF gives nearly \$2 million annually in emergency grants for immediate relief and assistance following local natural disasters.

"The history of our association has been that when there's been a need in a community, the Lions have always been there. I'd seen damage, devastation with September 11th and other disasters, but nothing ever like this," said Brandel, who assisted in the relief in New York City immediately following Sept. 11 both as a Lion and professionally as a police officer.

There are more than 2,000 Lions in China, where Lions Clubs International is the country's only official international volunteer service club organization. The first club began in 2002; however, Lions have a history of working with the Chinese government, dating back to 1999 when Lions launched SightFirst China Action. LCIF gave \$30 million, which the Chinese government matched, to train eye health care workers in 100 provinces and provide more than 5 million cataract surgeries.



Lions erect thousands of tents to house victims and relief workers.

LCIF has established a designated fund to channel funds for this disaster. Lions from around the world have overwhelmingly responded, and donations are continuing to pour in. Chinese Canadian Lions in Vancouver raised \$130,000, Taiwan Lions have committed \$50,000 and Lions in England donated \$86,000. Lions in Brazil have partnered with a local company to provide 7,000 blankets. For updates on Lions' fundraising and rebuilding efforts, visit www.lcif.org. Lions wishing to contribute to this disaster may donate online at www.lcif.org/donate. Please note "China Earthquake Relief Fund" in the comments field.

Lions and LCIF are steadfastly committed to long-term relief and reconstruction. Days, weeks and months from now, Lions will continue to provide humanitarian aid.

Lions Get Publicity

Lions' relief efforts in China received extensive media coverage both in North America and in China. Among U.S.-based media, stories ran on AOL Money and Finance (more than 6 million users), Forbes.com and in the Chronicle of Philanthropy, as well as in many other outlets. Major newspapers and Web sites in China also ran positive stories on Lions' assistance.



Past District Governor Alice Lau comforts a victim of the earthquake.

Educating Communities About Eye Health Through LEHP

by Alecia Dimar

Education is a key means to combating eye disease worldwide. Through annual eye care visits, educational materials and community support, the prevalence of vision loss can greatly decrease. A joint study conducted by the Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) and The National Eye Institute (NEI) further demonstrates the lack of awareness about eye health. It shows that most adults in the United States value their eyesight, however, they lack knowledge of how and when to seek timely detection and treatment of eye diseases.

The Lions Eye Health Program (LEHP) is confronting this lack of education about eye health in communities, where people are often unaware of the appropriate steps to ensure proper eye health. Even in high income countries, a significant number of people remain crippled from vision loss.

Seventy-one percent of respondents from the NEI study reported that a loss of their eyesight would rate as a 10 on a scale of 1 to 10, meaning that it would have the greatest impact on their day-to-day life. However, only eight percent knew that there are no early warning signs of glaucoma, a group of diseases that can damage the eye's optic nerve and result in vision loss and blindness. These startling statistics demonstrate that there is a lack of sufficient eye health education in communities.

LEHP is a community-based eye health education program that aims to prevent vision loss by promoting early detection and timely treatment of eye diseases like

glaucoma and diabetic eye disease. Because the program encourages people to visit an eye care professional, it is most appropriate for communities with an established eye care system already in place. For this reason, LEHP has been the primary SightFirst activity for Lions from high and middle income countries. With support from Campaign SightFirst II, Lions can continue to promote eye health and disease prevention throughout all countries.

"Lions have long been champions of people who are blind and visually impaired. By better



LEHP provides vision screenings for communities, in effort to educate and promote healthy eye care and annual check-ups.

educating the public on the need for regular eye exams and timely treatment of eye diseases, we can end preventable blindness," said Mahendra Amarasuriya, Chairperson, LCIF.

LCIF partnered with Allergen, Inc. to hold 10 glaucoma screenings throughout the U.S. The program was designed to enhance dialogue between those diagnosed with or at risk for glaucoma, their family members and eye care professionals. The program offers glaucoma check-ups, screening events and discussion guides for patients and caregivers.

"Because of this, I'm scheduling an appointment next month," stated a participant at a screening conducted by Lions in Mandelville, Louisiana. More than 90 percent of participants at this screening indicated that they are likely to schedule an appointment with an eye care professional in the future.

LEHP has been active in the United States, Japan, the British Isles and Ireland, Canada, Australia and Turkey. Lions can get their communities involved and help to increase eye health awareness. Additional resources will be available through LCIF's Web site early 2009, for Lions wanting to get involved with the LEHP program.

Through screenings, community events and educational materials, awareness of proper eye health is increasing in communities where LEHP is present. Together, LCIF and Lions are helping the public become more educated about preventable blindness.

Lions Get a Bang out of Bangkok

by Jay Copp

International conventions are nothing new for Larry and Cynthia Spaeth of Illinois. Between them they've attended nearly 20. But the Bangkok convention in June was especially rewarding.

"I came away rejuvenated," Larry Spaeth said. "You listen to the speakers and the accomplishments, and you hear what some clubs do around the world. That inspires you to do more in your local community."

The Spaeths were among the nearly 17,000 Lions from more than 100 countries who attended the 91st annual convention. Lions visited the city's famous temples, haggled for bargains in the ubiquitous markets and, of course, attended the convention's seminars, plenary sessions and receptions. Bangkok was a whirlwind of activities and a wellspring of inspiration. Lions bumped into old friends, forged new friendships, marched in the parade and generally immersed themselves in all things Lions.

"The visuals and the music [at the plenary sessions] were fantastic," said Kumar Acharya of London. "I get rejuvenated at a convention. Lions are a first-rate organization."

The reaction to the convention was almost uniformly positive. "It truly was an amazing experience. I learned a lot about the great deeds of Lions all over the world," Mina Tabamo of the Philippines wrote in an e-mail.

Thais were exceedingly friendly. "We'd be on the bus [with other Lions] and people would just wave to us," said Larry Spaeth, a past district governor from near Chicago. Then there was the time the Spaeths were at a temple

and obviously perplexed on where to go. A Lion from Bangkok approached them and helped them out.

The convention highlights included:

- Al Brandel of New York took the oath of office as international president. He praised Lions as everyday heroes who make miracles happen. His charming biographical video portraying him as an All-American boy who came of age in the confident, civic-centered post-World War II era drew smiles.

- Outgoing President Mahendra Amarasuriya of Sri Lanka happily told of the membership growth in 2007-2008, reversing more than a decade of decline.

- Campaign SightFirst II not only reached its \$150 million goal but also exceeded its \$200 million Challenge Goal. The total of \$200,329,000 was slowly revealed on the 70-foot-wide screen in the plenary hall, and fireworks and celebratory music followed.

- Sid L. Scruggs III of North Carolina was elected as second vice president and Eberhard Wirfs of Germany was elected as first vice president.

- Keynote speaker Adil Najam, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, cited clean, accessible water as a vastly underrated social problem that leads to disease and discord. ("Lions are involved in their communities, so this is something we can work on," said Spaeth.)

- The plenary sessions were enlivened by a 70-foot screen that showed fast-paced videos, entertainment such as Sri Lankan dancers and rhythmic dancers, and crowd participation devices such as thundersticks, huge but soft inflated "earth" balls that Lions gleefully batted about, and a grand finale with Lions singing



Rhythmic dancers in body suits perform at the first plenary session.

along to Brandel's theme song about everyday heroes as they waved miniature flashlights and watched a map of the world on the big screen be lit up country by country.

- The parade, flag ceremony, Melvin Jones Luncheon and other convention traditions sparkled with spectacle and pageantry.

- The convention hall buzzed with Lions trading pins, learning about Lions' programs, seeking advice and information from Lions Clubs International staff and finding gifts to take home.

- A Taste of Thailand and the International Show, as well as organized tours, gave Lions a pleasant introduction to the host country.

The end of the convention was about new beginnings. In the plenary hall, the newly elected international directors were introduced and the 2008-2009 district governors pulled off their district governor-elect ribbons, signifying the start of their leadership—a year to continue time-honored service projects as well as to start new traditions.



The tally for Campaign SightFirst II is unveiled in grand style at the second plenary session.



Words Worth Remembering

Adil Najam, the convention's keynote speaker, directs Boston University's Frederick Pardee Center for Study of the Longer-Range Future. He shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with former U.S. Vice President Al Gore for their work on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Here is an excerpt of his speech to Lions, as well as excerpts from other speeches.

"Climate and civil violence is coming soon. And it may already be here. ... The crisis in Dafur and the crisis in Rwanda are at their core climactic crises. Before you have ethnic conflict something happens to the resources. My water dries out. I go to your village, start drinking from your well. Your well doesn't have too much water. You start hitting me. By the time the news sources CSN and FoxNews get there, it's all about ethnicity. But the trigger of a lot of civil violence happens to be environment.



"We talk about climate as an energy issue but climate will become a water issue.

I wish some organization will do for water what Lions have done for eyesight and blindness. Because the issue of the future is water. ... When we think of climate we think of energy and cars and how much oil they use. But when you think of the impact of climate change most of them in the immediate term will be about water.

[He refers to the longtime conflict between Pakistan and India.] "In 60

years of constant conflict the total number of Indians killed is less than the number of children in New Delhi who will die in any one year because of dirty water alone. In my own country, Pakistan, exactly the same is true in Karachi. My point is if you are the mother of that child you do not care whether your son was killed at the wrong end of a gun or the wrong end of a tap.

"As a professor of international relations, I do not know what to do about the gun. As a professor of the environment, I know what I can do about the tap. I know there are Lions in the world who can do something about the water that comes out of that tap. That tap can save lives--today right now, right here."

Mahendra Amarasuriya, the 2007-2008 international president, delivered his farewell address at the first plenary.

"We need to protect and preserve our clubs by adapting and evolving. We can't stand still. As I've always maintained, traditions are wonderful and we absolutely need to hang on to whatever is working. Lions don't need a revolution. The fundamental values of Lions should remain intact. We don't need to change who Lions are and what we do. But we do need to change how we do things.

"So how have we done in the past year in meeting the challenge to change? Well, I've seen and been told of innovation and adaptation at meetings. Some clubs are shortening meetings. Others are spicing them up. Almost jokingly last year at the convention, I talked about clubs having karaoke at a meeting to make it more fun. Well, can you believe some clubs have done exactly that—they have added karaoke to their regular meetings and they are having fun.

"The goal of 20,000 net membership growth at the beginning of the year was



our dream. But isn't it true that if you don't dream, you can't make your dreams come true? So I spoke membership. I monitored membership. I lived and dreamt membership this year.

"And this year has been different. We achieved a positive membership growth. Our latest data may show a net membership increase of more than 23,000. This is the greatest year in recent history for club and overall membership growth despite a new financial suspension policy this year.

"The membership picture in the United States is particularly gratifying. Districts that have not extended a club for a decade or more have now done so. The tide has changed. We've laid the groundwork for future growth. ...

"We want people to fully understand how important and relevant Lions are. When people think of Lions, they need to automatically associate us with vigor and success, with being robust and necessary. We want people to want to join us, to partner with us, to contribute to us. So we set about to rebrand Lions.

"We are redesigning our Web site, our Lion Magazine, our advertisements and our other materials that Lions and the public see. We are sending out consistent messages about what Lions are all about. We are repositioning ourselves in the market place of perception.

"We are the same Lions. But we want people to see us for who we are, not who they think we are."

U.S. philanthropist Ken Behring and his Global Health and Education Foundation made a matching contribution of \$7.5 million to Campaign SightFirst II. He spoke at the second plenary.

"When I was young I could see what other people had and I wanted a big car, a big home. A couple of suits, whatever. So you start chasing what we call the American dream or climbing the mountain of what they call success."

He was a used car dealer, a builder, banker, and owner of the Seattle Seahawks. "I had a lot of success. I made a lot of money and kept climbing that mountain. But finally at one point where I got to what I thought was the top and there was no longer anything I wanted to buy or needed, I found the top of the mountain was barren. So I decided there has to be something else in this life and world outside of money and the things money can buy.

"I took food, books and medical supplies to Africa. By chance a church gave me a wheelchair to drop off. Never thought about a wheelchair. Never had anyone in one. But when I picked up the first elderly man, he started to cry and said he had had lost his wife and had a stroke. He said, 'Now I can go outside in my yard.' I thought maybe this is what I'm looking for other than possessions. This was eight years ago. Delivered 800,000 chairs in 152 countries.

"What we found as we were giving people wheelchairs if you give somebody hope you give them dignity. Most important you show them that somebody cares. ... That is how I found what I call purpose in life—trying to help someone and show them that somebody does care. That's what the Lions have been doing for years, showing people without sight, without money, that somebody does care."



Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus, the founder of microlender Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, received the 2008 Lions Humanitarian Award at the final plenary session.



The Lions Humanitarian Award is “not just a recognition of me personally. It’s a recognition to 7.5 million borrowers of Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. These 7.5 million borrowers, 97 percent of whom are women, joined Grameen banks as destitute women, take tiny loans, starting from something like \$30, \$35, and generate income for themselves and their families. And move up step by step.

“Today 64 percent of Grameen borrowers have crossed over the poverty line by creating self-employment for themselves and they send their children to school. This is part of the Grameen Bank program. One hundred percent of Grameen children must be in school. And then we give the scholarships.... So we have a totally new generation coming out.

“The payment rate is amazingly very high—98 percent, 99 percent. With the [loan] crisis going on in the world, this is quite a good story to tell—without collateral, without guarantees, without lawyers, people pay back.

“The conclusion is poverty is not created by the poor people. Poverty is created by the institutions we have built. Poverty is created by the concepts we have developed. If we can fix the institutions, if we fix the concepts, there will be no more poor people on this planet.

“Please believe we can create a world where not a single person will go through the misery of poverty. If we believe in it, we will create it. Then we will put the poverty in a museum. So future generations will see poverty only in the museums, not in the society.”

Al Brandel, the 2008-2009 international president, gave his inaugural presidential address at the final plenary session. “Just because you come from a very small club or district never underestimate the service you provide. It is a miracle to those who receive our service. ... Don’t ever say we are just a small club. A small club can make a miracle happen. ... These acts of service add up to

something spectacular. By doing your part you are part of a great global effort to make the world a better place to live.

“We do service whether it’s running a vision testing machine, making sandwiches after a disaster or cleaning up litter on a highway. Lions sincerely believe that no act of kindness is too small. When you deliver a food basket or holiday toys, never think that’s insignificant. Look into the eyes of the people receiving that gift because you are a hero in their eyes.

“I want ask each of you today to make Lions clubs and programs a priority. Former President Jim Ervin said, ‘Let’s not become foot soldiers in other people’s armies.’ We may raise so much money in our community but what do we do with it? We give it to other organizations.

“It’s very simple to write a check and put it in the mail. Let’s be proud of that check because money is important. ... That’s fine. But we are much more than that.

“I personally believe if a Lions club member has an opportunity to go on an eyeglass or medical mission we will have a Lion for life because they see the way we affect so many people’s lives. ... We are going to be taking a look at how we can enhance our medical and eyeglass missions around the world to give you the opportunity if at all possible so that instead of taking a vacation to New York or Maui you or your family may want to get on our Web site and find out where can I make a miracle happen, where can I teach my children how to be a humanitarian.



“The international president is not the most important person in Lions Clubs International. The most important person is you. Without you, all these programs and miracles would not have happened. We will continue to make miracles through service. And because of that you truly are everyday heroes and you are my hero.”

Weathering the Storm After Katrina Clubs Find Solid Ground Again

by Jay Copp

In September 2005, just a few weeks after Hurricane Katrina hit, members of the Slidell Noon Lions Club in Louisiana straggled into their clubhouse for their first meeting since the disaster. Homes and businesses in Slidell still lacked power and phone service. Tree limbs lay forlornly on water-filled, empty homes. Mud caked the streets.

Like other Slidell residents, most Lions had evacuated. Some had yet to return. The handful of Lions at the meeting hugged or patted each other on the back. Warily, they exchanged sad stories on destroyed homes, lost jobs and disrupted lives.

“I’m not sure if anybody was really thinking about the [future of] the club,” said Eric DuBuisson, whose dry cleaning business took on six feet of water and whose home on Lake Pontchartrain was hit with counter top-high

flood water. “We were thinking about whether Slidell would come back. There was total devastation.”

The damage caused by Katrina significantly affected dozens of Lions clubs throughout the Gulf Coast. Lions who lost their homes moved out of town. Many others lost their jobs. Clubhouses were destroyed or damaged.

Yet amid the losses and disruptions clubs faced extraordinary social needs. Overnight, the number of people in distress and unable to afford basic amenities exponentially increased.

Every Lions club has its own story on how it has fared over the last three years since Katrina. A few never recovered from the blow and faded away. Some lost members they weren’t able to replace and remain operating today at a reduced level.

But most clubs managed to regain their footing before long and quickly turned their attention to Katrina-related needs. Necessity

forced them to take on a new role. As donated goods and cash poured in from Lions worldwide and as LCIF stood ready with millions of dollars in aid, the clubs learned how to channel the outside help to those most in need in their own communities.

The Slidell Lions forged their own way. Katrina proved to be devastating to members. But the club found its own silver lining to the storm.

Unprecedented Disaster

A 30-minute drive from New Orleans, Slidell sits on the northeast shore of Lake Pontchartrain. The 2000 census reported a population of 25,695 people, 83 percent of whom were white. The median income was a healthy \$42,856.

The Slidell Noon Lions Club was almost as old as Lions. It started in 1928, just nine years after Melvin Jones founded Lions Clubs in



The Slidell area had to pick up the pieces.

Chicago in 1917. The Slidell Lions helped their town grow and progress. They knocked on doors to collect the data for the first telephone system. They made the streets safe for the increasing auto traffic by raising funds for speed limit and school zone signs. Through the years they took care of the less fortunate by distributing gift baskets and eyeglasses.

The Lions were interwoven into the fabric of Slidell, as true in 2005 as it was in the 1935. The mayor, police chief and other leading citizens often were Lions. Any major enterprise or event in Slidell inevitably involved Lions.

Katrina slammed Slidell on Aug. 29 with wind gusts of more than 190 miles per hour. The storm surge from Lake Pontchartrain reached 26 feet. The north side of town suffered extensive wind damage but the south side of town was engulfed with water.

Katrina dealt a blow to almost every Slidell Lion. Twenty-nine of the 30 members of the Slidell Lions who took part in a club survey said the hurricane impacted them. Twelve reported major damage to their home, four serious and 13 minor. Twenty-one were displaced from their homes, eight for six months or longer. One lived at a friend's house for five months and then in a FEMA trailer for three months. Another spent four months in an RV and then two years in a second home.

Where Lions worked or the businesses they owned were ruined or knocked out operation for months. A Lions' ice cream shop was totaled. A funeral home suffered more than \$500,000 in property damage. A medical billing business was without electricity for months. Even those who considered themselves fortunate saw their homes damaged. "I had 18 trees. Thirteen came down—four on the house," said Lion Jerry Cochran.

DuBuisson's dry cleaning business dated from 1929. Eric and Mary DuBuisson had bought Slidell Cleaners from Eric's uncle in 1982 and lived

above the business. A freak flash flood in 1985 had left two feet of water in the building and caused \$200,000 damage, for which insurance covered only a small portion. After the 1985 disaster, the DuBuissons had painstakingly rebuilt the cleaners; they added on and eventually increased their business volume fivefold. But Katrina destroyed their equipment as well as irreparably damaging \$500,000 in customers' clothes. The DuBuissons lived with friends for five months before moving into a cramped FEMA trailer.

Prudently built six feet

above the ground, the Lions clubhouse did not flood. But the damage required the members to replace the roof, fence, refrigerators and freezers and repair the floors. Lions brown-bagged it for the weekly meetings. Each week another Lion or two who returned to Slidell showed up. "I think most of us were anxious to come back to the meetings—the camaraderie and all," said Cochran.

Lions Respond

Help was on the way. Two months after Katrina a Lion from New York visiting his daughter in Mandeville drove over to nearby Slidell to get a closeup look of the damage. "It was horrendous," recalled Frank Milkovich, a retired teacher and school administrator and a Lion for 39 years. "I told my wife that we have to help these people."

Milkovich contacted Art Bell, the president of the Slidell Lions. He asked his own club, the Cold Spring Lions, to collect funds for the Slidell Lions. Among other activities, the Cold Spring Lions held a Mardi Gras. Milkovich also asked other clubs to pitch in and publicized the plight of Slidell in his local newspapers at home. The Cold Spring Lions eventually sent \$12,000

to the Slidell Lions to help needy individuals.

Other clubs from around the country also heard of the destruction in Slidell and began sending money to the Slidell Lions. By June of 2006, the Slidell Lions had received \$20,950 from 10 clubs. "It was just unbelievable. These people we didn't know were sending us all this money," said Cochran.

The Slidell Lions decided to match the funds and distributed the money to a couple dozen of the most needy. The club gave \$3,000 to a man whose home was damaged and whose young son had leukemia. It gave \$1,500 to a woman with a 10-year old daughter and whose husband died in a Red Cross shelter. It gave \$3,000 to a pregnant woman whose husband died while clearing a tree off his home. Even as its own members still struggled to recover their homes and jobs, the club provided critical support for people and institutions who otherwise would have had to do without.

Something else remarkable occurred for the Slidell Lions. Drove of people began coming to their twice-weekly bingo night. What had been a modestly attended event turned into a phenomenon. Lions could not believe the crowds. There was a simple explanation. The storm had wiped out the crowded casinos a short drive away along the Mississippi coast. People who enjoyed gambling needed a place to pursue their pastime.

The club typically cleared \$500 from a bingo night. The flurry of new customers left the club with as much as \$7,000 in profits after one night. In one nine-month stretch, the club netted \$325,000 from bingo. At a time when other Lions clubs and other civic groups that supported the less fortunate were hurting, the Slidell Lions for months on end funneled \$5,000 each month both to the Louisiana Lions Eye Foundation and the Louisiana Lions League for Disabled Children's Camp.

Lions themselves picked up the pieces and moved on. The DuBuissons opened up a dry cleaning business again but this time they are operating as a non-profit that employs those with disabilities. They also purchased an environmentally friendly dry cleaning machine, becoming one of the first businesses to use the new technology.

Most of the Slidell Lions have now returned to town and, aided by new blood, membership is back to its pre-Katrina level. The town itself is a mixed picture. New homes and businesses have sprouted up. But some homes remain abandoned and others have not even been gutted yet.

The Slidell Lions picked themselves up by their bootstraps but they also understand that their recovery and the city's resurgence was made possible by the generous spirit of outsiders. In 2006, the Slidell Lions named Frank Milkovich as its Lion of the Year.



DuBuisson's dry cleaning business was irreparably damaged by the storm.

LCIF Was a Major Benefactor

Following Katrina, LCIF helped equip or rebuild eye care centers, youth camps, schools, libraries and volunteer fire departments. Thanks to contributions from Lions, LCIF designated \$5 million to help Lions on the Gulf Coast provide service.

LCIF funded these projects and others:

- \$350,000 for cash-strapped Lions of Mississippi and Louisiana to continue important service projects such as sight screenings, an eye bank and eye care services for the poor.
- \$170,000 to support the Louisiana Lions League for Disabled Children's Camp.
- \$180,976 to repair Wilkes Youth Camp in Biloxi.

- \$81,000 for Lighthouse for the Blind to repair a building in Gulfport, Mississippi, to expand employment opportunities for the blind in the area and to facilitate the use of the location as a Lions warehouse to store and distribute relief items.

- \$24,000 to replace the educational video libraries at schools in the Bay St. Louis-Waveland School District in Mississippi.

- \$85,000 to replace specialty wheelchairs, adaptive golf carts, special fishing reels and other assistive-technology at the Technology Learning Center, a lending library at the University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast campus.

Club A3 A9 A5 A12 A15
Notes A16 A2 A4 A711 A1

Tom Life Member



Lion Tom Mulhinch, left, receives his Life Membership. Lion Tom is 87 years old and has been a Lion since 1972. He is a member of the Elliot Lake Lions Club, District A5.

Submitted by Lion Anne Brant

Mitchell Lions



Mitchell Lions hosted their 25th Cornfest Pancake Breakfast in August. Pancakes, sausage and eggs were served to over 400 people. Cooking up the pancakes are Lion Bill French, left, Lion Albert Van Herk and Lion Ray McNaught, right.

Submitted by Lion Allen Muegge

Mount Hope Snacks

Mount Hope Lions members, District A711, ran the Snack Bar for the Glanbrook Soccer Club again this past summer. Fun over the soccer season was had by all – a win-win for both clubs, as the Lions Club turns over a portion of the summer's proceeds back to the soccer club.

Submitted by Lion Suzanne Gunby

A9 Youth Exchange

In July the Owen Sound Scenic City Lions had the privilege of hosting a dinner for the A9 Youth Exchange Students. Some of the club members are shown with the students.

Submitted by PZC George Barnes



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Cycling Lion



On August 28 PDG Barry Brett of the Minnow Lake Lions Club, District A5, welcomed 56 year old Lion Ming-Jiing Hsieh from Tainan City, Taiwan. Pushing his 50kg load (bike & gear), Ming-Jiing says that while he is "pedaling through my life" he has discovered that Canadians are friendly and lovely. His starting point was Victoria, and will be ending in St Johns, Newfoundland. He realized that if he can do something for others that is good, then he is willing to endure the pain.

The money he received goes toward those who suffered earthquakes or other disasters or wherever the money is most needed. This is Ming-Jiing's 2nd cycling journey. A few years ago he did Victoria to the Arctic Ocean, inspiring him to choose Canada once again.

We wish Lion Ming-Jiing a safe and successful journey.

Submitted by Lion Leanne Furchner

Lion Wedding



On September 22 at the Widdifield Lions Club, District A5, general meeting, hard working Lion members Connie Alvino and Dan Harasymiw were married during the meeting. This was kept a total secret from all the members by Lion Vern Presse who was conducting the meeting. Members were told we were having a guest speaker and yours truly was given the task of taking her around and introducing her as a motivational speaker. Lion Vern announced we were to have a singsong and when the pianist started playing here comes the bride, in walked Connie and Dan. WOW. That is when we found out our guest speaker was in fact the minister. Some members of the North Bay and Ferris Lions were also in attendance and were all quite surprised. Everyone present wished Dan & Connie all the best in their journey through life together.

Submitted by Lion Bill Campbell

Annual Turkey Shoot

Many happy hunters went home on September 7 with turkeys, after a very successful turkey shoot, hosted by the Whitefish & District Lions Club, District A5. Range Officer was Lion Ken Makela, under the umbrella most of the day to ward off the rain. One Lion from the 'den', Lion Neville Moores Finally, 'got his gobbler', after six years participation. Ramakko's Store and Winchester were the generous event supporters.

Reported by Lion Helen Makela

King of Cans



Lion Len Hallman surrounded by the cans that the Cambridge Highlands Lions Club, District A15, collected over the summer as a fundraiser, 360 pounds of cans and eleven pounds of tabs. The Club separated the tabs from the cans, and the tabs will be given to the Cambridge Capables to buy wheelchairs.

The idea for this fundraiser originated with Lion Jan Ho and all members got involved as the idea snowballed. Members got their families, friends, and neighbours involved in saving cans. Some members from the Galt Cambridge Lions became allies and also started picking up cans and giving them to the Club. The wife of one of their members, Adele Bellan even brought cans back from North Bay trips. The Cambridge Highlands Lions Club certainly appreciated her dedication. In addition, the Club got help from the Paris Lions Club who let the Cambridge Highlands Lions Club put a bin beside their food concession at the Paris Fair and this really helped to increase totals collected.

It just goes to show how one idea can really take off, and also is a great example of how everyone working together really does make a difference.

Submitted by Lion Louise Reeve

Hard Work Honoured



Lion Sandy Ailles being presented with a Letter of Appreciation by Camp Dorset Board member Lion Jim Coulson. The photo, taken in front of the Ailles Family Centre at Lions Camp Dorset at the 30th Anniversary celebration. The Letter of Appreciation was from the Lions Camp Dorset Board of Directors in recognition of Lion Sandy's vision, perseverance and dedication to the establishment of the Camp.

Submitted by Lion Jim Coulson



Terry Fox Donation



Elliot Lake Lions Club member Lion Angelo D'Amato, District A5, presented a donation of \$1,000 to the Terry Fox Run on September 14.

Submitted by Lion Anne Brant

Whitefish Busy



Whitefish & District Lions, District A5, have been very busy over the summer with several hours spent at the local bingo hall in order for the Club to raise in excess of \$7000. The Club also volunteered service at the Penage Road Community Centre to help celebrate Sudbury's 125th Anniversary, 'Doors Open' on July 18 & 19. Shown left to right: Lion John Makela, Lion Helen Makela, Lion Don McLeod, Lion Lorraine McLeod, the 1930 Ford, Lion Ken Makela, and Lion Marilyn Shames.

Submitted by Lion Marilyn Shames

Youth Exchange 08



The Orangeville Lions Club recently hosted the District A9 youth exchange and camp delegates as they traveled through the local area.

The main purpose of the exchange and camp are to create and foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world. For delegates, participation as a youth exchange and/or youth camper is often a lifechanging experience. Traveling to another country, living with a host family, and experiencing another culture are milestone events.

The 2008 District A9 program involves participants from 17 different countries. Delegates spend a portion of their time with host families within the district as well as a week at camp with the other delegates from around the world. Local Amaranth Lions Club members, Jane and Bruce Blears were involved as youth leaders on this year's exchange. The Lions International Youth Exchange Program is a unique cultural learning opportunity that was officially adopted in 1961.

Submitted by Lion Barry Sinclair

Heather Chitussi



Helen Keller Fellowship is presented to Lion Heather Chitussi of the Ajax Lions Club, District A16. Making the presentation is Lion Jim Fair.

Lions Convention Update

July 6 - 10, 2009

Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

June 28 - July 2, 2010

Sydney, Australia

July 4 - 8, 2011

Seattle, Washington, USA

June 22-26, 2012

Busan, Korea

July 5-9, 2013

Hamburg, Germany

Perth Garlic

This past year the Perth Lions Club, District A4, donated \$10,000 to the local hospital; and made large continuing donations to the Sight First II program. The Club also donated this year the final \$2,000 committed to the purchase of a guide dog for a seeing impaired individual.

The Perth Lions Club, under the guidance of newly installed President Donna Beauvais, has been very busy with volunteering their time and expertise to support town activities, such as at the Perth Garlic Festival sponsored by the Perth Lions Club; at the reception for the return of the four Perth area Olympic athletes and manning the gates at the Perth Fair.

Submitted by Lion Yvonne Connaty-Mahoney

Camp Kirk Draw

Lions clubs Camp Kirk Foundation 50:50 draw statement 2008

Revenue:	Ticket Sales	\$30,860.00
Expense:	Printing	\$534.22
	Postage	\$699.03
	Misc	\$17.91
	Expense Total	\$1251.16
	Early Bird Draw @ District A16 Convention (Winner Cayuga Lioness Club)	\$500.00
	Balance	\$29,108.84
	Grand Prize Winner (Coboconk Lions Club)	\$14,554.42
	Lions Clubs Camp Kirk Foundation	\$14,554.42
	Final Balance	NIL

Reported by PDG Paul Brand, Chair

Salvation Army Presentation



Lion Cleo Roy presented a cheque for \$17,479 from District A5 to Geneva Oake, Salvation Army Family Services Director, to help send seventy-seven needy children to camp for one week this past summer. Left to right: PRC Fred Van Der Hooft, PCC Cleo Roy, Geneva Oake, Major Sterling Snelgrove, Salvation Army Community Church Pastor.

Submitted by Lion J. Allan Clark

Flight Academy



Cayuga & District Lions and Cayuga Lioness, District A2, entered floats in the Great Tricycle Race, sponsored by Haldimand Motors.

After a long drought, both clubs won \$1,000 in a 4-way tie for 5th place. Both clubs beautifully captured the theme of "Christmas in September". Club President Stephen Bobo thanked everyone who worked so hard again this year, and a special thanks to Lion Brian Boddington and his wife Kathy, and Lion Dave Erskine for the extra effort put into making the float a winner!

Pickereel Dinner



Saturday, August 9th was Magnetawan's "Heritage Day". As one of the numerous activities going on throughout the day was the Magnetawan Lions Club, District A12, "Pickereel Dinner" held Saturday evening at the Community Centre.

Over 285 people attended the near sellout dinner which featured freshly battered deep-fried pickereel, baked potato or french fries, coleslaw, dinner roll, and beverages, complimented by your choice of numerous kinds of home-made baked pies. Net proceeds of \$2000 from the evening's dinner will go back to support various Lions Club projects within the community.

Lion Dean Bernas is shown rushing the freshly made deep-fried pickereel fillets into the Community Centre to hundreds of waiting, and hungry, dinner patrons.

Submitted by Lion Randy Soth

Civic Improvement



Civic Improvement Director, Lion Bryan Hampson, left, and Lion Larry Hurtubise put the finishing touches on one of five picnic tables made for and donated to the Magnetawan Centennial Park for use by the public during their visit to the park and beach.

Submitted by Lion Randy Soth

Dunchurch Fall Fair



On August 15 & 16 the Dunchurch Lions, District A12, were at the Dunchurch Fall Fair Friday evening and all day Saturday with their crown and anchor machine. The Club also introduced a popcorn machine for the first time and handed out brochures provided by Lions Clubs International. With perfect weather on Saturday popcorn sales started before the Fair was officially open and once again the crown and anchor was a big success.

Pictured from left to right, volunteers Lion Ron Quick, Club President Charlie MacDermid and PP John Domerchie. A good time for all, and a successful fair.

Submitted by Lion George McFarlane

Ken Beacock Melvin



Lion Ken Beacock of the Elliot Lake Lions Club, District A5, received a Melvin Jones award after 49 years as a Lion. The Presentation was made by PDG Barry Brett.

Submitted by Lion Anne Brant



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ATV Run



ATV Chairman Lion Gary Verge presents a cheque to Dr. Michael Truchon for the Bonfield Medical Centre.

Left: Lion Lou Rowe, Lion Irene Lewis, Lion Bob Dugard, Lion Gary Verge, Lion Tom Rowe, Lion Chris Snook, Nikki Losier, Secretary, Lion Ralph Whittle, Doctor Michael Truchon and Lion Karen Whittle

The 6th Annual Bonfield and District Lions Club, District A5 Blue Sea ATV Fundraiser and Poker Run was held on May 3 and raised over \$9000 for Lions Charities, Local Charities and this year a Major Donation was made to the Bonfield Medical Centre to purchase items needed to serve local residents. The Bonfield Medical Centre was built with the Lions help.

The Bonfield Medical Centre purchased a Diagnostic Set, Desiccator, Pulse Oximeter, Asthma Nebulizer, Junior Table Set and Toys for the reception area with these funds.

The remaining funds will be used for local charities such as The Bonfield Family Life Centre, Food Bank, Library, Agricultural Society, Fire Department, school, churches and Township events and also Lions charities such as Campaign Sightfirst, Lions Clubs International Foundation, Diabetes and Hearing Societies.

The Bonfield and District Lions Club would like to thank all who participated, donated, volunteered and sponsored this great event. For more information and pictures please visit our website at www.lionwap.org/bonfieldca.

Gretzky Hockey Stick



The Thamesford Lions Club, District A15, raised \$7000 through the sale of tickets on an autographed Wayne Gretzky hockey stick. The money raised went to support three ladies who participated in the Princes Margaret Hospital (Toronto) 50 km Walk for the fight to find a cure for Breast Cancer, held in September.

In the photo, left to right: Club President Tony Webb, Lorraine Thom, Kim (Gretzky) Kohler, Lion Dianna Clark and former Thamesford Lion Dave Elliott, who donated the hockey stick. The winner was John Tapley of Norwich. The Thamesford Lions say Thanks for your support.

Submitted by Lion Jack Broadfoot

Volunteer Service



Ontario Volunteer Service Awards were presented to Kincardine Lions members, District A9. Pictured left to right Lion Jim Prenger - 25 year award, Katie Kloosterboer - Youth Award, MPP Bill Murdoch, Lion Peter Morris - 20 Year Award, Lion Ken Fair - 15 year Award.

Any Ontario volunteer organization can nominate up to 6 members and one youth each year. <<http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/honours/vsa>>www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/honours/vsa

Submitted by Lion George Ling

St. David's Wii



St. David's & District Lioness Club, District A2, recently donated a Wii game to the Chateau Gardens Nursing Home. Lioness Phyllis Green looks on as a resident is assisted to play a game.

Submitted by Lioness Grace Bissonstte

Wii Play 2Gether



The second annual "Wii Play 2Gether" family tournament was held in August 2008 in the Markham and Richmond Hill areas. This year's tournament was organized by Ontario York Region Heritage Lions Club, District A16, with Milliken Mills Lions Club and Oak Ridges Lions Club as co-organizers. Participants were playing Tennis, Boxing, and Bowling using 4 Wii consoles. There were four preliminary rounds held the beginning of August at Bayview Hill Community Centre, Angus Glen Community Centre, and Bond Lake Arena. The Finals were on August 24th.

The event is to promote family togetherness and interaction between parents and their children. About 300 people participated in the tournament. We had teams of grandparents and grand-children joining with the youngest player being a 3-year-old boy among all participants.

It turned out that the Final was really a "family matter". Anant and Priya Vijay of

Team Vijay#1 advanced to the Final facing Apaar and Lion Rakesh Vijay of Team Vijay#2; all coming from the same family. Lion Rakesh Vijay is from Milliken Mills Lions Club. Team Vijay#2 won the final and took home a brand new Wii console, while Team Vijay#1 won a Nintendo DS system as the 1st runner-up.

We want to thank Milliken Mills Lions Club and Oak Ridges Lions Club for co-organizing the tournament this year. We were very happy to have President Lion David Burke of Thornhill Lions Club joining the tournament with his daughter. Special thanks to RC Lion David Hitchen and Councilor David Cohen of Richmond Hill for coming to the Finals, with Lion David Hitchen presenting prizes to the winners.

Reported by Lion Tim Cheung

Club Project



Each year, the East York Danforth Lions, District A711, Club President selects a project to be completed during their term of office. For the 2007-08 Lion year, Club President Doug Harvey asked that the Club present a special chair for the use of oncology patients receiving chemotherapy treatment at Toronto East General Hospital.

In April, the Club lost one of its long time members - Lion Norm Clarke. In view of Lion Norm's support of the hospital over the years, the Club voted to present a second chair to the hospital in memory of Lion Norm. The staff of the Hospital Foundation were both overjoyed and surprised to receive a second chair. They assured the Lions that the patients would be equally excited about the gift.

Pictured are members of the East York Danforth Lions and members of Lion Norm's family, who were present at the presentation.

Submitted by Lion Ken Thompson

Lions Toll



Sheffield Lions Club members Lion Harvey, Lion Ray, and Lion Albert man the road toll at the African Lion Safari. This is one of the Club's many fundraisers.

Submitted by Lion Susan Hall

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Hugh Fair Life Member



The presentation of a Life Membership by Lion Jim Fair, left, to Lion Hugh Fair, who has been a Lion for 40 years and held virtually every director position including President, Secretary and Treasurer. Over the years Lion Hugh has been a member of the Simcoe, Bowmanville and now the Ajax Lions Club, District A16. Lion Hugh continues to be a very active member at the age of 81.

Submitted by Lion Jim Fair

Bridgenorth Library



The Opening of the Bridgenorth Library Campaign, to raise funds to furnish the library, got off to a great start with the presentation of a cheque for \$175,000 from the members of the Chemung Lake District Lions Club, District A3. The library is to be opened early 2009. Several of the 25 members of the club were able to attend the presentation.

Submitted by Lion Helen Sproule

Sheffield Helen Keller



Sheffield Lions Club President Ted Pimm presented a Helen Keller award to Lion Cliff Hall.

Submitted by Lion Susan Hall

Year End BBQ



The year-end BBQ held in June by the Owen Sound Scenic City Lions, District A9, was especially a great night when Lion Maye Walker was presented with her Helen Keller Fellowship Award by Club President PRC Lenora Raby. Lion Maye was a charter member of the Scenic City Lions Club, being a Lioness prior to the chartering of the Lions Club and has been a very hard working dedicated member, always there for her club.

Submitted by PZC George Barnes



Lottery Draw Winners

As part of the Magnetawan Fall Fair, winners were drawn from a sellout Magnetawan Lions Club, District A12, Lottery Draw at 1 pm on Saturday, August 23rd.

The Grand Prize winner of \$500 was Bev Kirbyson of Port Carling and the ticket was drawn by Mayor Dick Smith. Mr. Kirbyson, in an act of selfless gratitude **immediately gave back \$100 of his winnings** to the Magnetawan Lions Club. Thank you Mr. Kirbyson! The \$250 second prize went to Susan Musgrave of Maple Island and the ticket was drawn by Councillor Kris Nicholls. Third prize of \$100 was won by Walter Schaible, Stoney Creek and the ticket was drawn by Lion Harry Bell. A special thanks to lion George Brooks who was draw chairman.

Submitted by Lion Randy Soth

Friendship Arch



Pictured with the newly installed friendship arch are some of the Cayuga Lions Club members, District A2, and their associates who helped make the renewal of the parkette happen. Standing left to right: Lion Clayt Spears, Lion Gerald Kuckyt, Lion Walter McEwan, Lion Blair King, Darline Kinnear, Joan Langton, Lion Don Young, and Lion Gerald Langton.

For many years the southeast corner of Highway #3 and Cayuga Street had boxwood shrubs in it that spelled "CAYUGA". It was known as the Lions' Parkette, and still is. In 2004 the shrubs had become almost impossible to manage and their removal was advised. Lion Clayt Spears suggested that perhaps a Lions Friendship Arch could be made the centre of a revitalization of the site and the Club began to work to make that happen.

Darline Kinnear, an active member of the beautification committee of the Cayuga and District Chamber of Commerce, and owner of Kinnear Greenhouses, presented a plan for the refurbishing to the Lions and to the Chamber. Materials for the gardens were donated by Empire Garden Centre and Altons Maple Lane Farm Garden Centre. A grant from Haldimand County helped with the purchase of benches and garbage cans, and the arch itself. The arch weighs 500 pounds and staff from Foodland Cayuga helped with its unloading on very short notice when the arch arrived a day before it was supposed to! On Monday, August 25th, the Cayuga Lions Club and friends went to work bolting items into place and installing the arch.

Reported by Lion Stephen Bobo

Bob Receives Melvin



Tiny Township Lions Club, District A12, President Bob Nash received his Melvin Jones Award from RC Pat Byers and PDG Bob Byers at the Club's final Dinner Meeting in June. Lion Bob Nash has been a member of the Lions' family for 27 years with 100% attendance every year. He and his wife Sandy joined the Port McNicoll Lions Club in 1981, holding virtually every position including Treasurer and President. In March 2007, supported by the Port McNicoll Club, Lion Bob was the driving force behind the formation of the new Tiny Township Lions Club of which there are currently 28 members.

Lion Bob is an enthusiastic 'hands on' leader, shown by his very active involvement and chairing of various fund raisers including the Annual Snowmobile Poker Run, Golf Tournament and many others.

Submitted by Lion Marnie Redmond

Perth Raises Funds



The Perth Lions Club, District A4, raised \$3,275 for the Perth Terry Fox run on September 14th. Runners pictured are, from left to right: Lion Jim Hill, Club President Gerry Saumur, 1st Vice President Lion Donna Beauvais, Lion Murray Phillips and Lion Jim Bennett.

Submitted by Lion Yvonne Connaty-Mahoney

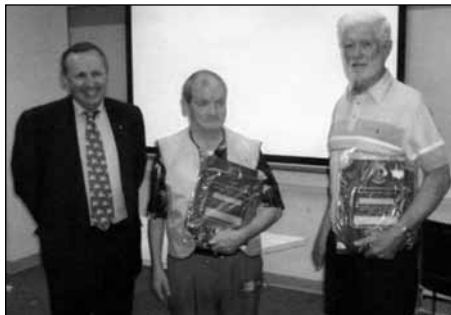
Kincardine Melvin



Kincardine Lions Club, District A9, Melvin Jones Fellows & Helen Keller Fellowship Award were recently awarded. Left to Right: Lion Eric Slade - Melvin Jones Fellow, Lion Ken Fair - Helen Keller Fellowship, Lion Gary Fair - Melvin Jones Fellow.

Submitted by Lion George Ling

Double Melvins



Another District A711 Melvin Jones Award Presentation, made by PDG Wayne Hoey to Toronto Central Lions, Lion Dave Vallance and Lion Wayne Doucette.

Reported by Lion Bob Sherman

Group of Five



Five Melvin Jones Awards were presented to Ajax Lions Club, District A16, members, left to right: Lioness Lin Nowitski, Lioness Germaine Pearce, Lion Len Crocker, Lioness Eleanor Robertson and Lion Don McGovern. The awards were presented by Club President Jim Fair, centre left.

Pancake Breakfast



The Toronto Central Lions Club, District A7, held a Pancake Breakfast, at Buskerfest, in the St. Lawrence Market. Members of the Toronto Central Lions, Maple Lions Club and DG Bill Allison served 700 pancakes in an effort to raise money for Epilepsy Toronto. \$175 was donated to Epilepsy in the end.

Submitted by Lion Doug Lowry

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Swim Class Grads

The Magnetawan Lion's club hosted their annual swim class graduation and BBQ on Friday, August 8th at the Centennial Park Beach. This year 83 children were provided with swim class lessons over the past three weeks of instruction. These classes were provided at no cost to the participants and teach the children how to swim and to practice water safety under the supervision of two certified swim instructors: Chief instructor Kyle Langford, and Assistant Instructor Samantha Saunders, both from Magnetawan. At the conclusion of these classes, participants are awarded a swim class crest, swim sticker, and a small gift from the class instructors.

All costs for this event were covered by the Magnetawan Lions Club and was organized by project co-ordinators Lion Nick Moor and Lion Jack Chuba from the town of Magnetawan.

Most Improved Boy, Alex Depew, receives his trophy and crest from instructors Samantha Saunders and Chief Instructor Kyle Langford.

A group photo of the 2008 graduating class of 83 children.

Respectfully submitted by Lion Randy Soth





Soapbox Derby

Every August, for the past eight years, the North Oshawa Lions, District A16, have combined with the Motor City Car Club of Oshawa to stage a soapbox derby and to utilize the Autofest venue to highlight the work of the Club and to make the draw for the Club's annual car raffle.

Club President Kevin Pumphrey presents the car keys to draw winner Ed Robertson and his wife, from Gananoque, while a number of North Oshawa Lions Club members look on.

The Club is a major sponsor of the soapbox derby, providing a souvenir tee shirt to each participant and a number of the trophies. Club President Kevin Pumphrey presents a trophy to one of the winners.

Submitted by Lion Doug Terry

