

# The International Association of Lions Clubs



## Who are the Lions?

The Lions are men and women dedicated to serving those in need, whether in their own community of halfway around the world. In addition to humanitarian service, they enjoy fellowship and develop leadership skills.

## The Name "Lions"

The official name of "Lions" is "The International Association of Lions Clubs" or simply "Lions Clubs International"

## The Aims and Accomplishments of Lions

Each year Lions clubs perform services and provide goods to thousands of people throughout the world. It can proudly be said that Lions clubs perform far more activities and help more people than any other service organization in the world today.



## Our Motto

**"We Serve"**



## The History of Lions Clubs International

Lions began in June 1917 when a young Chicago insurance agent, Melvin Jones, presented to a group of separate business clubs the idea of consolidating the individual clubs into one strong influential club with the goal of helping the community and serving humanity. The first annual convention was held in Dallas, Texas, at the Adolphus Hotel, October 8-10, 1917.

## Colors and Motto of Lions

To Lions, purple represents loyalty to country, friends, to one's self and to the integrity of mind and heart. It is the color of strength, courage and

dedication to a cause. Gold symbolizes sincerity of purpose, liberality in judgment, purity in life and generosity in mind, heart and commitment to mankind.

that create and foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world.

## **The International Constitution, Objects and Code of Ethics**

The Lions Club provide a structure around which the International Association functions. It also serves as a guide for the Standard Form Constitution and By-Laws under which individual clubs function.

The Lions Clubs Objects outline the aims and goals of Lions. It is up to the individual clubs to use the general objects for specific purposes.

The Code of Ethics is a guideline for the personal values that each Lion should exemplify.

## **International Fellowship and Understanding**

It may appear that the language barrier would make international understanding almost impossible. But international understanding and friendship (or fellowship) is a matter of spirit rather than language. Lions throughout the world communicate with one another through club activities



## **The International Organization**

At the close of the 1997 International Convention the officers of the International Association of Lions Clubs will include the president, immediate past president, first vice president, second vice president, and 32 directors representing various areas of the world.

## **International Headquarters**

The International Headquarters, with a staff of more than 350 full time employees, is located in Oak Brook, Illinois, U.S.A. Offices are maintained in several countries throughout the world.



"Lions are members of community service clubs, dedicated to the idea that the men and women who live in a community are in the best position to know who needs help and why. More than 44,500 strong, these local clubs are part of the world's largest such organization, with 1.4 million members serving in more than 180 countries and areas. The association is both non-political and non-sectarian. Lions are now best known for their sight-related programs, including SightFirst, the world's largest blindness prevention program.

### **Lions Clubs International**

The world's largest service club association, Lions Clubs International has 1.4 million members in more than 44,500 clubs in approximately 185 countries and geographical areas. Lions are men and women who volunteer their time to humanitarian causes. Founded in 1917, the association's motto is "We Serve."

### **Mission of Lions Clubs International**

Lions Clubs International is dedicated to helping those less fortunate in their communities and around the world. Cutting across all national, racial and cultural boundaries, activities have included sight conservation and work with the visually impaired, youth programs including drug education and prevention and

volunteer programs, diabetes detection and research and work for international cooperation and understanding

laws, objects and code of ethics were approved. Just three years after its formation, the organization became international when the first club in Canada was established in 1920. Major

## **History of Lions Clubs International**

The International Association of Lions Clubs began as the dream of Chicago businessman Melvin Jones. He believed that local business clubs should expand their horizons from purely professional concerns to the betterment of their communities and the world at large.

Jones' own group, the Business Circle of Chicago, agreed. After contacting similar groups around the country, an organizational meeting was held on June 7, 1917, at the LaSalle Hotel in Chicago. The new group took the name of one of the groups invited, the "Association of Lions Clubs," and a national convention was held in Dallas in October of that year. A constitution, by-

international expansion continued as clubs were established, particularly throughout Europe, Asia and Africa during the 1950s and 60s.

Perhaps the single event having the greatest impact on the association's service commitment occurred in 1925 when Helen Keller addressed the Lions at their international convention in Cedar Point, Ohio USA. It was there that she challenged Lions to become "knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness." They responded, and Lions are now best known for their sight-related programs, including SightFirst, the world's largest blindness prevention program.

young people away from harmful behaviors such as gang involvement, violence and substance abuse. The Leo Clubs Program, International Youth Exchange, International

### **SightFirst**

In 1990, Lions established SightFirst, a US\$140 million global initiative to rid the world of preventable and reversible blindness. The unprecedented program joins leading blindness and prevention experts, blindness prevention organizations, governments and Lions volunteers in an effort to establish long-term solutions in eliminating preventable and reversible blindness.

### **Youth Programs**

Second only to the Lions' commitment to aiding the blind and visually impaired is a strong dedication to serving young people. The Lions Youth Outreach program challenges young people to learn, to achieve and to serve. By focusing on volunteerism, it steers

Youth Camps and the Lions International Peace Poster Contest are all youth activities sponsored by Lions Clubs International that promote international cooperation and understanding.

### **Lions Clubs International Foundation**

Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) is the charitable arm of Lions Clubs International (LCI). The foundation's mission is to support the efforts of Lions clubs around the world in serving their local and global communities by funding humanitarian service projects."

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