

SECTION THREE:

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 or half-way 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. The primary aim of the Lions is service: first to the club's own community, second, to those in need wherever they may be.

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.

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.

Perhaps the single event having the greatest impact on the Association's service commitment occurred in 1925 when a young blind and deaf woman, Helen Keller, addressed the Lions at the International Convention in Cedar Point, Ohio. It was there that she challenged Lions to become "*knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness.*"

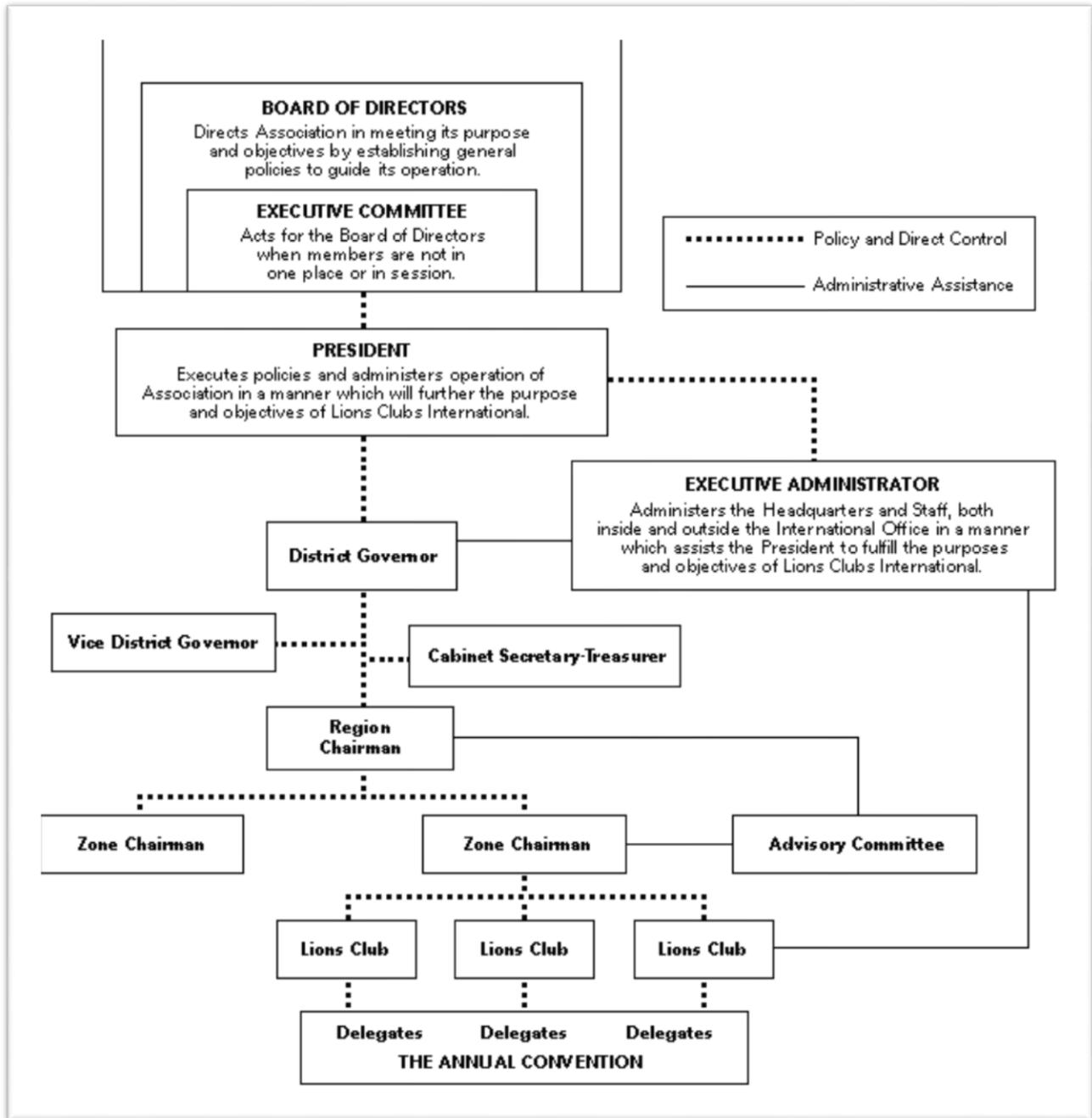
The Emblem. Throughout the world, Lions are recognized by the emblem they wear on their lapels. It consists of a gold letter "L" on a circular blue field. Bordering this is a circular gold area with two lion profiles at either side facing away from the center. The word "Lions" appears at the top, and "International" at the bottom. Symbolically, the lions face both past and future - proud of the past and confident of the future.

Official Colors, Motto and Slogan of Lions. The royal colors of purple and gold were selected as the official colors when the Association was organized in 1917. 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.

The Lions motto is "We Serve."

The Slogan of Lionism is "Liberty, Intelligence, Our Nations Safety."

The International Constitution, Objects and Code of Ethics. The International Constitution of Lions International provides 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 languages. Lions throughout the world communicate with one another through club activities that create and foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world.

The International Organization. Since 1997, the officers of the International Association of Lions Clubs 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 300 full-time employees, is located in Oak Brook, Illinois, U.S.A. (Chicago area). Offices are maintained in several countries throughout the world.

Records of Lions activities are kept in the Oak Brook office. This office is also responsible for the printing and distribution of materials to individual districts and clubs.

The International Headquarters provides a variety of brochures and manuals that are of help to Lions at both the club and district levels.

Merchandise items are available through the Club Supplies and Distribution Division. These items can be seen in the official Lions Supply Catalog which is sent each year to the club secretary.

International Convention. The annual International Convention is held in late June or early July. It constitutes the annual meeting of the members of the association.

Some of the activities held during the convention include:

1. Voting on constitutional amendments
2. Election of new members to the Board of Directors
3. Seminars of interest to all Lions
4. District Governors-Elect Seminar
5. General Sessions
6. International Parade

Official Directory of Lions Clubs. The Directory of Lions Clubs contains a list of all the clubs in the world. The listing includes the name, address and phone number of the club president and the meeting time and place for each club. It also provides information on the Executive Officers, and International Directors, as well as the names and addresses of all district governors, cabinet secretary-treasurers, council chairmen and extension representatives. The Directory is available through International Headquarters for \$4.00 plus postage.

International membership statistics. There are Lions clubs in 208 countries and geographical locations throughout the world. Total membership as of June 30, 1999, is 1,417,269 individuals active in 44,551 clubs in 740 districts, making Lions Clubs International the largest service club association in the world.

THE LION Magazine. The official magazine of Lions Clubs International, *THE LION* was established in November 1918. Since then, it has been received regularly by every member of the association. The annual subscription price is included in the International dues.

THE LION is published in English, Spanish, Swedish, French, Flemish-French, Italian, Finnish, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Dutch, Korean, Danish, Chinese, Norwegian, Icelandic, Turkish, Greek, Hindu and Thai.

THE LION Magazine has four major functions:

1. To inform the members of official notices.
2. To serve as a central reference point for service and fundraising ideas and the best methods to employ in order to ensure their success.
3. To supply information about countries and areas in which Lions are active, enabling all members to better understand and support international program objectives and to promote worldwide peace and understanding.
4. To present the story of Lions Clubs International in the best possible manner so that not only Lions, but the casual reader will receive a favorable impression of the association.

Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF). Lions Clubs International Foundation is the charitable arm of Lions Clubs International. The foundation was chartered in 1968 to support the efforts of Lions clubs around the world in serving their local communities and the world community through humanitarian service, major disaster relief and vocational assistance programs.

The SightFirst program, the aggressive global service initiative that mobilizes Lions' resources at all levels, responds to worldwide needs for the prevention of blindness. LCIF SightFirst grants (made from more than US\$140 million in donations restricted for Campaign SightFirst) are supporting projects that meet critical needs in both developing and developed countries. The SightFirst program has already provided nearly one million cataract surgeries, initiated eye health awareness programs, supported eye disease treatments plans, constructed hospitals and funded training for ophthalmic personnel.

Recognizing LCIF's healthy financial position, the board of trustees increased the yearly amount available for LCIF Standard, Emergency and Major International Service Program grants. The board also created a new grant category: LCIF International Assistance grants. This program provides funding for humanitarian aid projects involving Lions in different regions of the world working together to help the less fortunate.

LCIF honors donors with a variety of awards and forms of recognition. The highest form of recognition is the Melvin Jones Fellowship. Other recognition includes Honor Roll and Contributing Membership.

Leo Club Program. A Leo club is an activity sponsored by a Lions club. Leo clubs provide young men and women with an opportunity to serve others in their community - and around the world. Leo clubs can be school affiliated or community based.

Leo club activities include club meetings, organizing and conducting community service projects and social functions.

The Leo motto - Leadership, Experience, Opportunity - is fulfilled as members work together to respond to the needs of others. Participating in Leo activities and projects helps young people prepare for the future by developing leadership, organization and social skills. Through their service efforts, Leos develop a positive self image and personal growth as they meet new challenges and responsibilities.

Lions Youth Outreach Program. The mission of the Lions Youth Outreach Program, "Changing Tomorrow Today," is to help and challenge youth to learn, to achieve and to serve. Emphasis is placed

on the many opportunities available for young people to volunteer in their communities in order to help them gain responsible citizenship skills and avoid harmful behaviors such as gang involvement and drug abuse. A video program is available to help Lions clubs implement a youth outreach program in their community.

Alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse threatens the lives and future of young people everywhere. To counter these negative influences, Lions sponsor educational programs in thousands of schools. The Lions-Quest Skills for Growing (Grades K-5), Skills for Adolescence (Grades 6-8) and Skills for Action (high school) teach youth how to make healthy decisions and to say "no" to drug abuse and other negative behavior. All three Lions-Quest programs also include community service and violence prevention/conflict resolution components.