

*Welcome Home  
Lions of the World  
90th Anniversary  
Chicago, Illinois  
“Birthplace of Lionism”*



NOTES

## FORWARD TO THE FUTURE

Chicago has been host to nine (9) conventions in the 90 year history of Lions Clubs International: 1919, 1937, 1944, 1950, 1953, 1958, 1960, 1967, 1980 and 2007.

2017 will make the 100th anniversary and the members of Host Committee hope that we can again, Welcome You Home to Chicago, the Birthplace of Lionism as it has been honored to join with Lions around the world to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of this great Association!



## LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL - BRIEF HISTORY

### *THE BEGINNING YEARS—1917-1925*

.....**AND SO IT BEGAN....** "I'm finding out," he said, "that you don't get very far until you start doing something for somebody else."

Melvin Jones, who was the Secretary of "The Business Circle", was authorized by the group to invite delegations from other business men's' clubs to Chicago to discuss the affiliation of the independent groups into a single association.

The invitation was extended to twenty (20) delegates representing some twenty-seven (27) clubs who met for a luncheon on the 2nd floor in East Room of the LaSalle Hotel, LaSalle and Madison Streets, in Chicago on June 7, 1917.

Some of the Clubs invited were: The International Association of Lions Clubs of Evansville, Indiana, the Vortex Club of St. Louis Missouri and Detroit, Michigan, the Business and Professional Men's Association of St. Paul Minnesota, the Optimists, the Reciprocity Clubs, the Wheels, the Concord club of Omaha, and the Cirgonians of Los Angeles.

Although the name of the organization was to become "Lions," it was not until April of 1920 that the emblem as we know it today was finally agreed upon. The original design went through many changes and much discussion until finally Melvin Jones took matters into his own hands and created a rough design and asked a Lion commercial artist friend to do a final rendering.

Dr. William Woods, an Evansville physician was the President of the original International Association of Lions Clubs of Evansville, Indiana and its delegate to the meeting of the service groups.

Original charter of the International Association of Lions Clubs was 10/24/1916. All lions clubs chartered after 8/30/1916 were organized under that name and by June 1, 1917 there were 35 clubs that had received charters from the International Association of Lions Clubs The Chicago Central Lions Club received its charter on August 2,1917

The call to the first convention of Lions Clubs was done by Dr. William Woods, stating that "The first convention of Lions Club was held at the Adolphus Hotel in the City of Dallas, Texas on October 8,9,10,1917." At that convention, Dr. Wood was elected President with Melvin Jones as Secretary-Treasurer.

The delegates voted to open the membership to women as well as men. It retained the Lions' emblem, the head of a Lion holding a club in its mouth marked "International." The group chose purple and gold as the Lions' colors and Melvin Jones was authorized to open a headquarters in Chicago.

During the rest of 1917 and into the following year, Lions clubs generally concentrated on projects to support the nation's war effort ranging from bond drives, collections of books and magazines, entertaining service men, help for war orphans and widows, and fund-raising for the Red Cross.

At the 1918 convention in St. Louis, Missouri, the Constitution and By-Laws Committee proposed an amendment to the constitution eliminating women from membership in Lions Clubs. The Committee on Club Ethics made some minor changes in the Code of Ethics adopted in Dallas the year before. However, almost all of these 1918 changes were restored at the convention in 1919.

The first issue of "the Lion" appeared in November, 1918 – 28 pages plus cover, summarizing the St. Louis Convention, listing new clubs and reported on the activities of seven (7) existing clubs. |

At the 1919 convention in Chicago, the definition of Lions (Liberty, Intelligence, Our Nation's Safety) was adopted after being presented by a young Denver attorney, Halsted Ritter, in an impassioned luncheon speech.

The first state Lions Convention was held in Muskogee, Oklahoma on May 28, 1919.

## **"QUOTES" From Melvin Jones**



On of the cardinal principles of Lionism is to be willing to perform humanitarian service without hope or desire for recognition of reward.

If a Lions Club carries out its Objects, it will have a full program. It will be interested in world affairs, in national problems, in the needs of its own community and in the welfare of its individual neighbors.

True brotherhood exists where people live together, work together and break bread together in mutual trust and respect.

The Lions are unflinchingly united in a strong stand for a peace that ensures freedom and justice for all people and nations. There can be no temporizing where human values and rights are concerned. human values and rights are concerned.

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[August 5, 2010](#) – LCIF Providing Relief for Pakistan Flooding  
[August 27, 2010](#) – Lions Quest Announces Educator Award Winner  
[September 1, 2010](#) – Vice President Tam Named to Pediatric Cataract Initiative's Global Advisory Council  
[September 19, 2010](#) – Opening Eyes Celebrates 10 Years: Partnership Program Saves Sight of 200,000 Athletes  
[September 24, 2010](#) – Lions Mark World Sight Day in Japan by Providing Services for Visually Impaired  
[November 2, 2010](#) – Lions, Partners Provide Trachoma Treatments to 10 Million in Ethiopia  
[December 1, 2010](#) – Preventing Measles, Improving Health for 41 Million Children. Lions and LCIF are joining a world-wide effort spearheaded by the [Measles Initiative](#) to protect children from measles – a leading cause of childhood blindness. This special Lions-Measles Initiative pilot program will take place in four African countries – Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mali and Nigeria. The Lions-Measles Initiative pilot program is being funded in part by a US\$400,000 grant to LCIF from the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#). LCIF is providing an additional US\$300,000 to support the project.

#### **YEAR 2011—BEGINNING**

March 18, 2011 will be the 33rd annual Lions Day with the UN (LDUN) taking in New York City. The event will feature an appearance by International President Scruggs, Past International President Wroblewski, UN ambassadors/speakers and the International Peace Poster Contest award ceremony. In addition to the award ceremony, there will also be a satellite event in Kenya hosted by First Vice President Wing-Kun Tam, and featuring Lions work aligned with UN agencies in Nairobi. [Visit the LDUN Web page for more information](#)

In March, 1920, the magazine described the establishment of a wives' club, the first recorded in the Association's central publication. It was called "the Lioness Club of Quincy, Illinois" organized for the express purpose of being a helpmate organization to the Lions and Quincy. The April issue of The Lions showed the design submitted by the Oklahoma City Lions Club of the Lions Emblem, which was adopted at a Board of Directors Meeting in January 1920.

Lions became international on March 12, 1920 with the Border Cities Lions Club established in Ontario, Canada

The Lions song, "Don't You hear Those Lions Roar?" written by Robert Kellogg of the Hartford, Connecticut Lions Club was first introduced at the Omaha, Nebraska convention in 1924.

The location of the Breakers Hotel in Cedar Point, Ohio for the 9th annual convention of Lions Club International in 1925 became the turning point for all Lions. Helen Keller stood quietly on the stage and asked that the Lions "to constitute yourselves Knights of the Blind in this crusade against darkness."

Not only did she start the Lions on their continuing crusade against blindness, she was made the first woman Lion along with her teacher Anne Sullivan becoming the second lady lion – this honor was made unanimous by the entire convention.

#### ***THE FORMATIVE YEARS 1926-1939***

A Lion is likely to turn up anywhere. One, Admiral Richard E. Byrd, Jr., a member of the Washington D.C. Lions Club flew over the North Pole May 9, 1926, and sent a letter read at the San Francisco convention in 1926, which said "we carried the Lions Club flag with us to the top of the world and felt it the greatest possible honor to do so." To continue the saga, On November 28, 1929, Admiral Byrd and his chief pilot Bernt Balchen flew to the South Pole. Now Lions had been to both the top and the bottom of the earth.

China became the 3rd lions nation when a club began meeting in Tientsin on October 1, 1926.

Mexico was next with formation of a club in Nuevao Laredo on March 15, 1927.

Cuban Lions held their first meeting in Havana on June 23, 1927. Lionism in Cuba was strong and vigorous for more than three decades but became inactive after the 1959 revolution with 84 clubs and 3,000 members being put on status quo because they could no longer function.

At the 1924 Convention, In Omaha, Harry A. Newman, a Toronto attorney, became the 8th Lions International President, the first citizens of another country to hold that office.

Melvin Jones was remembered in Chicago as a soloist whose strong, resonant tenor for many years was a part of the offerings of the Appolo Club, the City's principal choral society, soon had the Lions singing like birds. "I introduced songs the first thing," he recalled. "It seemed to me that the meetings were pretty dead until we limbered them up with community song."

Among the many official Lions songs is "Don't You hear Those Lions Roar?" for which Lion Joseph W. Thurston of Hartford, Connecticut contributed the words and Lion Robert Kellogg of the same club, the music. The creation of an official Lions song book took a number of years, but finally in 1926, after much procrastination, Lions International had finally achieved an official songbook

One of the many Lions "first" in service to the blind was the first Boy Scout troop composed entirely of blind boys organized in 1929 by the Lions Club of Berkeley, California.

The tail twister, as we know the term today in Lionism has long been a part of the history and lore of the organization. There was one point in time, however, that certain Lions did not like this title and wanted the person holding this office to be called a "Spizzerinkter. Finally in 1930, International President Ray Riley told the Board they were taking themselves too seriously and he further suspected the clubs were going to go right on having tail twisters whether the Board liked it or not."

In 1931 Lions in Toronto, Ontario, Canada hosted the first convention to be held outside the United States.

The Association received a major international publicity boost with the Chicago Worlds Fair in 1933 and 1934. When the Century of Progress opened on May 27, 1933, Lions Clubs Interna-

[September 24, 2009](#) – LCIF Benefits from Attorney's Goodwill

[September 29, 2009](#) – SightFirst China Action Celebrates 10 Years, Saving Sight of 4.5 Million People

[September 29, 2009](#) – LCIF Assistance for Philippines Typhoon Relief

[September 30, 2009](#) – LCIF Relief for Tsunami-Ravaged Samoa

[October 2, 2009](#) – Assistance for Indonesia

[October 26, 2009](#) – Korean Lions Pledge More Than US\$1.25 Million

[November 6, 2009](#) – Lions Clubs International Recognized at 20th World Diabetes Congress

[November 12, 2009](#) – Lions Dedicate Chinese Village Rebuilt After Earthquake with LCIF Support

[December 18, 2009](#) – World Health Organization Recognizes Lion for SightFirst Work

[December 27, 2009](#) – LCIF Panelist in Discussion on NGOs in China on China Radio International

## YEAR 2010

[January 13, 2010](#) – Lions, LCIF Provide Earthquake Relief in Haiti

[February 11, 2010](#) – New Web Site for Lions Quest Launches

[February 22, 2010](#) – New Look for LCIF Debuts

[March 1, 2010](#) – LCIF Providing Relief for Chile Following Devastating Earthquake

[March 3, 2010](#) – LCIF Partner in Halting Transmission of River Blindness in Ecuador

[March 3, 2010](#) – Peace Poster Grand Prize Winner Announced

[April 1, 2010](#) – Bank of America Awards Grant to LCIF for Lions Quest

[April 14, 2010](#) – Lions and LCIF Providing Earthquake Relief in China

[April 26, 2010](#) – Vermont Lions Club and Third Grade Class Named Winner of Lions Quest Service Contest

[May 14, 2010](#) – LCIF Responds to Tennessee Flooding

[June 1, 2010](#) – LCIF Expands Partnership with Essilor

[June 28, 2010](#) – Partnership with the Bausch + Lomb Early Vision Institute Aims to Prevent Childhood Blindness

[July 1, 2010](#) – Foundation Launches Public Awareness Campaign on Sight

[July 2, 2010](#) – Retired North Carolina Airline and Military Pilot Elected President of Lions Clubs International

[July 8, 2010](#) – Indiana Teen Wins US\$10,000 in the Global Youth Music Competition

[July 22, 2010](#) – LCIF Donates to UNICEF School-in-a-Box Program

[July 27, 2010](#) – LCIF Supports the Measles Initiative with Grant from Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

The Iraq Host Lions Club was chartered by Lions Clubs International President Jimmy Ross on April 5, 2007 in a solemn ceremony in Amman, Jordan. Most of the new club members are young professionals. Charter President Akeel is a contractor. Other members include a poet, civil engineer, jewelry merchant and other business leaders. The efforts were led by Salim Moussan, a past international director from Lebanon, who has many contacts in Iraq and throughout the Middle East, with support from other Lions in District 351 in Lebanon and Jordan

A short summary of a portion of 2009 and 2010 are listed below by date. Detailed information on these events be seen by going to the LCI website or clicking on the underlined date and review the press release.

## YEAR 2009

[January 27, 2009](#) – Former President Jimmy Carter Dedicates "Gift of Sight" Statue at Headquarters

[March 30, 2009](#) – IFRC and Lions Clubs Join Forces to Help Communities Prepare for Disaster

[April 8, 2009](#) – Noor Dubai Protects Sight of 500,000 Men, Women and Children Worldwide in First Six Months

[June 1, 2009](#) – Former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell to Address 2009 Lions Clubs International Convention

[June 1, 2009](#) – Australian Youth Activist to Receive Lions Clubs International Humanitarian Award

[June 17, 2009](#) – Lions Join Call for Action on Blindness

[July 10, 2009](#) – German Business Leader Elected President Of Lions Clubs International

[August 3, 2009](#) – Lions Join United We Serve Initiative

[August 13, 2009](#) – LCIF Provides US\$190,000 for Flood Relief in Taiwan

[September 1, 2009](#) – LCIF, Lions Respond to California, USA, Wildfires

[September 10, 2009](#) – 10 Million Children Screened through Sight for Kids

[September 11, 2009](#) – Lions to Screen Children October 8 in Czech Republic for Lions World Sight Day 2009

[September 18, 2009](#) – Lions Clubs Record Second Straight Membership Increase

[September 23, 2009](#) – Lions Clubs International Wins Web Site and Video Awards

tional was represented. Visitors from every continent learned about Lions from the members manning a booth in the Social Science Division at the Fair. Some 5,000 lions representing 1,309 clubs were there too.

In 1939, the Lions had their special "days" at both the San Francisco and New York fairs. In the Court of Peace, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia and Grover Whelan, Fair President, welcomed 1,000 Lions who came on to New York from their convention in Pittsburgh. On Treasure Island, 4,000 visiting Lions were honored with a special program.

Amelia Earhart, an honorary member of the New York City Lions Club, completed a record-breaking nonstop flight from Los Angeles to Mexico during the 1935 International Convention in Mexico City.

One of the earliest Lions Camps was organized by the Casper, Wyoming Lions Club. Named for the late Allen H. Stewart former district governor, it opened in the mid 1930s as a milk camp during the depression

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Randolph-Sheppard Bill on June 20, 1936 whereby blind people are to operate vending stands inside government buildings. The co-authors of the bill, representative Jennings Randolph of West Virginia and Senator Morris Sheppard of Texas were both lions.

Melvin Jones was in the spotlight during the 1937 convention in Chicago. 15 members of the Chicago Central Lions Club were on stage the second morning in Chicago's Civic Opera House where Jones was presented with a medallion in his own image designed by a noted artist.

Lions Don Schur, Charles Nutting and S.A. Dodge from the Uptown Lions Club of Detroit, Michigan founded a school in 1938 to train dog guides and provide training for blind people in how to use them. Leader Dogs was born! S. A. Dodge went on to become International President in 1953.

In 1939, a "Citizenship and Patriotism Code" for Lions International was copyrighted to meet a need of which the directorate had been conscious for some time.

More than 100 countries have issued Lions logo postage

stamps in recognition of Lions Club activities. The first Lions stamp was issued by Cuba during the 24<sup>th</sup> International Convention in Havana in 1940.

The New York City Lions played a key role in founding the first eye bank in the mid 1940's.

The Lions Clubs International Constitution was revised at the 28th International Convention held in Chicago 1944 to provide for the Board of Directors to make future convention selection sites.

In 1945, due to the War, there was no International Convention held - the Board found it necessary to postpone the Convention so as to have it called and held in conjunction with the 1946 convention.

The humanitarian interest of Lions Clubs International is represented by many facets of work within the United Nations. Lions took a leading role in activities during the UN Charter Conference at San Francisco in 1945; and since 1947, Lions Clubs International has been one of the non-governmental organizations holding consultative status to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

International President Smith presented a charter to the Geneva Lions Club on May 19 and to the Stockholm Lions Club on May 23, 1948. The Stockholm Lions Club, however, completed organizational requirements before the Geneva Lions and is considered Europe's first Lions Club.

One of the Associations' most inspiring clubs was formed in Kalaupapa, on the island of Molokai in Hawaii. The date was April 24, 1948. Kalaupapa is a leper colony founded in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century by Father Damien.

In April, 1949, the International Board of Directors gathered in Chicago and learned from Secretary General Jones that 160 acres in 31 lots had been purchased for a Lions Clubs International City. This "city" would be located 27 miles southwest of Chicago's Loop. Jones proposed that it would be a home for International Headquarters and staff employees. The corporation was known as "Liondom".

The first club in England was organized in March of 1950.

In 2003, Vatican City became the 192nd country to embrace Lionism.

In October, 2003, in the battle to fight a major cause of preventable blindness, the Carter Center's River Blindness Program and Lions Clubs International Foundation celebrated the delivery of more than 50 million Mectizan® treatments in 11 countries in Africa and the Americas since 1996.

In 2004, United Nations Stamps began to feature Winning Lions International Peace Posters contest winners. On September 21, 2004, the stamps became available for purchase through the United Nations Postal Administration in Vienna, Austria; Geneva, Switzerland and New York City or from the UN Web site.

In 2005 Lions launched Campaign Sight First II with a goal of raising at least US \$150 millions dollars to continue and expand the work of Sight First I.

As of February, 2006 – Lions Clubs International grew to 197 geographical areas, with the latest one being the Republic of Maldives.

Then, in May of 2006 came The small island nation of Seychelles, population 81,500 became the 198th Lions country with the chartering of the Paradise Lions Club.

The 199th Lions Country became the Seven Trucial States of the Persian Gulf formed the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the 1970's.

The 200<sup>th</sup> country to become part of the Lions family is Iraq.

Effective January 1, 2007, Family Unit Certification became an official part of Lionism allowing reduced dues for lion members living in the same residence from the same family.

A 30-foot-long red-tipped white cane parade float, entitled "Sight First", symbolic of Lions Clubs' efforts on behalf of the visually impaired was showcased for an audience of millions around the world during the 118th Rose Parade on New Year's Day, January 1, 2007. This is the 21st year Lions Clubs International has sponsored a float.

## ***THE GOLDEN YEARS 1950-1980***

### ***THE EXPANDING YEARS 1980-2000***

From February 29 to March 1, 1984, Lionism's involvement in battling diabetic retinopathy through diabetes education and research came into focus with a meeting held at the headquarters office.

In June, 1984 the Association introduced Lions-Quest Skills for Adolescence, the major initiative for implementing the drug awareness program. Lions-Quest was created through the joint efforts of Lions Clubs International and Quest International in Granville, Ohio, a leading developer of programs for young people.

In 1987, the Lions International Convention approved an amendment to the constitution to remove the word "male as a criterion for membership in a Lions Club. The removal of this word, allowed both men and women to be invited to be Lions.

The first Lions club in an Eastern bloc country was organized in late 1988 in Budapest, Hungary with 27 charter members, eight of which were women. Sponsorship was by the Helsinki Lions Club of Finland.

Another worldwide Lions club project, the first Peace Poster Contest used art – a language which needs no translation – to dramatize without words – how peace in the world could be attained. In fact, the official rules distributed to clubs in 1988 prohibited the use of words.

Poland's first Lions club appeared Poznan on April 22, 1989. with 23 members in attendance at the first meeting.

In 1990, the Lions Clubs International Foundation launched its most aggressive sight preservation effort, SightFirst. The US\$143.5 million program strives to rid the world of preventable and reversible blindness by supporting desperately needed health care services.

### ***THE FUTURE YEARS—2000 TO 2007***

Mainland China came into Lionism in 2002 with the formation of 2 clubs.

On August 29, 1952, International President Edgar Elbert and Secretary Byrd made the necessary arrangements and 209 N. Michigan Avenue in Chicago became Lions Clubs International.

In 1953, in Chicago, Helen Keller once again appeared before the Lions saying "Dear Lions, my Knights of the Blind, As I have always called you. What a wonderful moment this is, as I stand before you and think of the light you are spreading among the people of the world.

"We Serve" became the Association's official motto at the International Convention in New York City in 1954. The winner was created by Lion D. A. Stevenson of Font Hi", Ontario, Canada.

Famed humanitarian Dr. Albert Schweitzer became an honorary Lion in 1956 as a member of the Ysoudre Lions Club in the Cameroons. Dr. Schweitzer wrote "I hope that the movement of Lions progresses. It has such a good influence of men of our era."

George A. Bonham, president of the Peoria, Illinois created the white cane for blind individuals to get about. By 1956 every state in the United States had passed White Cane Safety Laws.

The first Leo Club was founded in 1957 by the Glenside, Pennsylvania Lions Club and was known as the Abington High School Leo Clubs.

The year 1959 marked a major step forward in expanding the world of the visually handicapped. The American Printing House for the Blind in Louisville, Kentucky produced the first "talking books". Articles from Newsweek magazine were recorded on tape for blind persons.

Lions Clubs arrived at the South Pole when a group of U.S. scientists and military personnel established the southernmost Lions Club in the world. South Pole Antarctica became the 101st area on the Lions Map with the organizations of the 59ers Club.

Melvin Jones died at his home in Flossmoor, Illinois on Thursday, June 1, 1961 at the age of 82 years.

In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson issued a proclamation that marked the climax of the campaign by the blind to gain endorsements of their rights as pedestrians. Congress, by a joint resolution approved October 6, 1964, authorized the President to proclaim October 15, 1964 as White Cane Safety Day.

Dr. Kim Hi Joon, a charter member of the Nam San Lions Club, originated the idea of providing free eye operations for people in outlying areas. Dr. Kim was one of the founders of the Korean Ophthalmological Society in 1964. He initiated the Lions Eye Project in the same year and it has become an annual event.

Inventions, which allowed blind people to type messages to one another, were accomplished by a physician blinded in World War I, who was a Lion. The club in San Diego accomplished the Braille-Writers manufacture. They talked with Thomas J. Watson, President of IBM, to see if he would cooperate in its manufacture. Eager to help, Watson offered to produce the first thousand machines free for distribution by Lions to blinded World War II veterans.

Hadley School for the Blind was founded in 1915 by a high school teacher who became totally blind at the age of 55. William Allen Hadley headed the commercial department of Chicago Lakeview High School. He created his Braille correspondence course for a book-starved woman, using the Braille Writer, which was invented by Frank H. Hall of the Illinois School for the Blind in Jacksonville, Illinois. During the depression, when Hadley's usual sources of income melted away, the Lions Clubs in the area learned about him and went to his aid.

Dr. Richard Kinney who was both blind and deaf, President of Hadley, when he died in 1979, wrote 4 books of poetry, one textbook for the deaf blind, visited 40 foreign countries, published articles in many leading magazines and received countless awards. Living with joyous courage in a world he could neither see nor hear, he summed up his philosophy in the phrase "to love and help live". If we shoot for the stars, said Kenney, we may at least touch a rainbow."

France was the largest Lion country in Europe with Sweden and Italy not far behind.

The genesis of the Lions Youth Exchange Program came out of a Lions meeting held in 1960 in Kobe, Japan according to Jo-

seph Saito of Sacramento, California. The president of the Kobe East Lions Club and two Lions for California/Nevada Multiple District 4. Initially it was simply a student exchange between the Lions of California and Japan but because of its success it became a worldwide Lions activity

Another entity "Dialogue, was chartered in 1961 and began publishing in Berwyn, Illinois in January, 1962 with a \$1,000 grant from the Central Lions Club. Don Nold, a member of the Berwyn lions Club and a journalist who had lost his sight, started it. A worldwide magazine it was sent to South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and all of Canada.

As Lions moved into the golden anniversary year, 1967, membership passed the 800,000 mark.

President Dr. Robert D. McCullough dedication the fourth location for The International Headquarters Building in Oak Brook, Illinois on April 21, 1971. Prior to that time, there had been three (3) other locations for the headquarters office: (1) Insurance Exchange Building (2) McCormick Building, and (3) 209 North Michigan Avenue.

In 1972, the very first LCIF Grant which consisted of \$5,000 was sent to South Dakota, District 5-SW, for aid in flood relief.

In February 1973, International Association of Lions Clubs welcomed its 1,000,000 member - Barney Gill of the Oceana Lions Club in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

The Melvin Jones Fellowship was created in 1973 to honor individuals who have made outstanding contributions to humanitarian endeavors. On November 4, 1973, The first Melvin Jones Fellow was awarded to William G. Clayton, a member of the Fort Lauderdale Downtown Lions Club and Dr. Luciano Nunziante, a member of the Barletta, Italy Lions Club on June 14, 1974.

When it opened in November 1979, Lions Manor in Windsor, Ontario was believed to be the largest single club project in the world of Lionism. Lions Manor was built and operated by the Windsor Downtown Lions Club, which was founded in 1920 as the first Lions club in Canada. 40 of the 150 apartments were reserved for the legally blind. Those over 60 occupy the other 110 apartments, and rents are adjusted according to ability to pay.