

The Host Lions Club over the past 65 years has found an incredible number of ways to bring to life the Lions motto, "We Serve." It is not possible to recall them all, but here are some of them in no particular order:

--The Club issued merit certificates to outstanding students in each grade in school.

--Recognized in the 1930's the need for playground opportunities for our youngsters. Started a summer playground program using school playgrounds, then

--Provided the impetus and leadership to create the Jefferson City Park Board and its initial funding.

--To help provide playground equipment for the new parks, began in 1937 the Fireworks Festival. It continued until duplication with the city festival became a problem, beginning in 1976. The Festival was subsequently merged with the city festival.

--Provided numerous playground equipment installations over the years since 1937.

--Brought Colleen Moore's Dollhouse to town.

--Helped with the Air Show.

--Worked in flood clean-up projects.

--Sponsored the Soapbox Derby. In 1952, our winner took second place in Akron.

--With Police Department, inaugurated the School Patrol in 1949, and have sponsored them ever since.

--Our Goodfellow Club gave away a new car in a raffle each year until their legality was questioned. The remnant of that project carried over to our Peanut Sale, with the grand prize being a fishing car for several years--now replaced with a microwave oven.

--Built a wading pool in the park.

--Two electric scoreboards for Public School Stadium.

--Sponsored Halloween Painting Contests, beginning in 1949.

--The Christmas Parade, beginning in 1953.

--Put up the city's Christmas decorations one year.

--Built the Shelter House at the Washington Park Ice Rink, and

--The Hough Park Shelter House.

--For several years put on a Minstrel Show, which was supplanted by the

- Ham & Bean Dinner, which still continues.
- Donated Aurora Park to the Park Board.
- Ya-Gotta-Be-Kidden Golf Tournament.
- Teen Age Golf Tournament.
- Annual Light For Sight Light Bulb Sale since 1959.
- Blood Drive sponsorships.
- Wheel Chair Basketball.
- Celebrity Basketball for Salvation Army Christmas Drive.
- Ring the Bell for Salvation Army.
- Sponsored busses to International Conventions.
- Sponsored All State Band Students to Conventions.
- Hosted state Convention several times.
- Sponsored youngsters to both Girls State and Boys State.
- Refurbished and winterized Girl Scout Cabin on Green Berry Rd.
- Provide support services to host Annual All Star Football Game.
- Miss Jefferson City Pageant.
- Easter Egg Hunt--one year released balloons with prizes from an airplane.
- Twist Contest in 1963.
- Bought Moonwalk for fund raising, but also for civic uses, including School Patrol Annual Picnic and Project Graduation.
- Held picnics for all of the blind persons in the city.
- Transport blind persons to monthly meeting.
- Transport eye tissue to Eye Bank in Columbia.
- Sponsored maximum possible number of little league ball teams ever since little league began.
- Built boat docks at Hohn Boy Scout Camp and provided boats.
- Sponsored Crisis Line for Juvenile Attention Center.
- Sponsor memberships in YMCA.
- Support 4-H projects.

--Provided a vision testing machine for use of County Health Nurse.

--Tested hearing and vision of pre-schoolers.

--Hearing and diabetes testing for community.

--Glaucoma testing.

--Assisted Sheltered Workshop.

--Provided testing and glasses for needy.

--Collected eye glasses for use in third world.

--Support Eye Research Foundation, Leader Dog School and similar efforts.

--Began and continue to support Quest program to equip youngsters with more self-esteem and enable them to better resist the pressures to use drugs.

--Distributed white canes.

--Bought leather for Blind Shops.

--Helped reconstitute Business Opportunities for Missouri Blind.

--Trick or Treat Candy Sales.

--Supplied eye enucleation kits.

--Hosted foreign students.

--Supplied braille magazines to all parts of the state.

--Radio-phonograph sets to blind (talking books).

--During this time, the Lions of the Host Club were active in helping the formation of new Clubs. Our Club has sponsored the formation of 45 Lions Clubs. In 1937-38, the Host Club sponsored 21 new Clubs, earning the International President's "Frank V. Birch Award" for sponsoring more Clubs than any other Club in the world. No Club had ever sponsored that many in one year before.

--While extending Lionism to other Clubs, the Host Club still continued throughout to add to its own membership, and is now nearing a total of 250 members. It is the largest Lions Club in the state.

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Bob Van Ark