



District 17N News



67 Lions clubs serving in south central and south east Kansas | July 2025

Find us on the web at kslions17n.org or on Facebook as KansasLionsDistrict17N

Clark's Comments

Leadership and service keys to success this year

You can't get very far until you start doing something for somebody else.

—Lions Club Founder Melvin Jones



Last month, I began the new Lions year with my admittedly lengthy newsletter article which reflected upon the 2025-26 District 17N goals and projects while elaborating on how we could achieve them. The key to this coming year's success will be leadership and the desire to serve.

This year's tagline message from International President A.P. Singh is *Lead to Serve, Serve to Lead* because serving and leading are inseparable. They support each other.

"Lead to serve, serve to lead is a leadership philosophy emphasizing that true leadership stems from a desire to serve others and that serving others effectively is a key component of successful leadership," said Lions International President A.P. Singh.

Last month I had the privilege to attend my first Lions International Convention in Orlando, FL. It was exciting to spend six days with my growing International Lions family. There were many opportunities to meet and mingle with fellow Lions from nearly 200 countries.

Sunday was spent completing District Governor training. The same group of Lions who I trained with in Chicago in February met for the last time to explore, engage and reflect upon our training followed by a certificate of completion presentation and exchange of lapel pins. There was a huge party in the evening with all the other DG training groups from around the globe. There was a band playing, a buffet of international foods and good vibes everywhere.

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Save the Date!

First District Cabinet Meeting

Saturday, August 9
Valley Center
Community Center
316 E. Clay

Details on page 4

USA/Canada Forum

September 18-20
Atlantic City, NJ
Info at

<https://lionsforum.org>

Kansas Fall Rally

October 24-25
Lindsborg, KS

17N District Convention

February 27-28
Goddard

Kansas Lions District 17N Leaders

District Governor

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Wichita Downtown Lions Club

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1st Vice District Governor

Melanie Snider

Baxter Springs Lions Club

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2nd Vice District Governor

Barb Schattak

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Clark's Comments

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The second day started early with lining up to participate in the International Parade of Nations with my fellow convention attendees from the Kansas MD 17. Organized by PCC Lori Langley it included customized mouse ears and a yellow brick road t-shirt.

It was astounding to see how elaborate some countries/districts got with their costumes. Luckily, there was cloud cover to keep the heat factor low. The rest of the day was down to business. The trade show floor opened and it was extremely crowded. There were several stages for training and information purposes, a special Olympics event, a drop-in service project assembling hygiene kits for Orlando's homeless, and a business session for delegates to vote on amendments to the International Constitution/By-Laws and hear from candidates for International Director. That evening, there was an International Show that celebrated the music and dance of Latin cultures.

The convention kickoff session included entertainment and the international flag ceremony where every nation represented had their flag flown on stage. There was a presidential keynote speech and the winners of the Peace Poster and Peace Essay Contests were introduced.

I attended the Melvin Jones Fellowship Luncheon where MJFs were recognized and it was surprising how many Lions and Clubs just pulled out checks made out to LCIF in the six figures. The afternoon was spent attending leadership training programs about LCIF, club storytelling in the media, and the New Voices for Women and Young Adults. That evening my wife Cher and I joined others from Kansas for a seafood dinner.

Wednesday started early again with a session featuring legendary Olympian and mental health advocate Michael Phelps. He was quite open about his personal mental health struggles and promoting personal mental health practices.

During the convention I attended training sessions on successful zone chairs, Leo service, bringing in the next generation of Lions, achieving club excellence, and growing to serve.

That evening was a black-tie

dinner with past international presidents, past/present international directors, and past/present district governors. Some were recognized for their service to the Association this past year. I met the most fascinating Lion who was a professional sea diver and did he ever have some hair raising stories to tell.

The convention wrapped up with a session to announce the election results and welcome the new international leadership team. The infamous ribbon pulling ceremony officially made me a District Governor. Afterwards, there was a meet and greet reception with the International Officers consisting of donuts and ice cream.

Summarizing, it was a unique and thrilling experience that I wish every Lion could have for themselves. Now, the attendees are back home and it's time to get back to serving. That's why we are Lions. It's time to expand our service. The world needs what Lions do. This means expanding the capacity of Lions Clubs to serve by inviting and inducting more members to every club. Mission 1.5 is about making every club more vibrant and diverse.

Let's inspire positive change in our communities. The future of Lions starts now. Change doesn't come from waiting. It comes from showing up with ideas, with courage, and with the willingness to do things differently. Let's get going to grow our Association. Lead to Serve, Serve to Lead.

There can be no greater gift than that of giving one's time and energy to help others without expecting anything in return.

—Nelson Mandela
Lion Clark Lindstrom
DG District 17N 2025-2026



The Kansas delegation in the International Parade

Lions answer when called to serve

I need help! When this is heard by a Lion, there is a flurry of action and response – of service. Lions lead to serve by responding with “How can I help?”



As Lions, we are servants who listen, empower and support others—we put the needs of others first.

Leading to serve challenges me to listen to Lion members and community members; to support my fellow Lions in their growth; and to lead with empathy, humility and purpose. This is a humongous challenge. Whether I am filling the

position of club member, club president, club treasurer, district committee member, zone chair or governor, my service is defined by how well I serve others.

I am not gonna lie. Sometimes I help others and sometimes I fail to act when someone is in need. When I fail to be a servant, I pause, take a deep breath, remind myself that I want to serve. I make a promise—a commitment—to myself that when the next opportunity to help comes my way, I will serve.

I am asking you to join me in re-committing to service as we begin this new year of Lionism—to lead to serve.

Melanie Snider
1st VDG, District 17N 2024-2025

A great start for the new Lions year

Here we are a month into our new year of Lionism! I attended the Lions International Convention in Orlando last month with fellow Lions from Kansas. Our Kansas delegation was small but mighty and we enjoyed our time together. Each day was a learning experience for all of us. It was an honor to watch International President receive the gavel from PIP Fabrício Oliveira.

Our new cause for Lions this year is mental health. Michael Phelps came as a speaker at the convention and discussed his journey with mental health and how he is addressing it each day. It was very eye-opening to me and how each of us deals with mental health each day and in our own way.

On Wednesday evening some of our Kansas delegates attended the “Rock and Roar” at the Howl in the Moon. Germany Lions organized this fun event. We enjoyed music and singing during the evening and had appetizers to munch on. All funds raised were for SightFirst in Florida and raised \$7,100. What a great night we all had.

ID A.P. Singh's saying is “Lead to Serve, Serve to Lead.” He believes service and leadership go hand in hand and both are vital to who we are as Lions and what we do. He believes in Mission 1.5 and states we should focus on more members and more clubs.

DG Clark challenges each club to get at least one new member a month. With each new member we help our area grow so we can serve others better. DG Clark will donate to LCIF \$10/new member (up to

\$100) recognizing the club with the most new members reported at the end of each month. When there is a tie between clubs the amount won will divided to recognize each club with the most new members of the month. Another challenge is to bring in a new club to our district this year and to help those clubs struggling to survive.

As the past district treasurer, one of my passions is the vision screener warranties. Our district currently has five vision screeners and a five-year warranty for one vision screener is over \$1,700 dollars. In November of 2026, the warranties for three of the screeners come due, this is an expense for which we do not have adequate funds. We have in the past had our Silent Auction funds assigned to the screener fund, but this is not feasible. A District Governor can decide to have the Silent Auction funds assigned to another area of need such as Juvenile Diabetes Camp Fund, Childhood Cancer, or any other designation they choose.

Therefore, I challenge each club to put in their budget to pay a minimum of \$25 to the District each year for the “Partners in Care” fund to help raise funds for the screener warranties. If all sixty-seven clubs spent at least \$25 dollars, we could raise \$1675 towards the warranties each year. These screeners are available for all clubs to use. If you would like to be able to use one of the screeners, contact one of our two Vision Screening Chairs, which are IPCC Pam Bilyeu 785-817-3833 and PCC Helen LeBlanc 316-644-0168 to schedule it. Let us lead to serve and serve to lead.

Barb Schattak
2nd VDG District 17N, 2025-2026



We Serve

Around the District

Submit your club activities to newsletter17n@cox.net
Deadline is always the 25th of the month



We Serve



Wellington Lions participated in the Wheat Festival in early July, carrying a giant flag to lead the parade and serving up watermelon during Picnic in the Park. The club also handed out bottled water during the festival.



PDG Dan Funke received a Master Key, recognizing the recruitment of 50 Lions. Goddard Lions Secretary Nancy Borst presented the medal during the club's July officer installation dinner meeting.



Westphalia Lions (above) and Lyndon Lions (right) participated in Independence Day parades in their communities.



Melvin Jones Fellowships
Clockwise, from right: Jerry Smith, center, was presented a Melvin Jones Fellowship during Westphalia Days. Picture below, Valley Center Lions Dave Welch and Connie Davis received recognitions, presented by longtime Lion Dean Frankenberry.

