



Kansas Lions News

Statewide newsletter for MD 17 Kansas Lions | Fall 2026

Rally in McPherson this fall

Lions from across the state are invited to Fall Rally 2026, held October 23 and 24 in McPherson at the McPherson United Methodist Church, 1200 E Kansas Ave.

From a keynote presentation on the internationally known auto restoration program at McPherson College to seminars with valuable information to take back to your own clubs and communities, there's something for every Lion.

One of the highlights of Fall Rally will be the annual Band Foundation Auction. Donations of gift baskets, sports memorabilia, handcrafted items, baked goods,

jams/jellies, artwork and Lions items are gratefully accepted before the 10:30 am auction start time.

All three Kansas foundations will have meetings during the rally. The Kansas Lions Foundation will meet Friday night at 7 pm

The Kansas Lions Band Foundation meets Saturday morning at 7 am, followed by the Kansas Lions Sight Foundation at 8 am. All Kansas Lions are members of the three foundations and are encouraged to attend the meetings.

Join 17K 1st VDG Linda Chessmore for a Strides Walk for
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Car aficionados take note—

Auto Restoration prof is Rally luncheon speaker

McPherson College is home to the only bachelor's degree in automotive restoration in the nation.

From the early 1900's horseless carriages up through the muscle car era, students at McPherson College work on a wide range of vehicles.

Kansas Lions will have a opportunity to learn more about this unique degree as Matthew Miller-Wells, Associate Director of the Automotive Restoration Program, is guest speaker at the 2026 Fall Rally luncheon.

A 2020 alum of the program, Miller-Wells is working to create an automotive destination community at the College, using the automobile as a common thread that

connects all people across campus.

From art & design to engineering, history, technology, and communication, he has created experiences for students to engage with industry experts in dynamic, hands-on ways that spark creativity and collaboration.

Before returning to work for his alma mater, Miller-Wells helped establish The Garage Automotive Museum in Salina, KS as their Director of Education. He currently lives in Salina with his wife Destany, their dog, and three cats.



Save the Date



October 23-24

McPherson

Registration on page 8

Global Vision Week of Service

October 8-18

See more info on page 4 or at lionsclubs.org/vision under the resources tab

Reminder

All clubs need to file Form 990 with the Internal Revenue Service by November 15

Council Chair Comments

New opportunities in a new Lions year

Fellow Lions,

Welcome to the year that will make a difference in Kansas Lions. Our new International President, Mark Lyons is from the United States—Connecticut to be exact. Growing our Lions across all counties in Kansas is the future of Lions in Kansas.

We have a great team of experienced lions for Membership, New Club Extension, Service, and Leadership development. Multiple District 17 is here to help the districts and their teams to be successful.

This is a new year and a new opportunity to foster cooperation and strengthen our Lions Pride. Our goals are to add new members, educate those new members, involve

and listen to them, and develop them to be the Next Generation of Lions.

I encourage clubs to welcome new ideas, welcome new Lions and welcome new service projects. Learn from your community leaders and find ways to increase your club's visibility in the community with your service.

Be sure to post about it on your club's Facebook page with a good quality photo. Develop partnerships with other groups in your community, what can you do to help each other?

A shout out to our Zone Chairs in all three Districts: 17K Western Kansas, 17A Northeast Kansas, and 17N in Southeast Kansas. The

role of the Zone chair and the link between the 4-10 clubs in a zone is critical to keep everyone abreast of the challenges clubs face and the successes shared. Be sure to attend the meetings of your zone, build relationships with club officers in nearby clubs, and share ideas.

I am looking forward to all the Peace Posters that will be part of the Harmony in Humanity theme this year.

Finally, for any club that has a Milestone Anniversary, please invite me to attend. I would love to help you celebrate.

*Rooted in Service,
Irene Haws*
Irene Haws, Council Chair
2026-2027

MD 17 Leaders



Council Chair
Irene Haws

Topeka
785-249-1913

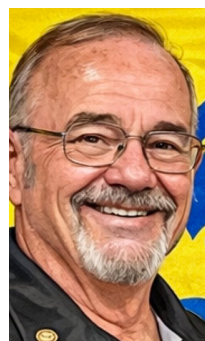
irene@idesignsGS.com



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Baxter Springs
417-529-2138

lionmelsnider@gmail.com

Kansas Lions State Office

231 S Tyler Rd | Wichita, KS 67209 | 316-773-2100

State Secretary: PDG Dan Funke | 316-650-0737

email: kansaslionsoffice@gmail.com | website: kansaslions.org

Kansas Lions celebrate Lions University graduates

Lions had the opportunity to participate in continuing education courses this past July, with Multiple District 17 serving as host for Lions attending the Great Plains Lions Leadership Institute (GPLLI), part of the Regional Lions Leadership Institute and the advanced Faculty Development Institute (FDI).

These outstanding programs provide Lions with opportunities to expand their knowledge of Lions Clubs International, strengthen their leadership skills, and prepare for increased leadership responsibilities. Both institutes play an important role in helping Lions pursue their degrees through Lions University.

Twenty Lions who attended

the two institutes in July received their diplomas during the Lions University graduation ceremony at the 2026 USA/Canada Lions Leadership Forum in Memphis, Tennessee. The graduates earned the following degrees:

Five Bachelor's degrees

One combined Bachelor's/Master's degree

Six Master's degrees

Eight Doctorate degrees

Multiple District 17 Graduates

Multiple District 17 was proudly represented by five graduates:

1VDG Cheryl Kerns — Bachelor's

1VDG Barb Schattak — Bachelor's

DG Roger Yost — Bachelor's

PCC Lori Langley — Doctorate

IPCC Shari Neidhardt — Doctorate

Congratulations to all the 2026 Lions University graduates on this outstanding achievement!

With the recent GPLLI and FDI graduates joining those who have completed their Lions University studies, Multiple District 17 is well positioned to celebrate several more graduates during the 2027 USA/Canada Lions Leadership Forum in Huntsville, Alabama.

Education strengthens leadership, and strong leadership strengthens our service to others.

PID Hans Neidhardt

2026 GPLLI/FDI

Curriculum Coordinator/Registrar



Cheryl Kerns



Barb Schattak



Roger Yost



Lori Langley



Shari Neidhardt

Focus on vision for Global Week of Service

Lions International President Mark Lyon has announced three Global Service Weeks during this year of service, highlighting **Vision, Youth, and Environment**.

President Mark shares his thoughts about these Global Service Weeks in the following video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3ZOaUisqMY>

Vision Global Service Week is just around the corner — October 8–18, 2026!

This is an excellent opportunity for Kansas Lions to highlight the many ways Lions serve those who are blind or visually impaired and to invite others to join us in making a difference.

Our commitment to vision service has deep roots in Lions history. Deaf and blind from an early age, **Helen Keller** became an outspoken advocate for people who were blind

and visually impaired. In 1925, she boldly challenged Lions to become “**Knights of the Blind.**”

Lions accepted that challenge, and vision service has remained one of the defining areas of Lions service around the world. Today, Lions continue to build upon Helen Keller’s legacy through a wide range of vision programs and services.

Lions KIDSIGHT provides vision screening and referral services for children beginning at age six. Early identification of potential vision problems can help connect children and their families with appropriate professional care.

Lions Eye Banks recover, evaluate, store, and distribute donated human eye tissue for vision restoration, research, and education.



Through this important service, Lions help provide opportunities for individuals to regain or improve their sight.

Vision Screening in Kansas
Lions provide an outstanding vision-screening service in communities across the state. These screenings can help identify individuals who may need professional follow-up. Remarkably, **80% of all visual impairment is preventable or curable.**

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The Lions Legacy Society: Continuing the spirit of service

The Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) Legacy Society gives Lions and friends of Lions an opportunity to make a lasting difference through planned giving. It allows individuals to include LCIF in their estate plans and help ensure that the spirit of Lions service continues for future generations.

A legacy gift may be made through a will or trust, a beneficiary designation, or other planned-giving arrangements. These gifts provide future support for LCIF and its mission of helping people and communities around the world.

Legacy Society members are recognized for their commitment to the future of Lions service. Their decision to leave a planned gift reflects a belief that the work Lions



Lions Clubs International FOUNDATION

do today should continue tomorrow.

LCIF supports Lions-led humanitarian efforts in areas such as vision, hunger, childhood cancer, diabetes, disaster relief, and community development. A legacy gift can help provide resources for these efforts long after a donor’s lifetime.

For many members, becoming part of the Legacy Society is about

more than financial planning. It is about leaving behind a tradition of caring and service and helping future generations of Lions continue to “We Serve.”

A legacy gift is a lasting way to share your values, support LCIF, and keep the spirit of Lions service alive for generations to come.

If you would like PCC Pam Bilyeu or PCC Shari Neidhardt to come to your club meeting and talk about the LCIF or the Legacy program, please call or email us and we would be happy to visit your club.

PCC Pam Bilyeu
(785)817-3833

email- bilyeuskies@hotmail.com

PCC Shari Neidhardt
(316)304-3644

email- 19faith58@gmail.com

October 1 is deadline to order Peace Poster kits

For 2026–2027, Lions Clubs International has chosen “Harmony in Humanity” as the theme for the Peace Poster Contest. Young artists are challenged to imagine a world where people of all cultures and backgrounds live together peacefully, celebrating their differences and finding common ground. Artwork is judged at the local, district, multiple district, and international levels based on originality, artistic merit, and expression of the theme.

Students who are 11, 12, or 13 years old by November 15, 2026, qualify to participate. and must be sponsored by a local Lions Club, usually through a local school or organized youth group.

Individual Lions Clubs can purchase a Peace Poster Contest kit for \$11.95 in either digital or physical form by October 1 from www.lionsclubs.org/peaceposter.

When ordering the physical form postage will be charged while digital does not charge extra for delivery. If clubs use the digital form they are encouraged to read the instructions.



lionsclubs.org/peaceposter

#peaceposter

Clubs are encouraged to contact their school's teacher as soon as possible, since there is narrow time frame. Club level entries will be judged at each District's Second Cabinet meetings. It is wise that individual clubs select their entry before their District's Second Cabinet meeting. Dates for the district meetings are:

District K—November 17 ZOOM Meeting. Peace Poster Chair is Karen Kanuer, 785-722-6059.

District A—November 7, Topeka. Peace Poster Chair is Priscilla McCabe, 660-473-6122; email: prissyruyth@yahoo.com

District N—November 7, 2026, Emporia. Peace poster chair is Leah Bromlow, 620-221-9066; leah-bromlows@outlook.com

Each districts winning original entries need to be mailed to State Chairperson PDG Richard Caldwell by December 1, 2026, to be judged for the three places. Mail to: 4609 East Falcon Court

Wichita, KS 67220

The first place entry will be sent to Lions International before December 15, 2026.

The formal announcement of the state contest placings will at the Third State Council ZOOM meeting on January 23, 2027.

A change has been made in the presentation of the state competition awards. The First-Place entry will receive \$300 while the Second-Place receives \$250. Third-Place will receive \$200. Instead of waiting until the State Convention in June, each contestant will be recognized and receive their awards at their District Convention. Those dates include

District K- April 16-17 Hays

District A- April 2-3 Topeka

District N – April 9-10 Parsons

During the State Convention, the contestants will be honored and recognized. It will be held in Topeka, June 4-5, 2027.

For further information, please contact State Peace Poster Coordinator:

PDG Richard Caldwell at teacher.caldwell@gmail.com.



Fall Rally

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Diabetes at 8 am. Linda will share diabetes facts and figures and as well as diabetes camp contact info. Walk will start and end at the church.

Council Chair Irene Haws will open the Rally with a welcome at 9 am followed by a lineup of semi-

nars by Lion leaders on topics like using the Portal, building membership, improving club communication and building community through service.

After lunch, PCC Lori Langley will lead an exercise in tapping into the GAT tools of membership, leadership, extension and service to "escape the status quo."

Moundridge Lions Club is host-

ing the Hospitality Room. Stop in for a quick snack and enjoy some Lions fellowship during the breaks.

Fall Rally wraps up with the Second State Council meeting beginning at 3 pm.

A reservation form, including a link for online registration is on page 8. *Deadline for registration is October 18.*

Vision Week of Service

Continued from page 4

Our vision-screening efforts can play an important role in helping people recognize potential problems and seek appropriate care.

Eyeglass recycling service provided by Lions. The eyeglasses collected, sorted, and processed by Lions today may someday give another person the opportunity to see more clearly and improve their quality of life.

Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) Vision Grants and District & Club Community Impact Grants can help clubs and districts fund projects that address important local needs. All three Kansas Lions districts have been recipients of LCIF grant funding, demonstrating the impact these resources can have right here in Kansas.

Your donation support and the vision services Lions provide make a lasting impact. Let's continue the tradition of Lions serving others and helping people see a brighter future.

*PID Hans Neidhardt
MD 17 LCIF Co-Coordinator*

LIONS INTERNATIONAL

VISION Brightens Lives!

Fall Rally Service Project

Help Us Collect Vision Essentials!

Non-prescription sunglasses (and clip-on sunglasses)

Readers

Glasses cleaning cloths, wipes and sprays

Magnifiers

Small eyeglass repair kits

Small Items... Big Impact!

ALL COLLECTED ITEMS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO VETERANS, SHELTERS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS.

Lions Make a Difference!

COLLECT PAW SHARE PAW GIVE

Fall Rally 2026

Friday, October 23th Schedule of Events

Time	Event	Moderator	Location
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Governor's Training	CC Irene Haws	Room 107
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM	Dinner on your own		
7:30 PM - 8:30 PM	Kansas Lion Foundation Meeting	PDG Steve Langley	Room 110
8:30 PM - 9:00 PM	Governor's Team Meeting	CC Irene Haws	Room 110

Saturday, October 24th Schedule of Events

Time	Event	Moderator	Location
7:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Registration	PDG Dan /Lion Becky	Front of Gym
7:00 AM - 8:00 AM	Kansas Lions Band Foundation Meeting	PDG Willie Tolle	Room 107
7:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Service Project "Vision, Brightens Lives"	PDG Carleen Rajala	Hess Hall (Gym)
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Kansas Lions Sight Foundation Meeting	PID Deb Weaverling	Room 107
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Hospitality Room	Moundridge Lions	Hess Hall (Gym)
8:00 AM - 8:30 AM	Strides Walk for Diabetes	1VDG Linda Chessmore	Wall Park
9:00 AM - 9:10 AM	Welcome and Rally Orientation	DG Irene Haws	Hess Hall (Gym)
9:15 AM - 9:45 AM	Beyond Service - Building Community	DG Melanie Snider	Room 107
9:15 AM - 9:45 AM	Just Ask!	1VDG Barb Schattak	Room 110
9:45 AM - 10:00 AM	BREAK TIME - Visit Hospitality		Hess Hall (Gym)
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Roar into Communication: Speak- Listen- Connect- Serve	1VDG Linda Chessmore	Room 107
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Lions Portal... It's for everyone	PCC Pam Bilyeu, Asst by PDG Chris Bauer	Room 110
10:30 AM - 12:15 PM	Lions Band Auction	Curt Marshal	Hess Hall (Gym)
12:30 PM - 2:00 PM	Luncheon and Guest Speaker Matt Wells	CC Irene Haws	Hess Hall (Gym)
2:00 PM - 2:50 PM	The GAT Escape Room: Can Your Club Escape the Status Quo	PCC Lori Langley	Hess Hall (Gym)
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Council Meeting	CC Irene Haws	Hess Hall (Gym)

Please support the Kansas Lions Band Foundation auction by donating items at the Registration Table. Looking for donations such as baked goods, jams/jellies, hand crafted items, theme baskets, sports memorabilia, artwork, Lions items, etc. All raised funds are used to support the Kansas Lions State and International Bands. Thank You!



Register now for Fall Rally October 23-24 McPherson United Methodist Church 1200 E. Kansas Ave

Register now for Fall Rally October 23-24 in McPherson

Name _____

Club _____ District _____

Address _____

City and Zip _____

E-mail _____ Phone Number _____

Name(s) of any additional Lions or guests in your party _____

Noon Saturday meal \$25.00 _____

Number of Meals _____ x \$25 Total _____

Send to Kansas Lions Office, 231 South Tyler, Wichita KS 67209

Use the QR code or link below to register online

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/annual-gala-7672>



Registration deadline is October 18

Staying in McPherson overnight? Here are some options*:

Best Western Plus • 200 N Champlin Street • (620) 480-2667

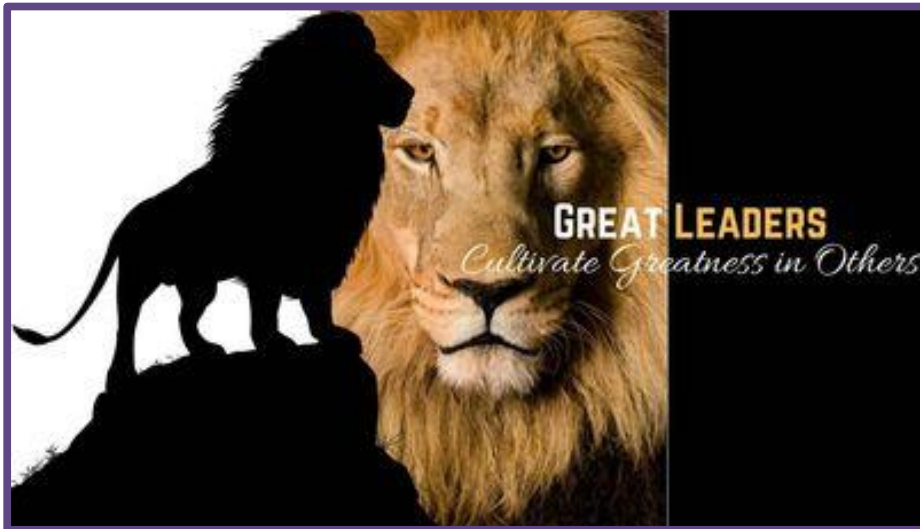
Fairfield Inn and Suites • 2270 E. Kansas • (620) 504-5353

Hampton Inn • 200 N. Centennial • (620) 480-2990

Holiday Inn Express • 2302 E. Kansas • (620) 241-5566

*Other lodging options available—these offer free breakfast according to [Visit McPherson](#)





KS MULTIPLE DISTRICT 17

Inspired by International President Mark Lyon's theme "**Rooted in Service**", MD17 will celebrate "Club Superstars." The initiative is designed to recognize a club member or community partner who impacts the Kansas community during 2026-2027 Lions year. Community service, consistent participation, support of club activities, leadership, membership development, initiative, fundraising efforts, community/club/member impact and Lions Spirit are contributions to be considered when identifying a "**SUPERSTAR**."

Key Details & Program Guidelines

- **Selection:** Each club selects their ultimate "Superstar"
- **Submission Deadline:** March 15th – Information to be included: Superstar's name, associated club, and a narrative outlining the reason(s) the Superstar was selected.
- **District Recognition:** Superstars will receive a special embroidered patch and be recognized at their respective District Convention in April.



- **State Convention:** Three Superstars from each Kansas sub-district will be drawn for a special recognition by International 2nd Vice President Tony Benbow at the State Convention Friday, June 4th in Topeka KS

**Each Club selects
their ultimate
"Superstar"**

**Each Club Superstar
will be recognized at
District Convention**

**Three Superstars
from each District
will be recognized at
State Convention
Friday Night**

**Submission Deadline
March 15, 2027**

CLUB SUPERSTAR

C/O Peggy Jacobson
6521 W. 78th Ter, Overland
Park, KS 66204
Cell 913-548-8402
or email to:

Pegjacob70@gmail.com

Due: March 15, 2026