

DISTRICT DIALOGUE - January 2026

Northeast Kansas Lions District 17A

Chart Your Course



We Serve

Save the Dates:

Cabinet Meetings 10 am to 12:30 pm

Feb 7 – Zoom only

Jun 13 – Salvation Army
Worship Center, Olathe

PLAN TO ATTEND

District 17A Convention

April 10 - 11 (NEW DATE)

**DoubleTree Inn & Suites
Manhattan, KS**

SAVE THE DATE

State Convention

**May 30- 31, 2026
Hutchinson, KS**

Zone Meetings:

Scheduled by the Zone Chairs for the clubs in each zone attended by club presidents & club secretaries. club vice-presidents are welcome

District Officers:

Irene Haws

District Governor

Roger Yost

1st Vice District Governor

Cheryl Kerns

2nd Vice District Governor

Stephanie Heisler

District Secretary

StephanieRHeisler@hotmail.com

Ron Nichols

District Treasurer

coachronnichols@gmail.com

Rick Dodson

District Administrator

dodsonr23@gmail.com

Governor's Message

Lions, we have been successful in Northeast Kansas this year so far. I know clubs throughout our district are performing service to their communities, be that blood drives, food drives, collecting plastic wrap to make benches and reduce the amount of plastic going into landfills, to sorting eyeglasses and vision screening for youth, in addition to the pancake feeds, biscuit and gravy breakfasts and much, much more. Thank you for all that you do for the communities you serve.



Did you know that as a member of Lions International, clubs have access to **Liability Insurance** for your events where the public could potentially be harmed? Some municipalities specifically partner with Lions Clubs for their 4th of July celebrations because as Lions the Liability Insurance is provided. Clubs, you do have to generate the certificate of Insurance based on the named event you are hosting for your club and if you have a community partner to include. Learn more about this coverage on lionsclubs.org: <https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/resources-for-members/resource-center/insurance>

The dates for the District-Wide River Clean up are now set. April 18 in Lawrence, April 25 in Manhattan. Two dates and two locations. I am excited to have an Environmental project so that the whole district can collaborate and work together. More details to come.

Speaking of environmental projects – **The Environmental Photo Contest Deadline is Feb. 1, 2026.** Visit Kansaslions.org for details, under the index tab, environmental program <https://kansaslions.org/environmental-program>

Keep doing what you're doing and strive to add new members to your club. New members, mean new ideas, new contacts and connections and more hands to provide service. The goal a 10% growth in membership in each club.

Congratulations to the Jackson County Lions Club our newest club in District 17A. Twenty members converted from the Sabetha Lions Club Branch to form the new club. I look forward to attending your Charter Night Celebration!

Jackson County Lions Charter Night is Feb. 21st

Jackson County Senior Center, 312 Pennsylvania Ave, Holton KS 66436, 5:30 pm for networking, 6:00 pm dinner & program. Seating is limited and advance reservations are required. Cost is \$15. **Menu:** Chicken Fried Steak, mashed potatoes/white gravy, corn, roll and dessert. Coffee, Tea or Water. (Reduced calorie dessert provided) **You must RSVP by February 14th to Terry Weldin by Email.** terryweldin@gmail.com

DG Irene Haws
irene@idesignGS.com



1st Vice-District Governor

When they are all gone!

40 plus years ago when I was asked to join the Lions Club of my hometown, I didn't have to think about it for very long. I had spent my entire growing up years seeing how involved this organization as within our small community. Floats in the parades, awards given at graduation, candy day at football games, hamburger feeds at the county fair and city park, I can go on and on. We even had our own trap range and sponsored weekly events with teams for neighboring towns year-round.

Funds raised helped families in need, kids in need and the towns in our county. Now we see communities without Lions volunteers reaching out and giving back. The loss of service is unnoticed until it is too late.

We as Lions, no matter the location, have the ability to help. Visit other clubs, invite other clubs to participate, challenge other clubs as well as your own to look to the future and new projects. Gaining new members means new ideas. By focusing on the good and correcting the bad, we will thrive!

Let's let our service be heard! (ROAR)

You can't expect to catch a cub without venturing into the tigresses' den.

Roger Yost
First Vice-District Governor

**Reminder: Deadline to submit electronic images for the Environmental Photo contest is Feb.1
Contact Terry Weldin, terryweldin@gmail.com for District 17A.**

Lead to Serve. Serve to Lead.



District 17A Global Action Team

Vania Castro

Global Leadership Team Coordinator
drvaniacastro@gmail.com

Rick Dodson

Global Service Team Coordinator
dodsonr23@gmail.com

Eric Strimple

Global Membership Team Coordinator
estrimp81@msn.com

Eric Tweedy

Global Extension Team Coordinator
erictweedy@icloud.com

Kansas Lions Directory is online

The Kansas Lions Directory is online - visit [KansasLions.org](https://www.kansaslions.org). This is password protected. Your President/Secretary & Zone Chair have the password (listed in the hardcopy directory). Any changes to club meeting dates/times/locations can be updated on the digital version of the Directory when emailed to kansaslions@gmail.com

Be sure to update club details in the *Edit Club Details* section on the Lions Portal too! Thank you for keeping your club details current.

District Dialogue Publication Details: Email news articles and upcoming events to 17Anews@gmail.com

Deadline is the first of the month for publication at mid-month.

Visit and Join the District 17A Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/kansaslionsdistrict17a> Share your club's posts to this group too! District Website: <https://kslionsdistrict17a.org> (past issues of the District Dialogue are saved here).



2nd Vice-District Governor

Happy New Year! Wouldn't it be great if each of us brought in a new member this month! What a way to kick off the new year! It is hard to believe that this Lions' year is half over! What did you choose to do to help eliminate hunger during Focus on Hunger week? Our club collected cereal and fruit cups to help a "backpack" program so kids can eat on the weekends and also sent hearty soup to a local food pantry.

I hope everyone had a joyful and blessed holiday season. I took some time for mental wellness and quiet time with family. Now I feel re-charged and ready to go!

Reminder: State Council Meeting is via Zoom on January 24th. You should have received information on how you/your club can help with the Veteran's Statewide project. Those donations need to be in by the 15th. Club Presidents and Club Secretaries are encouraged to attend. Actually, anyone can join the call!! The District Cabinet meeting is on Saturday, February 7th. It is also via Zoom, so grab your warm socks and join in!

Cheryl Kerns

Second Vice-District Governor



Lions International Peace Poster Contest

2026-2027 Contest Materials will be available Jan. 15

For nearly four decades, the Lions International Peace Poster Contest has given children ages 11-13 the opportunity to share what peace means to them through art. Each year, Lions clubs around the world sponsor the contest in schools and organized youth groups, giving young people the opportunity to be recognized at local and international levels — and awarded a grand prize of US\$5,000 — for their creativity in sharing their vision of the current year's theme.

Lions Health Program

Diabetes Camp Scholarships

In the past 15 years District 17-A has sent 1 to 5 youth per year to one of two Diabetes Camps administered by the American Diabetes Association ADA.

The cost to a family to send a youth to a Diabetes camp has gone up over the years where now it cost a family \$825 for one camp and \$700 for the other. District 17-A has always asked the family to pay \$150 and the District would scholarship the rest.

The estimated cost for a family to support a youth with Diabetes is \$1,000 to \$2,000 per month. This is why District A has scholared such a large amount. District 17-A has 5 youth that have asked for a scholarship this year 2026. Last October the District 17-A Lions Health Program LHP ask for donations to off set the scholarships. The District has received 1 donation for these scholarships of \$500. Please look at your funds and make a donation to the Diabetes Camp Fund, any amount is fine.

Please make the check to District 17-A Diabetes fund, and on the memo line write Diabetes Camp Fund and send the check to Lion Vern Failor, he collects this information and forwards the check to the District Treasurer.

Let's make 2026 a memorable year for the 5 families that have ask for a Diabetes Scholarship.

Lion Vern Failor

District 17A Health Program Chair

vlfailor@gmail.com, Cell: 785-231-3960



PDG Rich Webster Nominations Chair

**It is time for nominations to be submitted.
Here's what you need to know!**

Any qualified member of a club in the District seeking the office of District Governor shall file his or her intention to so run in writing with the Nominating Committee prior to the day of its report to the convention, and furnish evidence of her or his compliance with the qualifications for said office set out in the [District Constitution and By-Laws](#).

The Nominating Committee shall place in nomination at the District Convention the name(s) of all candidate(s) so qualified. If none is so received and/or so qualified, then, but then only, nominations for the office may be made from the floor. Each candidate shall be allowed one nominating speech of no more than five (5) minutes duration, and one seconding speech of no more than three (3) minutes duration. **Any member of a club in the District seeking the office of First or Second Vice District Governor** shall file his or her intention to so run in writing with the Nominating Committee at least thirty (30) days prior to the election, and furnish evidence of her or his compliance with the qualifications for said office set out in the District Constitution and By-Laws.

A candidate for **Director of any Lions Foundation recognized by MD-17** shall file her or his written letter of intent with a Nominating Committee member no less than thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Convention of the District. If no applications are received, the presiding officer shall call for nominations from the floor.

Voting Delegates are determined by the number of members in the individual club. Each voting delegate from a club and each Past District Governor must present a delegate form signed by the president or secretary of his or her club. The District Governor or First and Second Vice District Governors may sign the delegate form if the delegate has misplaced the original form. Each delegate must be a member in good

SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATION



NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE:

Rich Webster
325-669-0406
spechter16@gmail.com

Leroy Johnson
913-837-4179
bigbearx4@gmail.com

Al Kimmi
785-548-7554
aikimmi@rainbowtel.net

DISTRICT BYLAWS:
<https://kslionsdistrict17a.org/district-17a-constitution-and-bylaws/>

MULTIPLE DISTRICT 17 FOUNDATIONS:

KANSAS LIONS FOUNDATION

KANSAS LIONS BAND FOUNDATION

KANSAS LIONS SIGHT FOUNDATION





District 17A A BIG HELLO TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!



Melissa Minge, Barnes
Sponsor: Lindsey Hatesohl

Seth Follmer, Belleville
Sponsor: Molly Potuzak

Amy Burr, Clay Center
Sponsor: John Bensley

Matthew Arterburn, Eudora
Sponsor: Eric Tweedy

Michael Vollbrecht, Eudora
Sponsor: Eric Strimple

Malory Hendel, Eudora
Sponsor: Eric Tweedy

Rich Hill, Leavenworth
Sponsor: Caroline Arter

Brittney Baker-Delaney, Leawood
Sponsor: Jeff Baker

Maren Marler, Olathe Noon
Sponsor: Chuck Tuttle

Gwyn Hinman, Sabetha,
Sponsor: Terry Weldin

Jim Howard, Sabetha
Sponsor: Terry Weldin

Tristen Cullip, Wakefield
Sponsor: Richard Avery

Justin Thurlow, Wakefield
Sponsor: Richard Avery

Edward Ward, Wakefield
Sponsor: Richard Avery



Lion Eric Strimple, CGL (Certified Guiding Lion)
(He, Him, His)
District 17A GMT

Mobile 785-331-7757
Email estrimp81@msn.com
PO Box 574, Eudora, KS 66025

••• DECEMBER 2025 •••



Take me to the River

Distict Wide Environmental Project

Serving 800,000 people who get their drinking water
from the Kansas River

Save the Dates

Two Saturday Dates and Two locations

April 18 in Lawrence KS, 9 am & April 25 in Manhattan KS, 9 am

We would like to see many clubs represented.
A group photo will be taken at each event date.

More details will be coming . . .



District 17A

Leading With Excellence: Lions Portal Training Updates for Club Officers

Empowering Club Leaders. Enhancing Our Service. Serving Our Community.



Presidents, Treasurers, and Secretaries are encouraged to continue strengthening their leadership skills through the **Lions Portal** and **Learning Path**.

Over the past several months, multiple emails have been sent to all club officers containing detailed instructions and step-by-step guidance on how to access the Lions Portal and complete the required online training courses.

District Governor Irene Haws and I are committed to supporting our clubs in achieving an important district goal: **at least 80% of our club officers completing their required e-learning courses by June 30, 2026**. This collective effort strengthens our clubs, enhances leadership effectiveness, and supports long-term service impact across District 17A.

Together we can. Together we will.

Thank you for your continued service, commitment, and leadership.
Wishing you a successful and inspiring 2026!

♥ In Service,

PDG Dr. Vania Castro

drvaniacastro@gmail.com

DISTRICT 17A MEMBERSHIP GROWTH CHALLENGE!

**GROW YOUR CLUB
BY 10%
BY JUNE 30, 2026!**

**GET \$35
NEW MEMBER FEE
REIMBURSED!**

JOIN JAN 15 - MARCH 30, 2026!

CONTACT DISTRICT TREASURER RON NICHOLS!



District 17A Membership Growth Challenge!

Lions of District 17A — let's grow together!

Our district-wide goal is for every club to increase membership by 10% by June 30, 2026

Here's the exciting part: for most clubs, that's just 1–2 new Lions.

That's it. Totally obtainable. Completely doable. And incredibly impactful.

Why This Matters

Every new Lion brings:

- Fresh energy and ideas
- More hands for service
- A stronger, more sustainable club

Small growth = BIG impact for our communities.

District Incentive — Don't Miss This!

To help remove barriers and encourage action, District 17A is offering a reimbursement to clubs for the one-time \$35.00 application fee for new members.

Important details:

- Reimbursement covers the \$35.00 new member application fee
- Valid only for members who join between January 15 and March 30, 2026
- Reimbursements will be made to the club only
- To receive reimbursement, clubs must reach out directly to District Treasurer, Ron Nichols
- Limited-time offer — don't wait!

The Challenge Is On

Talk to a friend. Invite a neighbor. Share why **you** became a Lion.

Just one or two yeses can put your club on track to meet the goal — and help District 17A thrive.

Personal Recognition - Membership Keys for Lions who have invited others to join Lions



2 New
Members



5 New
Members



10 New
Members



15 New
Members



20 New
Members

When a new member remains a member for one year.

From Multiple District 17 - LCIF

Pennies to Dollars, Regardless of the Amount, Can Change a Life Today

It may be easy to come to the conclusion that small donations to Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) do not have an impact. But that conclusion could not be further from the truth. Since 1968, LCIF has provided more than twenty thousand grants totaling over one billion dollars. These grants provided critical funds that empowered Lions to expand their service and strengthen our humanitarian mission across Lion's global causes. The generosity of LCIF's donors directly impact personal outcomes for individual beneficiaries. The power of LCIF can be measured by one; one life forever changed directly by the donations of each donor.

As LCIF donors, we have experienced firsthand the impact on individuals and communities right here in Kansas. Since 1980 to just last September, Kansas has received over 80 grants, totaling in excess of \$1.4 million dollars. From 2000 through 2025, Kansas has been the recipient of at least one grant per year, except in 2004, 2005, 2016, and 2023. A lookback to January 2025 and the California fires, emphasizes what our donations and those of Lions from around the world mean to one person or community impacted by a major disaster.

California, Jan. 15, 2025: As wildfires continued to sweep through the Los Angeles area, causing injuries, fatalities, and widespread destruction to homes and businesses, Lions in the region stepped up to assist those in need. With more than \$100,000 in Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) grant funding, they were able to expand their efforts to provide critical support and resources to affected communities. Funds were used to meet immediate needs, including emergency food packs, water bottles, power cords, hygiene kits, blankets and face masks, as well school supplies for children. Checkout the following link to view a 40 second video link; LCIF: Together, we build hope.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1733862120514865>

Facebook comments from non-California Lions around the world reflected the true impact of the service provided by local Lions given the available funds from the LCIF Major Catastrophe Grant Butch Al Clark: As a Lion for over 50 years & a life member, it is marvelous just how quickly you have responded to this calamity taking place in LA. Let's continue the support of our fellow Lions the areas affected. God Bless.



Lion Michira Paul: Being a Lion has changed my mindset completely. In face of calamity like the recent California tragedy, I think of the children who couldn't run for their lives, the aged and sick family members who were bedridden, animals like pets and the lost damaged properties. It's sad. It's life threatening. It's disastrous. We have a role to play. Our California brethren, hold on a little longer.

PID Bill Phillipi & IPID Hans Neidhardt
Multiple District 17, LCIF Co-Chair

Lions are coming to ease your load. We love you.



Learn how to grow Lions & our impact

Join Lions & Leos across the U.S. & its Affiliates for **Let's Grow**, a 4-part interactive workshop designed to help you start new clubs, rebuild existing ones & ignite unstoppable momentum in your community.

You'll learn proven strategies, share ideas & leave each session ready to grow your pride.

BONUS: All new success stories, inspiration & interaction!

Our Focus:

- January 6: Process & Club Types
- January 20: Recruiting
- February 3: Marketing & PR
- February 17: New Club Application & Keep Growing

Perfect for:

- GAT Coordinators & Team Members
- Lions & Leos hungry for growth & impact



January 6 – February 17

(Every Other Week)

8 pm EST / 7 pm CST

/ 6 pm MST / 5 pm PST

Register Now: <https://bit.ly/GrowthWkshp26>

?s membership@lionsusa.org