

DISTRICT DIALOGUE -APRIL 2026

Northeast Kansas Lions District 17A

Chart Your Course



We Serve

Save the Dates:

4TH DIST. CABINET MEETING
Jun 13 – Salvation Army
Worship Center, Olathe

GPLLI -

Great Plains Lions
Leadership Institute

July 17 - 19

Register and pay by June 1

YOUR VOTE MATTERS!

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

There is no time to rest. After the district convention, I attended District 17K's convention and provided a program on marketing your club.

This week I visited Abilene and distributed fliers around town, purchased an ad in the local paper and set the informational meeting up to join Lions on May 2nd at the Abilene Public Library. I promised to rebuild this club with more members. This weekend Bart Hettenbach, Zone Chair will be distributing more fliers and promoting Lions at their America 250 Celebration.

This July I will be one of the many faculty members facilitating the training at Great Plains Lions Leadership Institute. Please be sure and register and pay by June 1. Registration forms for GPLLI and FDI are enclosed.

I am honored to be asked to be a facilitator at the USA/Canada Lions Leadership Forum in Memphis for a program titled Marketing Strategies for Service Visibility. My training in the FDI has been put to good use.

When you get a chance to step up and be a leader you will feel yourself grow. It is at times like this that the challenge will present itself and you will be the benefactor of this new growth, as you serve your community and work side by side with other Lions to make a difference.

Inside this issue is a photo collection of the exciting District 17A convention held in Manhattan, KS April 10 - 11, 2026. Congratulations to Newly Elected Directors: Kansas Lions Sight Foundation-Spencer Smith, Kansas Lions Band Foundation, Daniel Martinez and Roger Yost, and Kansas Lions Foundation - Ron Weaverling.

DG Irene Haws

irene@idesignGS.com

MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND THE USA/CANADA LIONS LEADERSHIP FORUM IN MEMPHIS

register at <https://lionsforum.org/>





District Governor-Elect

April 2026 - New Beginnings

April showers bring May flowers. May will be a time of new beginnings. How can we as Lions reenergize our clubs to start new projects with the seed of new members and ideas. We need to look at our ideas as a way of fertilizing old plants (projects), to give them more room to grow and give them a chance.

Ask yourselves, does your community really see the Club and understand what we do? Do you feel like you have made an impact? Do you feel like you have given your all? Be honest, the answers you hear may not be what we want to hear. We can change that.

A new Lions' year is fast approaching, as I've said before. Keep up the good work. Keep supporting our leaders because they can't do it by themselves. Change is good for the most part, be patient, understanding and willing to help with your experience and knowledge.

Believe me, I will be reaching out! Remember, We Serve.

From what we get, we can make a living; what we give however, makes a life.
Arthur Ashe

Roger Yost DG Elect
Yostfarms@hotmail.com
620-397-3108 (leave msg I will return the call)



Lead to Serve. Serve to Lead. District 17A Global Action Team

Vania Castro, GLT
Global Leadership Team Coordinator
drvaniacastro@gmail.com

Rick Dodson, GST
Global Service Team Coordinator
dodsonr23@gmail.com

Eric Strimple, GMT
Global Membership Team Coordinator
estrimp81@msn.com

Eric Tweedy, GET
Global Extention 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).



First Vice-District Governor-Elect

By the time you read this, I may already have attended the District Convention. I signed up to renew my Guiding Lion certificate. Each time I go through the process, I learn something new about Lions and I learn different ways to handle certain situations. I would encourage each of you to consider going through the process. Speaking of training, have you explored the Learn tab in the Lions Portal? There are classes on so many topics. Some of the topics are specific to Lions, but others are applicable to your job or your life. Conflict resolution is valuable training no matter what you do! All the classes are free...check it out!

The District-wide project, Kansas River Clean-up, is right around the corner. The link was in the March newsletter. It will be in Lawrence on April 18th and in Manhattan on April 25th. Both of those dates fall in the LCI Week of Service targeting the environment. Can't make those? Plant a tree, clean up a park, or adopt a section of a highway...lots of options!

State convention is right around the corner. It will be in Hutchinson, May 29th and 30th. The meetings will be held at Hutchinson Community College. There will be an excursion to the salt mines on Friday night and, of course, on Saturday a performance from the Kansas Lions Band. The Cosmosphere is one block away with discounts given with your convention name badge. All proceeds from the Silent Auction will go to support childhood cancer. Registration is open...do it now, before you forget! I look forward to seeing you there!

Cheryl Kerns
First Vice-District Governor-Elect

Left: Miami Traveling Lions and Leos help clean up the River at the Lawrence River clean up. A District-Wide service project for the International Week of Service for the Environment.

Members of the Topeka Lions Club will be participating in the River Clean up in Manhattan on Saturday, April 25.

Remember to report your Environmental Service Project in the Lions Portal for the International Week of Service, and upload photos!



STATE CONVENTION SERVICE PROJECT TO BENEFIT PEDIATRIC CANCER PATIENTS

The 2026 MD-17 Convention Service Project will be creating Comfort Care Kits for pediatric patients and their siblings. I've included an information sheet for your use.

Please:

- 1) publish the info in your newsletters
- 2) circulate the info as much as possible on your media sites
- 3) contact me with the names of local patients that should be included

Any questions or suggestions?

MD-17 Global Service Chair,
PDG Carleen Rajala
913-481-7328
10612 W. 93rd Terrace, Overland Park. Ks. 66214



[Comfort Kits for Childhood Cancer Victims!!!](#)

2026 MD-17 State Convention Service Project will focus on support and comfort for ***Childhood Cancer Patients & Siblings*** by donating comfort kits for use during the actual treatments, time waiting between treatments and journey to and from the treatment centers.

District Lions are asked to donate some of the following items at the convention in Hutchinson on May 30th, to send with other Lions or to send them to GST Carleen Rajala prior to that date.

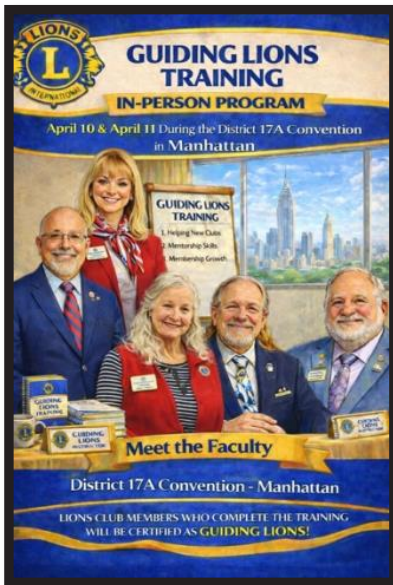
Items needed for the **patients** are:

- small bottles of ***unscented lotions and hand sanitizers***
- hand-tied fleece blankets*** (any super cozy throw size blanket)
- quesy pops or drops*** (available on Amazon)

Items for **patients and siblings** are:

- crayons & coloring books
- activity, crossword puzzle, word search or sudoku books
- water bottles

If there is a local pediatric cancer patient that you would like to give a kit to, please contact PDG Carleen Rajala 913-481-7328 lioncarleen@gmail.com.



Guiding Lions Training Strengthens Leadership Across MD 17

District 17A Convention | April 10–11, 2026

The Guiding Lions Training Seminar, held during the District 17A Convention proved to be a highly valuable experience for Lions leaders across Multiple District 17. This impactful program directly engaged 18 participants, while its influence is expected to extend far beyond the classroom—reaching over 350 Lions through their respective clubs, along with more than 100 Lions represented by our dedicated faculty team. The seminar featured an outstanding faculty, including PID Robert “Bob” Block (MD 1, Illinois, USA), PDG Carleen Rajala, PDG Richard Webster, PDG Rick Dodson, and GLT & PDG Dr. Vania Castro, who served as moderator and coordinator of the event. Their collective expertise and commitment

created a dynamic and engaging learning environment focused on leadership excellence.

A heartfelt thank you is extended to District Governor Irene Haws for her support in making this training possible during the 2026 District 17A Convention. Appreciation is also extended to PDG Caroline Arter for providing essential materials—including flip charts, markers, and Post-it notes—which enhanced the interactive nature of the sessions.

Participants shared that the seminar significantly strengthened their leadership skills and vision. Our international guest, PID Bruce Beck, was genuinely impressed and actively engaged throughout the program. He emphasized that this level of training is essential to developing strong clubs that effectively meet the needs of their communities. He also brought energy and enthusiasm to the event—leading participants in a lively dance during an “energizer moment” at the beginning of one session—and publicly commended the seminar as exceptionally well executed.

This success reflects the thoughtful planning behind including PID Bob as part of the convention program and demonstrates a strong commitment to delivering high-quality leadership development. Looking ahead, we are excited to continue expanding leadership training opportunities for all MD 17 Lions. Leadership development remains vital to increasing member retention, strengthening membership growth, and ensuring that Lions are well prepared to serve their communities with compassion and excellence.

In Service,
GLT & PDG Dr. Vania Castro

Reminder:

Be sure and input your newly elected club officers into the Lions Portal. If you have questions please contact our District Administrator.

Rick Dodson
District Administrator
dodsonr23@gmail.com

2026 GREAT PLAINS LIONS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE (GPLLI)

GPLLI Event Description: “Training to prepare Lions for leadership positions throughout the organization. The GPLLI program is customized to best accommodate the needs of the area.” Dynamic facilitators from across the Great Plains will provide emerging Lion leaders with modules on diversity; goal setting; Lions fundamentals; local issues; mission statement; motivation; public speaking; time management; and working in teams.

GPLLI Candidate Description: “Qualified candidates are Lions ready to pursue leadership roles within their Lions communities. Club Leaders would benefit from attending.” **NOTE: Previous attendees are not eligible to participate without prior approval from the Institute Coordinator.**

GPLLI Sponsors: Multiple Districts 3 (Oklahoma), 9 (Iowa), 17 (Kansas), 26 (Missouri) and 38 (Nebraska).

WHEN: July 17-19, 2026. Check-in at the dormitory will take place from 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. on Friday, July 17, 2026. Adjournment and checkout, by Noon on Sunday, July 19, 2026.

WHERE: Baker University, Baldwin City, Kansas 66006.

COST: US \$220 per attendee if payment received on or before April 30, 2026. Cost increases to US \$240 beginning May 1, 2026. Registration covers single occupancy room, seven meals, and all course materials. Lion attendees may request to room together if desired. Mail completed application and check to PID Hans Neidhardt, 2744 E Ironstone St, Park City, KS 67219. You may also pay registration fee by Venmo (@Hans-Neidhardt).

SPECIAL Needs: If you have special needs (meals, mobility, sight, hearing, etc.) please be sure to provide this on your application. Attached additional sheet if necessary.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES: Please download the fillable PDF application and provide complete information to the entire application before printing and submitting it. If you are given a hard copy of the application, please print the information legibly. Application deadline is June 1, 2026.

Curriculum Coordinator/Registrar:

PID Hans Neidhardt
2744 E Ironstone St, Park City, KS 67219
316-435-2800
hnwizardofoz@gmail.com

24th ANNUAL GREAT PLAINS LIONS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
Sponsored by the Lions of Multiple Districts 3, 9, 17, 26 and 38
Baker University,
615 Dearborn Street, Baldwin City, Kansas 66006
July 17-19, 2026

REGISTRATION FORM (Please type or print legibly)

NAME _____ **Badge Name** _____ **Gender** ____
Last First Initial
ADDRESS _____
Street/PO Box City State/Province Zip/PC
PHONE () _____ () _____
Home Bus/Cell Email
Home Club. _____ **Sub District Number** _____ **LCI Mbr #** _____
Years in Lions _____ **Highest Office Held** _____

Registration Fee is **US\$220 if received by April 30, 2026**, and must accompany the registration form. **Beginning May 1, 2026, the base fee increases to US\$240.** Make checks payable in US funds to GPLLI or use Venmo (@Hans-Neidhardt). Mail registration form along with check (if paying by check), to PID Hans Neidhardt, 2744 E Ironstone St, Park City, Kansas 67219. You can also email the registration form to PID Hans Neidhardt (hnwizardofoz@gmail.com).

Application Deadline: June 1, 2026

"Applications will not be accepted without full payment."

Your registration fee includes seven meals, all Institute costs and dormitory rooms (Friday and Saturday) at Baker University. Please note that the dormitories are smoke free. You are permitted to request a specific roommate. Check in will take place at the **Harter Student Union** from 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. on Friday, July 17th and check out must be completed by 8:00 A.M. on Sunday, July 19th. We offer a souvenir shirt for an additional US\$30. Shirt size _____ (they run a little large).

The following information must be completed before registration will be accepted.

_____ Diabetic Diet requested _____ Vegetarian Diet requested
_____ Wheelchair Access required _____ Vision Impaired (List what accommodation(s) are needed)
_____ Hearing Impaired (List what accommodation(s) are needed)

Please list any other special requests _____

Questions about the Great Plains Lions Leadership Institute may be directed to: PID Hans Neidhardt, Registrar, 2744 E Ironstone St, Park City, Kansas 67219, (316) 435-2800, or hnwizardofoz@gmail.com. Additional information will be sent to attendees prior to the start of the training session, to include directions, campus map, daily schedule, etc.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

We are asking for the following information in case of an emergency arising during the 2026 Institute. This information will be maintained until the close of the Institute and then shredded.

Emergency Contact Name _____ Relationship _____

Contact telephone: HOME _____ WORK _____ CELL _____

Medical information that needs to be shared with emergency responders: Please feel free to use the back of this form.

**** LCIF Donations Collection: Historically, we have accepted individual and/or club donations during the training course. Donations are entirely up to each individual and/or clubs, and are in no way mandatory.**

EUDORA

times

75 years of “We serve” Lions Club honors legacy

JULIA HANSON
April 16, 2026

The Lions Club gathers for its meeting earlier this month planning community events and recounting years of service at the Community Center.

The Lions Club gathers for its meeting earlier this month planning community events and recounting years of service at the Community Center.

A local club that tries to help every corner of the community is celebrating its 75th anniversary of service this year.

The Eudora Lions Club was founded in 1951 to foster community support, disaster relief and fundraising. Over two dozen local business owners gathered to establish the club and honor the motto “We serve.”

“At that time, it was a lot of business people that were signed up to be a part of the Lions Club because they felt that as-

sisted their business, as well, by being a member,” said Gary Scott, a current Lions Club member.

Scott’s father, Earl Raymond Scott, was a founding member of the club. He owned the electric and plumbing store, Scott Electric & Plumbing at 729 Main St., for 33 years. Other members owned the grocery store, hardware store and a pharmacy. Several families of founding members are still in Eudora, Scott said.

“I’m very proud of that,” Scott said. “We know what it’s like now in a small community, but in 1951, the community was a lot smaller. So, Lions Club really even meant a lot more.”

Charter members, according to eudorakshistory, were W. Glenn Brown, Al Colman, Keith Colman, Harold Daugherty, Johnnie Douglas, Harry J. Edwards, John J. Halligan, Dr. B. L. Harden, Jack Howard, Archie Jameson, Don Joslin, D. E. Kerr, W.C. Mercier, R. C. Ogden, Alf T. H. Oleson, Fred Papenhausen, Delbert Reusch, Fred Rothberger, E. R. Scott, S.C. Simons, James B. Smith, Charles Taylor, Wilfred Trefz, David Wilson, Glen Wilson, Howard Wilson and Fred Ziesenis. Kerr served as first president.

In 1955, the club was instrumental in numbering the houses in Eudora, Administrator Eric Tweedy said. They have continuously hosted fundraisers like chili dinners for the Boy Scouts, and they provided funds for the public library’s flag pole in the 1970s. In 2014, the club donated \$5,000 to the Eudora Area Historical Society to help restore its building in downtown Eudora.



Prior newspaper coverage of the Lions' work. Newspapers courtesy of Eudora Community Museum.

Today, the club serves in every corner of Eudora, partnering with the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, the Eudora Schools Foundation and the food pantry. It helps with cemetery maintenance, road cleanup and fundraising to send students to band camp. Every year, the Lions Club collects glasses to send worldwide for those without access or funds.

When a tornado struck Douglas County in 2019, the Lions responded by distributing free items like shovels and brooms to clean up the damage.

"Typically 24 to 48 hours, money is where it needs to be, and Lions are boots on the ground," Tweedy said. "That's worldwide, not just in Kansas."

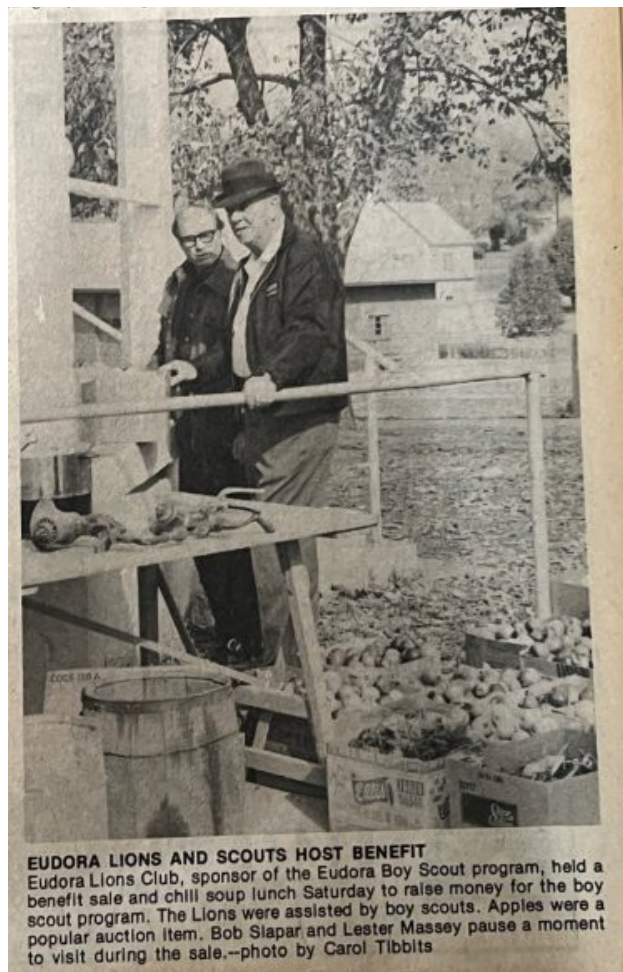
The local club now has 32 members, men and women, who are all volunteers.

"Eudora as a small town, there isn't a whole lot of services. I mean, we have one main food pantry. Because we have this strong little club, we're just able to help our community a lot more in areas we lack in because we are small," Vice President Katrina Hayes said.

One of the club's annual events is the Angel Tree during Christmas. For over 10 years, the club made a Christmas dinner for families in need. Last year, they gave 75 families gift cards to Gene's Heartland Foods to buy a Christmas dinner instead. The club also gifted 120 children clothes, toys and bicycles last Christmas.

We had one gentleman, several people really, that was starting to cry because their kids were getting brand new bicycles, and they thanked us over and over again," President Kathy Strimple said.

The Lions Club is an international organization with 1.4 million members and 50,000 clubs that serve in over 200 countries. Each club receives funding primarily from local fundraisers, member dues, grants and the Lions Club International Foundation. The foundation is also funded by donations and grants.



Prior newspaper coverage of the Lions' work.

The Lions Club began allowing women members after a 1987 Supreme Court ruling determined that Rotary Clubs could not exclude members based on gender. Now the Lions Club has over 425,000 women members.

Tweedy created a branch of the Lions Club in 2024, exclusive to Eudora, called Lions of Pride and Purpose for LGBTQ+ people and allies. The branch stocked Free Little Libraries in the community with books, including banned books. They held a coat drive to donate winter clothing to the Social Service League store, a Lawrence non profit that funds local charities.

"It has meant a lot because the Lion's motto is 'We serve.' And we started that branch because we felt that community needs help and support, especially now. So, it means a lot," Tweedy said.

Member Rebecca Giubileo was at a Pride festival after having just moved to Eudora from California. She only knew her family and was looking to get involved in the community. Tweedy was tabling at the event and inspired her to join.

“Now I can see people out and about and be like, ‘Oh I know them.’ I feel like I know what’s happening in Eudora,” Giubileo said.

The Lions acquire new members by tabling at Main Street Market and posting on their social media. Word-of-mouth has brought most of the members together.

Those interested in joining the club are encouraged to attend a meeting at 7 p.m. on the first and third Monday of every month at the Community Center.

The club will privately celebrate its 75th anniversary together April 25 with a slideshow highlighting its years of service.

Pictures from the District 17A Convention



District Governor Irene Haws presented Lion/GET, Eric Tweedy with the **New Voices Nomination to LCI** for his work in starting the Club Branch, Pride and Purpose Cyber Club Branch of the Eudora Lions Club.

Eudora Lions Club
April 18 at 4:57 PM · 🌍

Eudora Lions Club
April 18 at 4:56 PM · 🎵 Inspire and Uplifting - BlueWhaleMusic · 🌍

This morning you may have seen a bunch of Lions loose in Eudora, don't worry, there wasn't a breach at the local zoo. 🙄

A crew of Eudora Lions spent the morning cleaning a one-mile stretch of east 10th Street and 442, from Grandview Trailer Park to the east K10 interchange.

During the 2 1/2 hour clean up, 16 bags of trash were removed from the roadway. Remember to do something for the environment this week as we all celebrate Earth Day, April 22nd! 🌱🗑️



Friday Night Dinner with PID Bruce Beck and Lion Erin Beck



PID Bill Phillipi and Vickie Phillipi treated PID Bruce and Lion Erin Beck to the Midwest Dream Car Collection, in Manhattan.



Friday Night Dinner Dinner before the Social, Olivia and Camy from Concordia, and to the right, Joyce McDaniels 2VDG-Elect from 17K, with Topeka Lions Club members: Priscilla McCabe (Peace Poster Coordinator, Donna Doel, Convention Chair, and Linda Sloan, District Marketing Chair.



Left: John Cook, Riley County Extension office speaks on native plants and gardens.



Right:: Vern Failor talks about the Diabetes Camp. Proceeds from the basket auction go to replenish the funds in the Diabestes Fund for District 17A



Peace Poster Winners Awarded



Nominations Chair, Rich Webster announces the results of the election. Acceptance remarks by District Governor Elect, Roger Yost and First Vice District Governor-Elect, Cheryl Kerns



Fun at the PDG Pound Auction



Stretch and movement during the Guiding Lions Training



Environmental Photo Contest Winners Recognized by PDG Terry Weldin, Environmental Chair



Graduates of the Certified Guiding Lions Training and Facilitators!
Roar Lions!



Friday Night social included Corn Hole - Friday Afternoon PID Bruce Beck got to view the Midwest Dream Car Collection



PID Gene Vogel with PID Bruce Beck



More photos of the Friday Night Dinner - FVG Roger Yost and Terri Yost with DG Lou Morgan and Patty Morgan from 17K



Right: Friday Lunch with PID Bob Block and Lion Brenda Block, Day 1 of Certified Guiding Lions Training, with students, facilitators and PCC Shari Neidhart and PID Hans Neidhart



Tokens of appreciation/gifts to our two Past International Directors; Bruce and Eric Beck(top) and Bob and Brenda Block, Guiding Lion Facilitator. Bottom photo) Donations to LCIF were also made in their honor.



LCIF Coordinators PCC Bobby Duvall and PID Deb Weaverling introduce the Best Looking Legs Contest. A fundraiser for LCIF.



Saturday Night's Keynote address included use of AI in this illustration.



PDG Neal Nichols introduces the bylaws update, thanking IPDG Margy Sundstrom for naming the Reading Action Program after his late wife PCC Beverly Nichols. The Beverly Nichols Reading Action Program.



Left to Right: Ron Weaverling and PID Deb Weaverling with Lion Erin Beck and PID Bruce Beck



DG Irene Haws was honored to have PID Bruce Beck present a program on **Lions of the US and Affiliates**.



Learning can be Fun! Look at these Lions!

Below: Right: PID Bob Block and GLT Vania Castro Certified Guiding Lions, a Two Day Training at the Convention.



Friday Night Social Swing Dance Lessons by DG Irene Haws





Cheryl Kerns and Roger Yost Surprise Irene Haws. "You charted your course and helped the district set sail for success. Job Well Done! A donation to LCIF was also made in her honor.



Vern Failor, Lions Eye Health/ Diabetes Chair, receives the International President's Certificate of Appreciation



Martha Kehr, Webmaster, receives the International President's Certificate of Appreciation



Stephanie Heisler, District Secretary, receives the International President's Certificate of Appreciation



Five PIDs in one place - Saturday Night after the Awards Banquet - some extra time to socialize!



Special Thanks to Lions from District 17N & 17K for attending and participating:

17N: PCC Pam Bilyeu, DG Clark Lindstrom, DG-Elect Melanie Snider, First VDG-Elect Barb Schattak, PCC Shari Neidhart and PID Hans Neidhart.

17K DG: Lou Morgan and Patty Morgan, 2nd VDG-Elect Joyce McDanies, and Jim Huemegarde for the lenseometer demonstration.

Eye-glass sorting was completed at the convention and many boxes of glasses were sorted.

Congratulations to Lion Nelda Buckley who won the Branson Getaway vacation!

Thank you all District 17A Lions Clubs represented at the District Convention.

We hope to see many of you at the State Convention!

Kansas Lions are on a Mission!