



Biloxi Lions Club

Lions Roar



Founded February 18, 1924

<http://biloxilionsclub.org>
www.facebook.com/BiloxiLions

October 13, 2021

District Governor Remarks

District Governor Charles Cruthirds was with us today. He told us that our Mid-Winter convention would be down here at Gulf Hills on January 21-22.

In other news, the night of Hurricane Ida, my phone rang at 11 PM. It was LCIF telling me that we qualified for a \$10,000 grant for disaster relief! It took some time to put some plans together. We ended up feeding some refugees in the Gulf Hills hotel as well a people at the Kiln shelter. We also provided clean-up kits and hygiene kits to the people in both places. I'm about to close out the grant and will end up returning about half of the grant that went unused.

I recently met with Mr. Jim Grove who is with the LCIF International Disaster Relief. He has a warehouse in Pennsylvania with ready-to-go supplies as well as a semi-trailer to move them. He is looking to mirror that facility in the south, perhaps in Jackson!

Our next District 30-S Cabinet Meeting will be on October 30 at 2:30 PM in the Lions State Office in Flowood.

Pageants

We have posters available that can be distributed to advertise our pageants. The Lions Club phone number is on the poster and Jaye Brice will be holding the phone so she can answer any questions people may have. After ad sales, having contestants is a very important thing. After the meeting, we will be taking a trip to the venue to check out the facility.

Nut Sales

The order will be going to the company this Friday! It appears that the sales this year are at least about the same as last year. We expect the order to arrive just before Thanksgiving.

October Board Meeting

Our October Board Meeting will be tomorrow at Camp Wilkes. All club members are welcome to attend.

Passing of a Lions Mother

We want to recognize the passing of Shelley Jarvis' mother. Please keep her in your prayers!

Scout Raffle

The Cruisers came through in a big way. We sold \$1080 of tickets! Right now, we have sold around \$2400 of tickets. Remember, the drawing is in December!

Eye Screening

We are hoping to get a November date for an eye screening at the Ohr Museum on Thursday. We may also have an opportunity to do an eye screening at the Maritime and Seafood Museum during their visit from Santa in December!

Meetings are noon every Wednesday at the Maritime and Seafood History Museum



Guest Speaker

Commander Joseph Nicholson, Jackson County Narcotics.

To learn how to do this when I was new, I did some undercover work with the Biloxi PD. The office was in the old Biloxi Police Dept. in the basement. It leaked so bad that when it rained, the people down there had to wear rain gear – they looked much like the shrimpers!

Fast forward to now. The current trend of drug problems has changed. In the late 1990s, crack cocaine was the most popular drug. We eventually got that under control only to see meth replace it in the early 2000s. Starting around the mid-2000s meth was being replaced with ICE, which is a pure form of meth. The Mexican drug cartels pretty much control the drug shipping. For us, that means I-10. So, ICE started coming in to our country from down south.

Through all of this, we kept trying to solve the drug problem (the effect) using legal enforcement without treating the main problem, mental illness (the cause). Not much was changing, the same people were still buying drugs, just in different ways.

Most narcotic operations are run by task forces. An agency will send me someone and within three years they move out of the task force. Because of this, most task force members don't get to see the entire picture of what is going on. They only get to see what is right in front of them. They find evidence and arrest people. They don't get to understand the cause of it or why they had it; are we making any change or doing anything differently.

Our task force has a “board of directors”; each one of the Chief of Police from the cities, the Jackson County Sheriff, and a representative from the FBI. Each month we have a board meeting and I present the budget to them. We then discuss what our issues are in Jackson County.

Some of the things that we have changed are that as drug preferences change, we have to keep up. Vape pens are a big problem right now. About half of the vape pens have THC in them (marijuana). The stores that sell them label them as “Delta 8”. Delta 8 is very similar to Delta 9 and they are both illegal. Delta 9 is just a particular strain of marijuana. Delta 8 is just a variant of Delta 9. State law defines a “dosage unit” as 1 milliliter or more. So, people who use these vape pens just have less than 1 milliliter and so they skirt the law. This is a legislative problem, not an enforcement problem.

Another problem we have is with heroin. Heroin was not a problem here three years ago, so it's a fairly new problem. I believe it grew when we were cracking down on doctors for prescribing too much pain medication. One thing that doctors want to do is open methadone clinics. There is a clinic in Biloxi and one in Mobile. They wanted to put one in Jackson County, but we wouldn't sign-off on it. While methadone is an opioid blocker and is used to wean people off of opioids, it comes with its own set of problems. I'm sure it does help cure some people, but it can just swap one drug for another.

The latest problems are with fentanyl. Fentanyl is about about 500 times more powerful than heroin and 1,000 times more powerful than morphine. Last year there was about 105,000 cases of over-dose in America. This year in Jackson County 106 people have over-dosed on it so far.

One thing they are doing now is taking heroin and fentanyl and pressing them into pills. The obvious problem is there is no quality control. One pill might get you high, but the next pill my kill you.