

YOUR FLORIDA LIONS FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND WHY IT DESERVES YOUR SUPPORT

The Florida Lions Foundation for the Blind (a *'not for profit'* corporation) became a Florida Lions entity by vote of the Delegates at the 34th Annual State Convention, Sarasota, Florida, May 20, 1958. Since then members of the Lions organizations statewide have testified to the effectiveness and integrity of the Foundation. Requests have come in from many other states for advice on forming a similar Foundation.

FOUNDATION MEMBERSHIP

All active members in good standing of Florida Lions Clubs are automatically Active members of the Foundation. A non-Lion may become a member by making a donation. The Foundation charges its members no dues or assessments. All members are invited to attend Foundation meetings as announced in *'Florida Lions'* and other mailings. All members have voting privileges at the Annual Foundation meeting each May.

PROJECTS

Sooner or later, by way of the Sight Conservation Chair (SCC) or other alert member, a Lions Club gets news of a local citizen who qualifies as lacking fund sources and needs an expensive eye procedure. That may be cataract surgery, corneal transplant, etc. The Club Treasurer determines that their budget falls short of the fee. The SCC looks up the Foundation's District Project Chair in the District Directory and makes contact. Our State Projects Chair helps with the paperwork, studies the medical report(s), confers with the prospective patient and his/her family, case worker, medical provider(s), and so on. He persuades the doctor to reduce the fee, usually to less than half of the original. The club may (but is not required to) provide a *'co-payment'* depending on the health of its budget. At the next Foundation Board meeting (or immediately in case of an emergency) the Directors approve the case. The patient gets the procedure, the Foundation pays the bill. Some cases are more complex, but most follow the above pattern.

FUND DRIVE

Each year the Foundation runs its State Fund Drive from May 1st through April 30th (the *'current year'*). District Drive Directors canvass their clubs by mail and personally, signing up Life Members and logging in other donations. Contributions from clubs and non-Lions go into the General Fund; Life Memberships, Memorials and Bequests go into the Custodian Fund. By policy, in any year, the Foundation spends only money raised the *previous year*.

CUSTODIAN FUND –

was set up as a Trust from which no withdrawals of principal are permitted. It generates interest and dividends that are the basis for the annual budget from which the Foundation pays for projects or makes grants to other organizations. *All other Florida Lions entities started with substantial grants from the Foundation.*

GENERAL FUND –

accrues interest, and the principal is withdrawn and spent. It pays operating expenses and contingencies and is applied to projects as needed.

CONCLUSION

The Foundation keeps expenses extremely low. There are no offices, no inventory, no loans to pay off. There is only one paid position, and the salary and expense allowances are modest. The overhead rate, consistently less than ten percent, is lower than most charities.

Your contributions to the Foundation work extra hard for your sight projects.

Florida Lions Foundation for the Blind