

LIONS DISTRICT 25 A NEWSLETTER

Coming Together to Serve

DISTRICT CONTACTS

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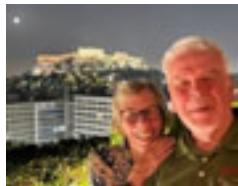
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**District 25-A Convention is March 6th to 7th at
Fair Oaks Farms**

See Information pages 35-37

District Governor Jim Furlong



District Governor Jim Furlong

630-699-4278



LEO'S AT THE MIDWINTER CONFERENCE

Well, the Mid-Winter Conference is in the books and, as usual, it was a great event. One of my personal favorites as watching the many Leo's attending the conference. There were several Leo's from our own District but, for the first time, Leo's from other districts. And boy, did they bring energy to the conference. They participated in a few service projects like packing toiletries and other essentials in emergency kits for the less fortunate.



They even donned Blindfolds to simulate the feeling of blindness and walked through the lobby of the hotel. A few of them even bumped into some larger objects including some hotel guests. Apparently some of those guests were members of the famous Harlem Globetrotters basketball team who were making an appearance in Indianapolis. Afterwards some of the Leo's were upset that they didn't get to meet the Globetrotters. Oh well.

Leos: The Leaders Shaping the Future of Lions

One of the greatest strengths of Lions Clubs International has always been our ability to look ahead—to see needs before they become crises and to prepare future leaders before the moment calls for them. In that spirit, the Leo program continues to be one of the most important investments we make in the future of our organization.

Leos bring energy, creativity, and fresh perspectives to Lionism. They approach service with enthusiasm and openness, often seeing possibilities where others see obstacles. Whether organizing community projects, supporting Lions' initiatives, or launching service ideas of their own, Leos remind us that service is not bound by age—it's driven by heart.

District Governor Jim Furlong

Beyond the projects they complete today, Leos represent the next generation of Lions leaders. Through hands-on service, collaboration, and mentorship, they learn what it truly means to serve with integrity and compassion. They gain leadership skills, confidence, and a deep understanding of community needs. When Leos transition into Lions, they don't start from scratch; they bring experience, commitment, and a strong sense of purpose with them.

Just as important is the relationship between Lions and Leos. When we work alongside Leos—as mentors, partners, and supporters—we strengthen our clubs and ourselves. Leos challenge us to think differently, communicate more openly, and adopt new ways of engaging our communities. In return, Lions offer guidance, encouragement, and the example of lifelong service. Together, we create a bridge between generations that keeps Lionism dynamic and relevant.

In a world that is changing rapidly, the Leo program ensures that the values of Lions Clubs International continue to thrive. Service, fellowship, and leadership do not fade—they are renewed through young people who are eager to make a difference. When we support Leos, we are not just sponsoring a youth program; we are safeguarding the future of our organization.



First Vice District Governor David Dickinson



District 25A Lions,

It sounds like you are looking to organize a **community-wide service project** or an event that brings everyone together. When you combine the resources of a Lions Club with the energy of schools, churches, and families, you create a powerful "village" effect.

- The core engines: Lions & Organizations
- The energy: Schools, Kids, & Families
- The Heart: Elders & The Disabled

How to Get Started

1. **The "Big Table" Meeting:** Invite one representative from each group (the school principal, the Pastor, the Lions Officers) to a brief coffee meeting to align on one common goal.
2. **Identify the "Pain Point":** What does your specific town need most? (E.g., a cleaner park, a ramp for a neighbor, or a youth center).
3. **Assign Roles by Strength:** Let the Lions handle the permits, the kids handle the social media/promotion, and the churches handle the hospitality.

Would you like me to help you draft an invitation letter or a flyer to send out to these different groups?

We Serve,
1VDG David Dickinson

Second Vice District Governor Wendy Semans

Hello Fellow Lions, Hang in there Spring will be here eventually!

If you did not attend Mid-Winter, you missed a great weekend, it was filled with learning, fellowship and good food. Next year they are looking at ways to keep the costs down so stay tuned.

District Convention is coming soon, please plan to attend to support your District Governor and meet the visiting ID. I look forward to seeing everyone and talking about all things Lions and Leo's.

I see a lot of events planned, have fun and remember when you have a project or fundraiser don't forget to talk with the non-Lions and ask them to join, it's all about the ASK.



District Convention Delegate Certification and Elections

Planning to run for an office at our District Convention on March 7th? Planning to vote? Please remember that to do either, you must be a member in good standing, of a club in good standing. You know that to be a member in good standing, your dues are paid, right? So, what does it mean to be a club in good standing? I would refer you to the Lions International Board Policy Manual. The Board Policy Manual, Chapter V, Section, B, subparagraph 1 defines a club in good standing as the following:

1. Good Standing

A club in good standing is one:

- a. Which is not in “status quo or financial suspension”;
- b. Which operates in accordance with the provisions of the International Constitution and By-Laws and International Board Policy;
- c. Which has:
 - (1) District (Single, Sub-and Multiple) dues and fees paid in full; and
 - (2) No unpaid balance of International dues and fees greater than U.S.\$10, outstanding more than thirty (30) days; and
 - (3) No unpaid Lions Club International account balance greater than U.S.\$50, outstanding more than ninety (90) days.

As you can see, not only do your district and state dues need to be paid in full, but any other fees you may owe, such as supplies from the state office. Additionally, any supplies ordered through LCI must be paid (see above).

A Certified Delegate list will be pulled from the Lions Portal as well as the State Certified list will be provided by our State Comptroller. Either CS Robin or CT Sally will advise you if there are any outstanding balances due. If there are, you have until February 20th to bring the club into good standing. Please feel free to contact either of us or Nominations and Elections Chair, PDG Barbara Toosley with any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Cabinet Secretary Robin Smith, PDG
Cabinet Treasurer Sally Davis

Convention Voting Information

LIONS ALL: Constitution, By-Laws and Dues Payments

Please be advised that there will be 10 Constitution and By-Laws Amendments brought forth to the Convention Delegation for voting during the Annual District Convention March 7, 2026. The details of these amendments will be provided to all Clubs in accordance with Article IX, Section 3 and Article X, Section 3 of our current governing document.

Please look for the mail providing the official notification with all proposed amendments attached and share the information with your club members. The email will be sent no later than February 5, 2026.

Recently the state and district dues statements were sent out by me via email. These were issued to the club president, treasurer, and secretary. If this was not received by one of your officers, please notify me. One of the criteria of a club in good standing is having all dues paid.

It is time to pay your Lions Club dues for the second half of this fiscal year to the district. This covers the period from January 1, 2026, through June 30, 2026. It is based on the number of members that were registered at LCI on December 31, 2025. \$7 will be paid to state and \$3 will be retained in the district. It also includes any balance due on the account. Your prompt payment is appreciated.

Please note: This does not include dues that are payable to LCI. You must log on to the portal to obtain that portion of your club dues.

Contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached by email at csdavis61@comcast.net or call me at 219-942-4433.

Sally Davis
Treasurer

District 25-A Elections

Correction to Clubs for Ed Paine - Region 1 & Region 3

2026 DISTRICT 25A - DISTRICT ELECTIONS
Lion Barbara Toosley, PDG – Nomination & Election Chair
Members: Donna Worst and Jay Ferrell

District 25A Officers and Elected Committees Members & MD25 Foundation Officers
Nominating Committee Checklist

For Second Vice District Governor Candidate *

This checklist must be completed for each candidate and submitted to the Elections Committee.

Name of Candidate: _____

Name of Candidate's Lions Club: _____

Date of Nominating Committee Meeting: _____

Date of Election: _____

Candidate has submitted sufficient evidence showing that he/she has met the following Requirements:

This checklist must be completed for each candidate and submitted to the Elections Committee (DATED) via US Mail to Barb Toosley, 13700 Lantern Drive, St. John, IN 46373 or Email 30 days to lionbarb@comcast.net prior to the ELECTION, before or on February 5, 2026, 11:59 pm CDT.

- Candidate is an Active Member in good standing of a chartered Lions Club in Good Standing* in his/her single or sub-district.
- Candidate endorsed by his/her Lions Club or a majority of the Lions Clubs in the District. (Attach minutes of club meeting or signed form by majority clubs to Nomination Chair)

□ Club President:	Year Served_____
□ Club Board of Directors	Two (2) Years Served_____
□ District Cabinet (check one)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Zone or Region - Year Served_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cabinet Secretary and/or Treasurer) Year Served_____	
- With none of the above being accomplished concurrently.*
- Has not completed a full term, or majority portion thereof, as district governor

**Please note that if the club has any outstanding dues, the candidate should be notified and provided up until fifteen (15) days prior to the close of credential certification to ensure that his/her club pay outstanding dues.*

I have reviewed this checklist and certify that the candidate listed above has met the requirements for Second Vice District Governor in accordance with the International By-Laws, Article IX, Section 6(c).

Nominating Committee Chairperson _____

Date _____

Nominating Committee Member _____

Date _____

Any questions contact Chair Barb Toosley, 219-798-5950

District and Multi-State Offices

District and Multi-District Offices

(If you are a current OFFICER please check your term dates)

Each candidate must be submitted in writing to the Elections Committee (DATED) via US Mail to Barb Toosley, 13700 Lantern Drive, St John, IN 46373 or Email 30 days to lionbarb@comcast.net prior to the ELECTION, before or on February 5, 2026, 11:59 PM CDT, for your intent to run for any office listed below to be placed on the ballot. Election by your club is not a requirement.

Nominations will also be taken from the floor and be written on the ballot as a "Write-in Candidate".

State Projects & Foundation

*One Candidate from each Project or Foundation **

2026 – 2029 Indiana Lions for the Indiana School for the Blind & Visually Impaired, Inc.

2026 – 2029 Indiana Lions Speech & Hearing, Inc.

2026 – 2029 Indiana Lions for Leader Dog, Inc.

2026 – 2029 Lions Cancer Control Fund of Indiana, Inc.

2026 – 2029 Indiana Lions Foundation

2026 – 2029 Indiana Lions Eye Bank/Vision First

District 25A – Ed Paine Care & Helping Hands

One candidate from each Region

Candidates must be a member in good standing from one of the Clubs listed below.

Regions Amended in 2025

2026 – 2029 – Region 1

FROM: REGION 1 - East Chicago Evening, Gary NWI, Griffith, Highland, Indiana Harbor East Chicago, Munster, Whiting, Cedar Lake, Crown point, Lake of the Four Seasons, Lowell, Schererville, Schererville Central, St John

2026 – 2029 – Region 3

FROM: Francesville, Monterey, Star City, Winamac, Goodland, Morocco, Remington, Rensselaer

**Please note that if the club has any outstanding dues, the candidate should be notified and provided up until fifteen (15) days prior to the close of credential certification to ensure that his/her club pays outstanding dues.*

*** All CANDIDATES must be a member in good standing of a club in good standing in this district. Delinquent dues may be paid, and good standing acquired up to fifteen (15) days prior to the close of credential certification, as such closing time shall be established by the rules of the respective convention. For the 2026 District 25A Election, closing is February 20, 2026.**

All International, State & District DUES must be paid by February 20, 2026, 11:59PM, CDT

LCIF Report



PDG Randy Greer
219-728-8432
lionrandy@yahoo.com

PDG Nick Gonzalez
219-588-4893
Nsg1917@yahoo.com

LCIF is the global foundation dedicated to empowering Lions' and Leos' through service. So that, we can bring new possibilities to life together Worldwide. LCIF Grants and Special Programs help them realize their most inspiring and ambitious service projects.

LCIF has awarded over 15,000 grants totaling 1.3 billion dollars since 1968.

LCIF awarded 1800 grants in 2024-2025 that helped over 14 million people,

There were over 333 Covid-19 grants totaling over 6 million dollars.

Some of the grants that our District donated to since 2022 are:

Kentucky tornados – Disaster Relief

Ukraine Aid to Refugee Camps – Humanitarian

Hawaii Wild Fires – Disaster Relief

Hurricane Helene affected 5 States – Disaster Relief – Lions from all over the country sent aid to the affected areas.

California Wildfires – Disaster Relief

Texas Flooding – Disaster Relief

Each of the affected areas also received Catastrophic Relief Grants for \$100,000,

In the past 20 years District 25A has received the following grants:

3 Flood Relief Grants = \$25,000

2 Tornado Relief Grants = \$9,000

Eyeglass Recycling = \$17,000 – Matching

Eyeglass Recycling including the Vision First Van & Trailer = \$78,000 – Matching

Blind Social Center Renovation \$146,000 – Matching Humanitarian

Update Prison Recycling Equipment \$11,000

Your Individual or Club donation to LCIF makes a difference in the ability to give out the grants needed to provide the service to help others!

PLEASE DONATE TODAY!



GLT District Coordinator-Global Action Team

GLT District Coordinator

GLOBAL ACTION TEAM



GLT Pat Greer - 219-928-3618 - patricia.agreer@gmail.com

Qualifications for 2nd Vice District Governor in compliance with the International Constitution and By-Laws

Applications may be submitted to PDG Barb Toosley lionbarb@comcast.net

A candidate for the office of second vice district governor shall:

- (1) Be an Active Member in good standing of a chartered Lions club in good standing in his/her single or sub-district.
- (2) Secure the endorsement of his/her club or a majority of the clubs in his/ her single or sub-district.
- (3) Have served or will have served at the time he/she takes office as second vice district governor:
 - (a) As president of a Lions club for a full term or major portion thereof, and a member of the board of directors of a Lions club for no less than two (2) additional years; and
 - (b) As zone chairperson, region chairperson, district global extension team coordinator, district global leadership team coordinator, district global membership team coordinator, district global service team coordinator, LCIF district coordinator, or cabinet secretary and/or treasurer for a full term or major portion thereof.
 - (c) With none of the above being accomplished concurrently.
- (4) Has not completed a full term or major portion thereof as district governor.

District 25-A Convention Chant Contest

Lions of Indiana, we need a chant! Whenever we are gathered as a group at an event, we need a cheer or chant that shows who we are. We are the Lions of Indiana! We are here to Serve our fellow Hoosiers! Although it is a great song, 'Moonlight on the Wabash' just doesn't have the 'WOW!' we need. And it definitely does not work when we are marching in the International Parade.

I know you've got great energy and ideas! Work with other Lions in your club or district to create something fun and memorable that really expresses who we are.

We will have a Contest at the Indiana State Convention to determine the best Chant. The winning team will be awarded a prize for their creativity.

We can't wait to see what you come up with!

Lion Patty Cooke-Furlong
MD25 Marketing Committee Chair

Bert Nelson, International Director at District 25-A Convention

Bert Nelson: International Director, Lions Clubs International

A Friendly Glimpse Into His Life and Service

At our District 25-A convention we are lucky to have International Director Bert Nelson as our guest and keynote Speaker. He will be accompanied by his wife, Lion Pamela (Pam) Nelson.

Bert Nelson is one of the International Directors for Lions Clubs International—the world's largest group of people dedicated to helping others and making communities better. Bert's been part of the Lions for many years, and he's always been passionate about service, whether on a local scale or in projects that reach around the globe.

Over the years, Bert has become known for his positive outlook and steady leadership. He's been involved in all sorts of initiatives, from supporting vision programs to helping out during disasters, encouraging young people, and promoting diabetes awareness. Bert brings a practical, hands-on approach to everything he does, guiding clubs and teams to find creative solutions that really make an impact.



International
Director
Bert Nelson

Among his fellow Lions, Bert's reputation is built on teamwork, honesty, and his knack for motivating others. He's represented his district and country at big international gatherings, where he's made connections and friendships that help Lions Clubs do even more good, both at home and abroad.

On a personal note, Bert enjoys spending time with his family. His wife, Lion Pam Nelson, is also actively involved in the club and shares his enthusiasm for giving back. Together, they dive into community events, support worthwhile causes, and encourage new members, showing by example what it means to be a Lion.

Whether they're planning fundraisers, volunteering at local organizations, or supporting health projects, Bert and Pam Nelson aim to make the world a bit brighter, inspiring others to follow their lead. Their partnership is well known in the Lions community, and they're always happy to welcome new friends to the cause.

FEBRUARY 2026

Invitation to Special Guests Dinner: District 25-A Convention



*District Governor Jim Furlong
Invites you to join him for dinner welcoming*



Special Guests, International Director Bert Nelson and Lion Pamela

To

District 25A Annual Convention

Friday, March 6, 2026

Social 6:00 pm / Dinner 6:30 pm CST

*Curtis Creek Golf Course
5385 County Road 1080 W.
Rensselaer, IN 47978*

\$30 per person

Dinner will be your choice

- *Pulled Pork, mashed potatoes with gravy, vegetable and salad*
- *Lake Perch with baked potato and cole slaw*

Cash bar

SEATING IS LIMITED

RSVP MUST BE RECEIVED by February 19, 2026

Name & Title _____ (circle choice) *Pulled Pork or Lake Perch*

Name & Title _____ (circle choice) *Pulled Pork or Lake Perch*

Number attending _____ \times \$30.00 = _____

Business attire requested

Please make your check payable to:

District 25A Lions Convention

Mail to: CS Robin Smith, PDG

745-1 Capitol Road, Valparaiso, IN 46385

*mswolff@comcast.net *** (219) 916-4549*

OR

***PAY WITH ZEFFY
SCAN BARCODE***



FEBRUARY 2026

Crown Point Lions Club BINGO



Crown Point Lions Club Spring Bingo

Thursday, March 26, 2026

DOORS OPEN AT 5:00 PM * FIRST BINGO AT 6:00 PM

St. Elijah Church 8700 Taft Street - Merrillville, IN

Tickets are available at the door or presale from a Crown Point Lion

\$6.00/Person



Bingo and Door Prizes

Bring used eyeglasses and receive extra Bingo cards

Tip Boards for Bacon, Sausage, Hams, etc.

50/50

Money Bingos

Loads of Prizes and Fun.

License #001729 - Event #164268

Crown Point Lions

CROWN POINT LIONS CLUB HIGHLIGHTS

The Crown Point Lions Club has long been recognized for its commitment to serving the community. Recently, the club took decisive action to address the issue of hunger in Crown Point by participating in the Lions "*Weeks of Service*" project. This initiative brought members together to collect non-perishable food items, directly benefiting two essential local organizations: St. Mary's God's Groceries Food Pantry and the Community Help Network Food Pantry.



Lions Donna and Jim Worst delivered food items to St Mary's God's Groceries Food Pantry. Pictured left with Susie Hartman, Parish Life Director and Deacon Bill Grimes.



Lions Becky and Paul Sills and Lions Sharon and Al Thom, pictured left, delivered items to the Community Help Network



The newly formed **Diabetes Awareness A1C Testing Program** has successfully launched its first trial program in January 2026, bringing vital diabetes awareness and screening to the community. Senior groups from Crown Point's First Presbyterian, First United Methodist, and St. Matthias Churches took part in on-site A1C risk assessments. Approximately 50 people completed the risk assessment test and out of those tested 13 had abnormal A1C results. Nurse Shannon led the testing and an engaging Q&A session, joined by Ivy Tech nursing students who supported the event. The program highlighted the power of community partnerships in promoting education, prevention, and healthier lives.



Pictured left. Students from Ivy Tech., Kendall Crisp, Ivan Zapata and Ashley Creighton helped set up for the event and distributed forms. They also performed blood pressure checks.



Nurse Shannon Hough (pictured below) took the time to speak with Dale and Mary Ann Wietbrook about their test results and give guidelines for healthy living.



Lion Carolyn Toosley, Diabetes Awareness Chair for District 25A attended the testing at St. Mathias. Pictured right, Lion Carla Smolek, Nurse Shannon, Lions Phylis Porio, Carolyn Toosley and Aaron Whitten.



Crown Point Lions

CROWN POINT LIONS CLUB HIGHLIGHTS



Crown Point Lions were honored to have District Governor Jim Furlong at our January 15, 2026 meeting. He spoke to the club about service citing a quote "Everything worth doing in the world is worth doing for others". Membership is always a challenge, and he encourage everyone to "JUST ASK". DG Jim also presented a Milestone Chevron Award to Chuck Westerfield, Rich Day and Cindy Beckman.



Lions Carla Smolek and Louise Moore delivered 10 boxes of glasses to Wanata, the collection center for District 25A. That's approximately 4000 eyeglasses. The glasses were collected at our Holiday Bingo and collection sites throughout our community. The collected eyeglasses are ultimately cleaned, sorted by prescription, and distributed to individuals in need in developing nations.



Lea



District Governor Jim Furlong's Third Cabinet Meeting was hosted by the Crown Point Lions Club at the Crown Point Community Library. Despite the cold, many Lions attended.

After the District Meeting, Lion Julie Wendorf, Library Director gave the District Lions a tour of the many projects that the Crown Point Lions have collaborated on including the Interactive Play Area, non-verbal communication board, puppet tree and other annual programming donations.



As a Crown Point Lion, I often wonder what our impact is on our community. We receive thank you notes of all kinds. But this letter struck a chord, and I wanted to share it with you all. Name deleted.

"Dear Lions Club, Hi, my name is And I would like to thank you for the gift cards that you donate to the trustees. I have been very down on my life this past year and with the trustee's and your donations, I don't know how I would have made it through. So, thank you so much for your donations as it has helped me tremendously not to be hungry. Merry Christmas"

We can and do make a difference! Let's keep it up!

Leader Dog

Each year, we set a fundraising goal for our partnership with Lions. Reaching this goal helps continue the Lions legacy of supporting vision through Leader Dogs for the Blind. We reached the midpoint of the fiscal year, and the months ahead are critical. Together, we have a real opportunity to accelerate toward our \$2.5 million goal.

Can you help us reach our goal? Giving options are on the [Ways to Give page of our website](#), which you can access with the QR code to the right. If you would like to make a personal gift, please include your Lions Club so we can recognize your gift as a Lions gift.



Vision Activity for Convention Season

Convention season is here! Between February and May, the Lions team and a few Leader Dog clients will join you at dozens of Lions conventions across North America. Conventions are an important opportunity for Lions to gather, celebrate our impact in our communities, and educate each other on the causes we support.

We outlined an activity you may be interested in bringing to your convention or your club meeting. It allows participants to **experience first-hand the importance of vision for orientation in space**, and how quickly those with low vision can become disoriented without support like Leader Dog's Orientation & Mobility program.



Lion Christie Boyer of New Mexico serves as Leader Dog Chair in District 40, and she designed this activity for district leadership with great feedback. **Participants said, “It was fast, furious, and fun.”** Get an activity guide for this activity and order blindfolds with the QR code to the right or on the [Lions Club Resources page of our website](#).



Leader Dog

Lion Melissa Weisse Honored as a Melvin Jones Fellow



In December, the Royal Oak Lions Club of Michigan recognized Lion Melissa Weisse, President and CEO of Leader Dogs for the Blind, with a Melvin Jones Fellowship Award. They presented the award in front of an audience of more than 200 Lions from Michigan and Ontario, underscoring how deeply Melissa's leadership and mission-driven dedication resonate across the Lions community.

For more than 20 years, Lion Melissa has been a fierce advocate for the blind and low

vision community. **"Melissa exemplifies the heart of Lionism and demonstrates a commitment to dedicated humanitarian service—the basic principle of being a Melvin Jones Fellow,"** said Lion Laura Mastracci, President of the Royal Oak Lions Club. "We were privileged to bestow this honor on Melissa for the compassionate, hard-working Lion that she is."

Lion Karen Burke, a Leader Dog client, shared her perspective: "Melissa knows what she stands for, which is to serve. **Not only is she a Lion, but she's also very persistent in making sure that clients are served at Leader Dog.** She listens to what we share and looks for ideas to improve our experience when we come for a program."

Melissa expressed her deep appreciation for the recognition, saying, **"To be awarded this by Lions who do so much good in this world is incredibly meaningful to me. I am proud to be a longtime Lion and to partner with Lions every day to advocate for people who are blind and to support the critical work of Lions globally."**

Mission Moment

"When you lose your vision, you lose your independence, and that was the hardest thing. Leader Dog Timber will make it a little easier to keep going.

I've never been a very emotional person, but meeting Leader Dog Timber was emotional. **It was this overwhelming happiness and feeling that this is going to work out.** It's a hard feeling to describe. It's not just having a companion but thinking about our life together."



Cedar Lake Lions

It is with great sorrow we announce the passing of Cedar Lake Lions Director Lion Richard "Dick" Kutchek. Lion Dick has been a member of our club since 1970 and obtained Life Membership in 2004. During his tenure, he served as Treasurer, Secretary, Vice President, President and Director. Even at age 90, Lion Dick was active in the Cedar Lake club serving as director and coordinator of our annual Golf Outing. He was friend to all and exemplified Lionism service.

The following is information regarding services. Please keep his family in your prayers.

Lion Terri Yauger, Secretary
Cedar Lake Lions Club

Richard F. Kutchek Obituary

Richard F. Kutchek, age 91, a longtime resident of Cedar Lake, IN, passed away peacefully on January 12, 2026. Richard was the beloved husband of the late Eleanor "Dottie" Kutchek. Born to the late Frank and Stella Kutchek. Richard is survived by a large and extended family, to include his brother, Raymond (Rose) Kutchek; sisters-in law, Carol Kutchek; Joanna Taylor, and Julie Ciszek; brothers-in-law, Joseph (Michaline) Roll, James (Pong Cha) Roll, and Michael Hanna. Richard was a cherished uncle and great-uncle to many nieces and nephews, and a loyal friend to Judy Havran and Dave and Debbie Cummins. He was preceded in death by his brother, Ronald Kutchek; his sister-in-law, Audrey Hanna, and brother-in-law, David "Dude" Roll.

Friends may greet the family on Sunday, January 18, 2026 from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm at BURDAN FUNERAL HOME, 12901 Wicker Ave., Cedar Lake, IN. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Monday, January 19, 2026 at 11:00 am DIRECTLY at Holy Name Catholic Church, 11000 W. 133rd Ave., Cedar Lake, IN. Interment will be held Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 10:00 am DIRECTLY at Resurrection Cemetery in Justice, IL.

Lowell Lions

At a recent Lowell Lions Club meeting, members were reminded just how powerful dedication and service can be — and how one person's decision to serve can create a ripple effect that changes lives.

We were honored to welcome our District 25A Zone Chair, Cindy, who shared updates, encouragement, and insight as we continue our work across the district. As a new Zone Chair, Cindy already brings enthusiasm, leadership, and a clear passion for Lionism. Her willingness to step forward and serve is a meaningful example of the dedication that keeps our organization strong.

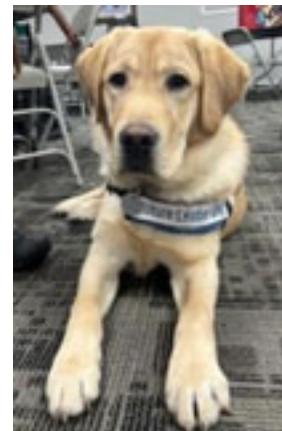
The evening also featured a heartfelt and inspiring presentation from Kim and Don, volunteer puppy raisers with Leader Dog for the Blind, who introduced us to Moses, a future Leader Dog. Through their story, we learned about the commitment involved in raising a future service dog and the life-changing impact these dogs have for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

What made their message even more powerful was the personal inspiration behind their service. Kim shared how her mother's example of compassion and helping others influenced her journey. That legacy of service continues today through their work with Leader Dog — a beautiful reminder that the values we model can inspire generations.

Their presentation highlighted an important truth Lions know well: service does not always begin with grand plans. Often, it begins with one simple "yes" — yes to volunteering, yes to learning, yes to giving your time to make someone else's life better. From that single step, extraordinary impact can grow.

As Lions, we serve in many ways — through vision programs, youth support, community projects, and partnerships like Leader Dog. Even so, it is always powerful to pause and hear the stories behind the service. These moments reconnect us to our purpose and remind us that what we do truly matters.

The Lowell Lions Club is grateful to Cindy, Kim, Don, and future Leader Dog Moses for an evening filled with inspiration. Their dedication reflects the very heart of Lionism: We Serve — and through that service, we change lives.



FEBRUARY 2026

Westville Lions



Westville Lions Club

2026 Chili Supper

Saturday, March 14, 2026

Cost: \$12.00 — 4:00 pm - 6:30 pm

Westville United Methodist Church

154 W Main St, Westville, IN 46391

Donation's: Westville Medical Loan Closet

Westville Area Food Pantry

Door Village Lions

Door Village Lions members conducted their January Membership Meeting at Cristo's Restaurant last Monday with Club President Sue Kaiser presiding and opening the meeting with introductions of visiting dignitaries and two special guests. Lion Sue started with District 25A Governor Lion Jim Furlong and his wife Immediate Past District 25A Governor Lion Patty Cooke Furlong, Past District 25A Governor Lion Mitchel Semans and his wife 2nd Vice District Governor Lion Wendy Semans. Special guests were Hanna Stombaugh and Ruby Metz.

After a short business meeting and quick dinner, Boss Lion Sue invited Governor Jim Furlong to induct the club's newest member Hanna Stombaugh. Lion Jim asked Hanna and her sponsor Lion Wendy Semans to join him and welcomed Hanna to the world's largest volunteer organization and told her how proud he was to be inducting her this evening and told her he hoped she would enjoy a long career in Lionism. Lion Wendy Semans then performed the formal pinning of a new Lion, and members gave her a resounding round of applause and welcomed her into the club. Newly inducted Lion Hanna addressed the group and told them how excited she was to become a Lion and thanked everyone for the warm welcome.

Club Secretary Lion Cindy Fischer gave a comprehensive report on the Senior Bingo and Salvation Army Christmas Gifts projects recently completed, and announced that club members, for their most current project, would be delivering school supplies the club bought, for Kingsbury, Kingsford Heights and Riley Elementary Schools, on Thursday January 15th starting with Kingsford Heights at 9:00 a.m., Kingsbury at 9:30 and Riley at 10:00, weather permitting. Lion Cindy also announced the next three fund raisers club members will be working on, starting with the Amish pies in March, Hacienda Give Back in April and Candy Day in May.

Boss Lion Sue Kaiser called on Lion Cindy Polito for the Tail Twister part of the meeting. Lion Cindy gave everyone a piece of paper and asked them to list in descending order the five months of the year for the most babies born, September was the winner and new member Hanna Stombaugh had the most months correctly listed and was presented with the prize that Lion Cindy had purchased for the game. The meeting adjourned at 8 pm.



LOFS Lions

The LOFS Lions served the community by assisting the organization, NWI No Child Hungry, in packing “Buddy Bags,” their food and snack bags. The NWI No Child Hungry Organization started serving a handful of schools and children in 2019. The organization has now provided 55,500 Buddy Bags to local children.

Their President, Gretchen Mercer (pictured below leading the packing team), says that she would have been a Buddy Bag recipient as a child. The LOFS Lions were pleased to, as part of their service to the community and their service goals, help this dedicated group.



Munster Lions Welcome Leader Dog Finn and Speakers



At the January 7 meeting of the Munster Lions Club, members were honored to welcome guest speakers Lion Bob Hrdy, his partner in service Lion Vicki, and Leader Dog Finn. Together, they delivered a powerful and heartfelt presentation about Bob's journey living with visual impairment and how his family has worked together to maintain a high quality of life as his vision has declined due to a genetic condition.

Bob shared the many challenges, adjustments, and experiments his family faced along the way. Ultimately, their journey led them to Leader Dogs for the Blind—a life-changing resource that restored independence, confidence, and mobility.

For individuals who are blind or visually impaired, the loss of sight is only the beginning of a profound life change. Tasks that once seemed simple can quickly become overwhelming, often leading to feelings of depression, anxiety, and isolation.

Founded in 1939 by three Detroit-area Lions Club members, Leader Dogs for the Blind empowers people who are blind, visually impaired, or Deaf-Blind with the skills needed for a lifetime of independent travel. Their programs help open doors that may feel closed after vision loss.

Services are tailored to individual needs and begin as early as age 16. These offerings include summer camps for teens, white cane training—formally known as Orientation and Mobility (O&M)—and the matching of clients with expertly trained guide dogs.

Leader Dogs for the Blind is 100% philanthropically funded. There is no government support, and all services are provided at no cost to clients thanks to grassroots fundraising efforts, Lions Club support, and grants.

Please join us in making a difference. You can learn more or donate by visiting the Leader Dogs for the Blind website or by reaching out to any Lions Club member in the community. Our meetings are open to the public, and we invite you to connect with us online or attend one of our community events—such as our upcoming Pancake Breakfast on March 1 at Munster High School.



St. John Lions Club

The St. John Club had a busy and fun holiday season!

Counted glasses at our November meeting –2,066 glasses, 2 hearing aids, batteries and misc. parts.

We kicked things off with another successful Bunco fundraiser at the VFW in St. John last November. Everyone who brought in canned goods for the food pantry at the St. John Township Trustee's Office received up to 5 free basket raffle tickets. And we donated a check to the VFW in support of our Veterans after our event !

Also, in November we ran a Facebook post reminding people that we can get free medical equipment to the people in our community! We had donated 2 stairlifts and we had a lot of other medical equipment taking up space in our tiny shed. The FB post was a huge success!

We were able to get the 2 stairlifts into 2 homes that were in desperate need! Of course, we informed the people that we could not install them because of liability, which they all understood.

Even more people asked for free medical supplies too! We donated out several walkers, wheelchairs, bath chairs and shower seats. It's a good thing to remind your community of this service! Thanks to Lion Clarence for being available when Lion Karl calls for dropping off loads of stuff too!

- Donated \$1,000 to Disaster Relief for Hurricane Melissa in Jamaica.
- Donated \$1,000 to Camp Quality Illinois – a Camp for kids with cancer.
- Donated \$500 to Meals on Wheels.
- Donated \$500 to District 25-A Eyeglass Recycling Program in Memory of Lion Gene Rice who recently passed away.

For the holidays we donated all the food people brought to Bunco to the Food Pantry, **PLUS** we always sponsor 4 families at Thanksgiving by donating gift cards from Stracks and sponsored another 4 families for both Stracks and Walmart gift cards (for toys) for the Christmas holiday.

St. John also wrote a check to the St. John Township Trustee's Office for their general fund. And since we were doing so well with giving food away... we wanted to focus on the Veteran's again and found a place through our VFW called Northwest Indiana Veteran's Village in Gary.

St. John Lions Club

St. John had members go shopping and purchase various food items and cleaning supplies and took a couple carloads to the Veteran's Village before the holidays. We are also going to plan a day hopefully in February to go back there and prepare the residents a spaghetti dinner – and take some more groceries and supplies for them again too. St. John Lions Club, P.O. Box 331, St. John, IN 46373.



St. John Lions Club

Once again, we decorated a tree for the St. John Christmas in the Park event. Our Members did a great job decorating our tree again this year. We have some home-made decoupage ornaments and individual ornaments for every member of the Club. One of our members even made a “fake” eyeglass box that sits next to the tree! We hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas Holiday!



FEBRUARY 2026

Munster Lions Pancake Breakfast

MUNSTER LIONS

SERVING MUNSTER SINCE 1938



69th ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Sunday, March 1st
7:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**At The
Munster High School Cafeteria**

MUNSTER LIONS 88th Anniversary



MISSION 1.5 Bulletin

A bulletin from your International president and *MISSION 1.5*,
sharing inspiring, life-changing stories.

More Lions Means More Service

Communities all over the world rely on Lions to feed the hungry, rebuild after disasters and so much more. As these needs continue to grow, so must our membership. We must continue to start new clubs and recruit new Lions so we can be there when we're needed the most.

Mission 1.5 Membership Update



Members Added

These members' lives will be forever changed, as yours has since becoming a Lion, and the lives impacted by these members will be countless. (Data is from 7/1/25-12/31/25)



New Clubs Formed

Just as your club transforms your community, these groups unite to create lasting change in theirs. (Data Is from 7/1/25-12/31/25)

FEBRUARY 2026

Indiana Lions State Convention May 2026

2026 Indiana Lions State Convention



Hosted by District 25-C



May 1-3, 2026

Embassy Suites

6089 Clarks Creek Rd, Plainfield, IN 46168

Please reserve your lodging by March 31, 2026 by phone at **(317) 839-1106 ext 0**, or email at Zoe.Garner@Hilton.com. Reference **Lions Convention Rooms Block--Code 918 and ask for the type of room you need (Single, Double, Queen, King)**

Room Rate: \$179.00 + taxes and fees per night

(includes breakfast buffet or made-to-order hot breakfast [\$20 value] and evening (5-7 p.m.) Manager's Reception with snacks and beer, wine and cocktails [\$20 value], included in the cost of the room)

All Convention (Pre)Registrations must be received by March 31, 2026

Name _____
Lion Title _____ Preferred Name _____
District: _____ Club: _____
Address: _____
City / State / Zip _____
Phone Number _____ Email: _____
Is this your FIRST Indiana Lions State Convention: Yes _____ No _____

Friday morning - Tour of Indiana Law Enforcement Academy (limit 30 per time slot) 9 a.m. ____ 11 a.m. ____

Please note any dietary restrictions for alternative meals: _____

Friday Evening Dinner \$25.00 _____

Double D's Southern BBQ (located off site at MADE@Plainfield), includes

Baked Beans, Coleslaw, Dessert and drink

Select one: ____ Shredded Chicken ____ Pulled Pork

Saturday Lunch \$30.00 _____

Buffet style: Tuscany Lasagna with fresh vegetables and/or Italian Sausage

Hoagies with sauteed vegetables, Caesar Salad, Dessert Minis and drink

Saturday All-State Banquet \$55.00 _____

Plated dinner of Chicken Piccata and Roasted Pork Tenderloin, Strawberry

Fields Salad, Chef's Choice Potato, Vegetable Medley, Rolls/Butter, Dessert Minis and drink

Saturday Strides Walk _____

(pick up T-Shirt at Registration Table) (Please circle size needed)

Donation only (no walking or T-Shirt) \$ 5.00 _____

Walk with T-Shirt (S / M / L / XL) \$20.00 _____

Walk with T-Shirt (XXL / XXXL) \$25.00 _____

TOTAL REGISTRATION DUE _____

If Mailing: Mail form with check payment to: PDG Chloe Weyrauch, PO Box 94, Prairie Creek, IN 47869. Make check payable to **Indiana Lions State Convention**. On-line registrations payable by credit/debit card can be made by visiting <https://inlionconvention.org> after February 1, 2026.

Indiana Lions State Convention May 2026

All roads this May lead to Plainfield and the 105th Indiana Lions State Convention, as we welcome Past International President Joe Preston and Lion Joni for a weekend of Lions' fun and fellowship. On behalf of the 2026 Convention Committee, we invite you to make the trip to the "Heartland of Indiana" on May 1-3, 2026.

With construction of I-69 to Evansville now complete, all of our districts now have quick and easy access to the convention. Whether you are traveling I-69 or I-65, I-70 or I-74, or US-231 or even the Old Historic US-40 National Road which runs right through downtown Plainfield, there is no reason not to pack up the car and make a weekend getaway to be with your Lions' family.

The weekend kicks off with tours of the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) on Friday morning, and then a BBQ dinner hosted by the Plainfield Lions Club at Made@Plainfield before the opening plenary session at the Embassy Event Center. Many of our local community police officers have graduated from ILEA since the first class in 1969.

The Saturday luncheon will feature Dr. Dan Neely as the keynote speaker. Dr. Neely is the medical director for Indiana Lions Operation KidSight preschool vision screening program, has served as the team ophthalmologist for the Indianapolis Colts, and gives of his spare time with Orbis flying hospital.

Past International President Joe Preston, of Mesa, Arizona, will be the keynote speaker for the Saturday evening banquet, and will be presenting several Leadership and Presidential Awards to the Lions of Indiana along with is certain to be an inspirational message about being a Lion.

In between these events, are district caucuses, the second plenary business session, exhibit hallway, seminars, Strides Walk and much more.

Voting happens on Sunday morning, along with a Memorial Service to remember all of those Lions who have ended their service to those WE SERVE before the closing session.

The Embassy Suites and Event Center is located just a couple of minutes from I-70, and your room reservations entitle you to complimentary made-to-order breakfast (a \$40 value*) and a complimentary "Manager's Reception" each night from 5:00 – 7:00 pm (a \$40 value*). There is ample free parking at both the hotel and the event center for those coming in for the day.

So why not make the trek to Plainfield on May 1-3, 2026 and celebrate being a Lion?

(* value based on double occupancy room)

Indiana Lions State Convention May 2026

2026 Indiana Lions State Convention

EMBASSY SUITES
6089 Clarks Creek Rd.
PLAINFIELD, IN 46168

CONVENTION PROGRAM BOOK ADVERTISING APPLICATION FORM**WHAT MAKES A GOOD AD?**

- Events-Advertise a Club, district, community or business event...
- Honors-Thank a Lion, recognize an employee, congratulate a VDG...
- Welcome IP to Indiana and thank sponsors
- Show Club pride! Share Club History!

The 2026 Convention Program Book will be the standard 8.5" x 11" page. Please circle to indicate chosen size/price. **Deadline for submission is Saturday, MARCH 1, 2026.**

Full Page	Half Page	Quarter Page	Business Card Size
8" x 10"	8" x 5"	3.5" x 5"	3.5" x 2"
	Horizontal Only	Vertical Only	
\$250	\$150	\$75	\$50

To place your ad: 1. Email your digital ad to: ross.drapalik@sbcglobal.net
2. Mail your check (payable to Lions of Indiana, Inc. State Convention),
with this completed application to: PCC Ross Drapalik
P.O. Box 1062
Martinsville, IN 46151

Your Name _____

Club, Organization, Business Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____ @ _____

FEBRUARY 2026

District 25-A Convention Information



District 25A Convention District Governor Jim Furlong

Fair Oaks Farms
856 N 600 E
Fair Oaks, Indiana 47943



March 7, 2025

Our Special Guests – International Director Bert Nelson and Lion Pamela

Make room reservation directly with the hotel: Fairfield by Marriott at Fair Oaks Farms

PLEASE RESERVE YOUR OWN LODGING BY February 4, 2026

Call: (219) 394-2100 for Reservations**Mention "Lions"

Room Rate: \$155 / night plus tax – Double or King

Hot Breakfast Buffet included

Rooms and rates cannot be guaranteed after February 4, 2026



Please complete this form
(NO MORE THAN 2 PEOPLE AT THE SAME ADDRESS PER FORM)

Please Print or Type All Information

Name:

Lion/Leo Title	First Name	Last Name	Name on Badge
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Name:

Lion/Leo Title	First Name	Last Name	Name on Badge
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Address:

Mailing Address	City	State	Zip Code
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Telephone:

E-Mail: _____

Club:

District: _____

This is my FIRST District Convention (circle one)

Yes No

Meal Prices Increase by \$10.00 / meal after February 4, 2026 postmark date. –

Meal Reservations MUST BE RECEIVED by February 23, 2026

		QTY	PRICE	PRICE 2/5-2/23	TOTAL
Saturday Lunch	Box sandwich lunch [CIRCLE ONE] -Ham, Turkey or Roast Beef w/farm salad, chips, cookie and bottled water		\$20	\$30	\$
Saturday Banquet	<i>Includes salad, rolls, and dessert</i>				
	Airline Chicken w/cream sauce, red potatoes, bacon green beans		\$35	\$45	\$
	GLUTEN FREE – Grilled Chicken w/sauteed vegetables		\$35	\$45	\$
	VEGETARIAN – Pasta Primavera		\$35	\$45	\$
Banquet Child meal (under 12)	Chicken Fingers and Fries		\$20	\$30	\$
	Total Amount Enclosed				\$

Please make your check payable to:

OR

**PAY WITH ZEFFY
SCAN BARCODE**

District 25A Lions Convention

Mail to: CS Robin Smith, PDG
745-1 Capitol Road, Valparaiso, IN 46385
mswollen@aol.com *** (219) 916-4549



FEBRUARY 2026

District 25-A Convention Exhibit and Vendor Application



Lions District 25A Convention

Fair Oaks Farms
856 N 600 E
Fair Oaks, Indiana 47943
March 7, 2026



Exhibit and Vendor Application

Exhibit tables from 8:00 am – 11:00 am

Vendor -- \$30 per space

State/Club/ District Project -- \$0

Each Booth includes:

10 x 10 area
1- 6ft. skirted table with 2 chairs

Please indicate if electricity is needed (limited space)
First come, first served

Please note: Exhibits must be taken down promptly at 11:00 am and removed from the room

Please return this completed form and payment by **February 23, 2026** to:

2nd VDG Wendy Semans
5200 N 150 E
Knox, IN 46531

Make checks payable to: District 25A Lions Convention

Questions, please contact

Wendysemans71@gmail.com or (219) 851-2409

Name _____

Organization/Club _____

Phone **Email**

State/Club/District Project - \$0 Vendor - \$30 Electricity - \$0

Total enclosed \$

FEBRUARY 2026

District 25-A Convention Advertising Application



Lions District 25A Convention

Fair Oaks Farms
856 N 600 E
Fair Oaks, Indiana 47943
March 7, 2026



Convention Program Book Advertising Application

So...what might an ad include?:

- Upcoming Club Fundraisers
 - Honor your Melvin Jones or WP Woods Fellows
 - Welcome our Guest Speaker – International Director
 - Congratulate the District Governor and Vice District Governors



Deadline for submission is Friday, February 13, 2026

Full Size Page – 5 x 8	Actual Ad Size width x height	✓
Color Front Inside Cover	\$150	(Sold) 8.5 x 5.25
Color Back Cover	\$200	(Sold) 8.5 x 5.25
Color Back Inside Cover	\$150	(Sold) 8.5 x 5.25
Full Page	\$100	5 x 8
½ Page	\$ 75	5 x 4
¼ Page	\$ 50	5 x 2

Check Amount

\$ _____

Make checks payable to: District 25A Lions Convention

I have attached an Ad or emailed an Ad

Please design an Ad with the attached information **DUE BY FEBRUARY 13TH**

Return with Ad or Send check and email your Ad to:

GLT Pat Greer, 744 Acadia Road, Valparaiso, IN 46385
patricia.agreer6@gmail.com (219) 928-3618

ALL ADS ARE DUE BY FEBRUARY 13TH AD WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THAT DATE!

Your Name _____

Club, Organization, or Business Name _____

Address _____

Contact Phone Number _____ Email _____

District Governor Jim's Schedule

2/6-2/17 Personal Vacation

2/28 District C Convention

3/6-3/7 District 25-A Convention – Fair Oaks Farms (Info in this newsletter)

Membership

February

Members Who Have Completed Their Service

Wheatfield

Lion Bob Tilema January 28, 2026

Welcome New Members!

Door Village

Hanna Strombaugh Sponsored by Wendy Semans

Hamlet

Joseph Klinedinst Sponsored by Arthur Borrelli

Munster

Mark Anderson Sponsored by Raymond Anderson

Anthony Christopher Sponsored by George Shinkin

Valparaiso

Ted Huff Sponsored by Tom Cath