



Christopher Lion's Club Turns 100 by Tom Vaughn

Imagine being one hundred years old and a go-getter, with plenty of desire to come up with assorted projects to benefit folks in your community. We would celebrate someone like that and that's just what the members of the Christopher Lions Club did at the Show Room special events venue on Christopher's Market Street. The Lions Club 100th Celebration featured recognition of the Charter members, and several current members for length of service, as well as

installation of new officers. Guest speakers from Lions of Illinois and Lions International made special presentations.

On February 7, 1924 the Christopher Lion's Club was formed with twenty "paid" members and one honorary member. Members paid dues at a rate of three dollars each for their first three months. "The Christopher News" reported that the group celebrated their new Chapter with a dinner on March 10, 1924 in the middle of a statewide cold wave and a heavy blanket of snow. Lions Club members from several area towns were on hand to help Christopher celebrate back then, which shows Christopher isn't the oldest Lions Club, but also that the chapters support each other throughout the world-wide organization.

The Christopher Lions Club has a long history of serving the larger Christopher community. One of their longest running events is the annual Fall Festival Parade, which began in 1927, starting out as an Autumn Festival. It quickly turned into a Halloween festival with a miniature "Mardi Gras type parade", according to the Christopher Progress newspaper, October 13, 1931. This event has brought big crowds to Christopher for the past 97 years, with a host of activities. It is expected to do so again at the Fall Festival Parade of 2024.

At the centennial celebration, several members were honored for their years and levels of service to the Christopher Lions Club. Nine members have 20 plus years or more in the club. The current members' years of service total 279 years of commitment.

The 100th anniversary celebration featured Lion Bob Block, Past Director for Lions Club International, as the Guest Speaker. The 1CS District Governor, Lion Larry McGuire, was also on hand, representing the State of Illinois Lions Club at the district level. Lion Larry McGuire awarded Length of Service Chevrons and installed the new officers for the Christopher's Lions Club 2024-2025 Lions year.

In 1987, Lions Club International voted to allow women to join the Lions family and Christopher now has their first ever woman member. Lion Gisele Reece was recognized as the first female member of the Christopher Lions Club at the celebration. Women are the fastest growing group of Lions with more than 425,000 serving around the world.

One hundred years of serving a community is an achievement that is a cause for celebration. Being part of a world-wide organization that believes service to others is a worthy goal bonds this group together. The current 25 members of the Christopher Lions Club are committed to carrying on the work from the past one hundred years on into the future.



Jeff Troutt Lion of the Year



Lion Rowland 50+ years as a Christopher Lion



Gisele Reece 1st female Christopher Lion



Banquet at the Show Room on Market Street Christopher



Lion Troutt 50 + years as a Christopher Lion