



Lions of Illinois Foundation

HAPPY NEW YEAR

2024



Candy Day '23



PIP Judge Brian Stevenson receives a Foundation Fellow Award

'TIS THE SEASON TO BE GRATEFUL

Thinking of all the good things and good people in our lives... and feeling so very grateful this season.



Lion Tom Martin tests hearing equipment



Camp Lions



Lion Terry Knollenberg visits the Multiuse Mobile Unit

Looking back with a heart full of gratitude for all we've accomplished during the past year...

We thank you, Lions, for your kindness, dedication and action to serving those in need!



Lion Carol Anderson at the July Coordinators Meeting



Chicago Ridge LC collects sneakers at a recycling event

Happy New Year,

As you may know our theme for our **50th Anniversary** is **“Moving Forward-Looking Back”**, with this being said, we have many good things to look back on, from the start of the fiscal year and many more as we move forward into 2024!

In **June** I was able to address the camp counselors at Camp Red Leaf Village in Ingleside, IL for their training week, to speak a little about the history of **Camp Lions** and the importance of what they do. I also stopped by Camp East Bay in Hudson IL and was welcomed by the campers and counselors alike. This year, 137 deaf and/or blind campers got to experience Camp Lions for a week in the summer of 2023 and it was all due to the generous donations we received from our Lions Clubs throughout this great State. Thank you for bringing in snacks for the campers and for providing a meal on their Open House Days, the campers really love interacting with the Lions Clubs! Our Camp Directors and their staff are outstanding. Together they were able to make each week a memorable experience for all of the campers in attendance.

We started the fiscal year, in **July** of 2023, with a “Boots on the Ground” **Coordinators Meeting** that was held directly after our Board of Trustees Meeting. It has been some time since we were able to meet as a group and there were a lot of questions and information that was downloaded to those in attendance. Thank you to all who attended and contributed to this meeting.

August and September, were busy months for the Foundation, we held our 29th Annual Charity Golf Classic in the beginning of August to support Student Low Vision, then our Roar in Charity Car Shows in September. We also hosted our First Bingo Bonanza at the end of September to support the Adult Low Vision Program, Orientation and Mobility Training. Candy Day Jamborees and LIF Orientation Sessions were also held in each district.

Thank you to all of the Golfers, Sponsors, and donations to our **Annual Charity Golf Classic**. This was a great start to fundraising for the Student Low Vision Program. We could not have done it without you. This year, **2024** will be our **30th Anniversary** of the Charity Golf Classic. The Foundation is currently running a raffle for a FREE foursome. Tickets will be on sale at all the District Conventions.

Our first **Bingo Bonanza** that was held September 30th at the Pekin, VFW and it was a huge success. Thanks to all the sponsorships throughout the State and the support of the Pekin and St. Jacob Lions Clubs, we were able to donate over \$4,200 to the Adult Low Vision Program! The Foundation will be looking to put on this type of event in other regions of the State in the future.

Candy Day Jamborees were scheduled, and we were able to do a mix of Jamborees and **Foundation Orientations** together. Lions met to collect candy and supplies at the Jamborees and were also able to hear a little of the history and operation of the Foundation. This included the significance of Candy Day and how it connects to the people we serve throughout Illinois.



Camp Lions



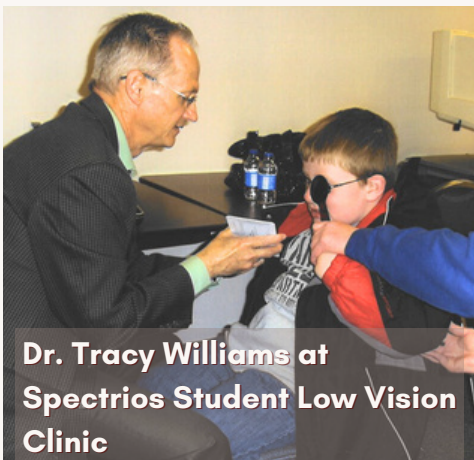
Camp Lions at Busch Stadium
Cardinal Baseball Deaf Night



Student Low Vision Clinic
Jacksonville

This in-school outreach program helps children with low vision, grades K-12, all throughout Illinois receive diagnostic services and optical devices completely free of charge. These children get more confident through increased independence, participate more in the classroom, engage in P.E. and improve academically. They are more able to navigate their surroundings and are happy to be able to find the school bus at the end of the day! Imagine that, and then consider the huge impact all of this has on their success and self-esteem, in school and beyond. We could not have achieved these accomplishments without your generous support. Thank you so much, Lions of Illinois!

~ R. Tracy Williams, O.D.
Spectrios Institute for Low Vision



Dr. Tracy Williams at
Spectrios Student Low Vision
Clinic

In **October** I was able to attend the **Jacksonville Student Low Vision Clinics**. I spent time with Dr. Derrald Taylor, talking about the program's history and continued impact it has on the students it serves. Since its beginning in 1976, this FREE Program has changed the lives of countless students, giving them a chance to reach their goals.

At the end of **October** our **Mobile Unit** cycled off the road for the winter months. Clubs hosted 127 screening events this year! This allowed 111 people to be identified as having possible Macular degeneration, 40 were screened with changes to their retina due to diabetes and over 1,000 were screened with moderate to profound hearing loss. Please check with your Club Secretary for information about 2024 screenings.

Our **New Multi-Use Mobile Unit** is being built. The fabricator has lengthened the chassis, the floor is set and framework is underway. Once the unit is done, it will need to have the graphics applied to the outside and be outfitted with equipment.

In November, **Sight and Sound Sweepstakes** tickets, were sent to Clubs that requested to receive them before the holidays. The remaining tickets will be mailed out to your Club Secretaries in January. This year each booklet will still be \$10 but will have five (5) tickets in honor of the 50th Anniversary. Don't forget there are **3 Early Bird Drawings**: March, April, and May! We are also returning to **Cash Prizes** for the **Top Sellers** at the State and District levels.

To date, over 141, **50th Anniversary Foundation Fellows** have been awarded to recognize Lions as well as non-Lions who have served or supported the Clubs in their efforts to help those in need! I have traveled throughout the State presenting some of those awards and I am reminded of amazing devotion our Lions have to serving the community. In addition, many Lions continue to be Sustaining Supporters and new Legacy Supporters. This is all coupled with support for the new **Holiday Tributes** initiative.

I was honored to present Trustee Guideon Richeson with the **Executive Directors Certificate of Appreciation Award** at the 1-CN District Convention. I also had the pleasure of presenting the **Distinguished Service Award** to Lion Brad Cash at the 1-M District Convention, this particular award is presented to Lions nominated by their District Trustees.

As we move forward into our 50th Anniversary and beyond, the Foundation is always looking to improve our service to each Lions Club and listen to your feedback as we work together to provide quality programs and services to the members of our communities. We have sent out a quick **survey** to be sure we are meeting your communication needs. We will be using these responses to update our mailing formats.

In 2024 our **Website** will have a new "Lions Club" tab just for Lions and a separate section for the Public. The Public section will have an "Events" tab to help navigate and find information on our fundraisers. We are simplifying our donation page and working on a QR code for donors to use. We are also adding our Historical Information in the form of a Timeline. In 2024, you'll see implementation of new Candy Day recognition awards, an update to the Cards for Camp program and more.

"Looking Back" the programs of our Foundation have touched so many lives to start this Lions year and **"Moving Forward"** we have plans to do so much more! I look forward to doing a Townhall Zoom on January 27th and presentations at the District Conventions. Everything we do happens because of the support we receive from the Clubs and Lions. The Foundation is the mechanism for Lions helping those in need. The LIF staff and I consider it an honor to work with all Lions and our partners!

Lion Ronald Fruit, PDG
Executive Director



On behalf of the students, their families, and the teachers who serve them, thank you all. These students and their families are beyond grateful for the services, glasses, and devices purchased through your generous donations. This clinic allows for the irreplaceable ongoing care they need. Without the support of the Lions Club, these students would not receive this comprehensive care and devices that are vital for their success in school. Thank you!

~ Jasmine Wells
Illinois College of Optometry



Candy Day
Lions Wayne and Ron Fruit



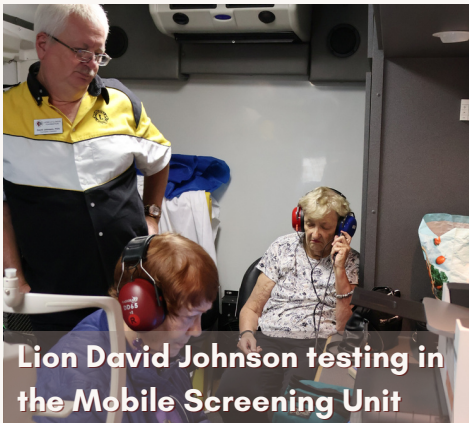
Lion Maureen Koch at
Bingo Bonanza



New hearing equipment
training at LIF

Thanks to your help, we are changing the lives of students with low vision, as well as those of their families. On behalf of The Chicago Lighthouse and the students we serve, thank you to the Lions of Illinois Foundation, as well as the local Lions chapters that contribute to it, for your continued support.

~ Kara Crumbliss,
The Lighthouse Chicago



Lion David Johnson testing in
the Mobile Screening Unit



Camp Lions



Lion Jim Kiser receiving the
Candy Day Award for Darien LC

The *Seeing Is Believing* program allows us to ask questions and see the evaluation in progress. When the doctor, teacher, and parents are in the room at the same time, we can all ask questions and share information, which is absolutely invaluable.

~ TVI,
Northern Suburban Special
Education District



Camp Lions



Camp Lions



Camp Lions was one of the biggest points of my life that really helped me accept who I was. Growing up in a hearing school and public school, I felt isolated. I felt excluded all the time and I didn't feel like I belonged with any of my friends. Because of the staff, being a counselor, and also the other kids and campers, I felt like I belonged here. It made me feel like I was a part of something and I felt like I could achieve more than I could possibly dream.

~ Kyle Schulze
Camp Lions, Deaf Ninja

2023 Golf Classic Volunteers



LIF Lion visits Malta Girl Scouts to receive Recycling Donation

I appeal to you Lions, you who have your sight, your hearing, you who are strong and brave and kind.

Will you not constitute yourselves *Knights of the Blind* in this crusade against darkness?

~ Helen Keller
Lions Club International Convention, 1925



Kyle Schulze at Camp Lions



Roar-In Charity Car Show North, 2023



Lion Dianne



Lions Johnny Anderson & PIP Judge Brian Stevenson pick the winning ticket



Frankfort LC - Candy Day '23



LIF Staff

Front: Lion Trish, Lion Ron, Lion Jyllann
Middle: Lion Nicole, Lion Andrew, Lion Kirsten
Back: Lion Max *Pictured above: Lion Dianne

Please join us...



LIVE

WEBINAR



**Lions of Illinois Foundation will be hosting a
Town Hall Meeting via Zoom
at 9:00 AM on Saturday, January 27, 2024**

**Lions of Illinois Foundation
Celebrating 50 Years of Service**

1974 ➔ 2024

Join us as we look back and learn more about the **HISTORY** of how the Foundation began in 1974. Then journey with us to discuss where our **FUTURE GOALS** will lead us.



**MOVING FORWARD...
LOOKING BACK**



**Lots of fun to be had
with TRIVIA and
opportunities to spin
the BIG WHEEL for
PRIZES!**

SPACE IS LIMITED!

Registration in advance for this meeting is **required.**
**Your club secretary has received the link to register. If you
have questions please contact us at LFOffice@lifnd.org**