



# On the Trail of 5M4



Kent Beissel District Governor

Vol. 1 No. 5

December, 2005

## December News

### Not Riding on the Trails in December...

#### Burrrrr!

As I'm sitting at the dining room table writing this newsletter, I can see the nasty looking clouds swinging overhead and writing their story in the sky. The story is titled "Winter is Coming". All of us who have lived in Minnesota most of our lives know that, without looking outside. The other message that those clouds bring is that the Lions 5M4 Midwinter Convention is not too far off. I have mentioned in past newsletters some of the details of the convention plans. Things are shaping up nicely. I'm sure that I'm in for some surprises, but right now the committee is putting together a great weekend. You should have been provided, in some form, an outline of the convention happenings. That outline along with a registration blank can be found at the end of the newsletter. Don't let that all-important date of December 15, 2005, get past you. It is the deadline for the "Early Bird" registration. The cost of registration will increase \$10 after that date. All you shoppers can appreciate the difference 15% can make.

A reminder to all clubs that they need to be considering a candidate for the Hall of Fame Award. These individuals need to be nominated by their club and their biography presented to the convention participants at the General Business session on Saturday, January 28, 2006. Following the presentation a vote by the delegates will take place. This year there will still be two candidates eligible from each District, one living and one deceased. These nominations need to be sent to the District Governor within 30 days of the convention. The nomination form and the award criteria can be viewed and downloaded at the MD5M website at [lionsmd5m.org](http://lionsmd5m.org).

Those of you who have heard my club presentation already know my major theme is that Lions help change peoples' lives each and every day. One of the ways to achieve those changes is the promotion of pro-active wellness. I'm asking each Lions club to promote an activity in your community that says, "Lions care about the health and wellness of the citizens in our town. Hopefully this will be an activity that promotes some form of physical activity. If you listen to, or read about wellness you already know that the catch phrase for most wellness activities is "Diet and Exercise". If we, as Lions, really care about peoples' well being and their health, then we need to promote this in our own communities. If you need ideas on how to do this promotion there will be two seminars at the Midwinter Convention where you can get excellent help and information.

Yes, the skies are telling me that winter is upon us, however it is also a message that the Christmas holidays are here also. I have to admit that it is my favorite of all holidays. Christmas is for "kids" no matter what their age. Judy and I want to wish each of you and your loved ones the best and all the holiness of the season. The celebration of the birth of Christ brings with it, each year, the renewal of the hope that we can all make the Earth a better place to live. Lions have that hope all year long, but the Christmas season brings it out so beautifully.

### Happy Holidays,

DG Kent and Judy Beissel



## NEWS FROM THE SOUTHWEST

VDG JIM DEMAREE

As I write this column on the day after Thanksgiving, I can't help but think of the many things that we have to be thankful for. This wonderful country that we live in that gives us the freedom to belong to this great organization to name one. Where we can work together to help the needy, the sick, and those less fortunate than ourselves. Sure, our country isn't perfect but it's better than any other one that I have heard of. It is said that you can judge a country by comparing the number of people trying to get in versus those trying to get out.

Enough philosophy! Marge and I have been having a ball attending various and sundry events. A couple that stand out were the Thanksgiving for Vision and the Family and Donor Recognition Service, both hosted by the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank. Thanksgiving for Vision has been going on for many years. I have attended perhaps a dozen or more and always come away with new information about the research that is going on the cure, treat, or prevent blindness. This was our first time to attend the Family & Donor Recognition Service. This is a relatively new program where the families of corneal donors are brought together to recognize the wonderful decision that they made at what was probably the worst time of their lives. Marge & I both left in tears because as we were walking out, donor families were thanking us for what we do as Lions. It was a very emotional time for everyone.

I am in the "embryo" stage of starting to form my cabinet for next year. In the not to distant future, I will be contacting people to serve in various positions. For present cabinet members you may be asked to serve in a different capacity or perhaps may not be asked to serve next year. This does not reflect on the job that you have done in the past! A lot of people have asked to serve on my cabinet and I will accommodate them to the best of my ability. New people bring new ideas and this is always welcome. When I do contact you, please realize that I have given you and your position a lot of thought and that I very much want you on my cabinet.

In another serious matter, to date no one has stepped forward to be a candidate for Vice District Governor. I can't do this again next year! It doesn't take a Superman to fill this position

Basically, the qualifications are that the candidate must have served two years on the Board of Directors of his/her club and as club President. On the District level, he/she must have served in one of the following positions: Zone Chair, Region Chair, Cabinet Secretary or Cabinet Treasurer. There are a lot of people out there who are qualified so someone please step forward. If you have questions, please contact DG Kent or me at any time. We will be happy to walk you through the steps to declare yourself as a candidate.

Keep in mind the upcoming conventions: District – Alexandria – January 27-29, Multiple – Rochester – April 28-30, Int'l – Boston – June 30 – July 4.

Have a Merry Christmas & a Happy & Prosperous New Year!

## Club Activities

**LIONS-helping people make their lives better every day.**

Atwater--Earned \$2600 selling sweaters

Benson--Served a Community Breakfast/Brunch

Cedar Mills--Had Santa Claus Days, Dec. 3

Clara City--Parked cars for craft show; sold Christmas trees

Glenwood--Built storage shed for Habitat for Humanity house

Montevideo--Helped decorate buildings for Christmas at Chippewa Village

Osakis--Donated funds toward purchase of playground equipment

Sauk Centre Lions--collected 1442 pounds of food and \$187 for the local food shelf

Starbuck--Held a waffle feed Dec. 4

Willmar Evening--Donated funds for 'Let's Go Fishing

## Thorfinnson for Int'12<sup>nd</sup> VP Campaign



**PID Ross L. Thorfinnson Jr. and Lynda**

A member since 1987, PID Thorfinnson belongs to the Brooklyn Center Lions Club and has held many offices within the association, including club president, zone chair, vice district governor, district governor and council chair. He has also led sessions on strategic planning and leadership and has served as chair on numerous Lion committees within his district and multiple district. He is currently serving as the Campaign SightFirst II National Coordinator for Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota and North Dakota.

In recognition of his service to the association, PID Thorfinnson has received numerous awards including the Lion of the Year Award, a District Governor's Excellence Award, four International President's Awards, an International President's Leadership Award, two International President's Certificates of Appreciation and the Ambassador of Good Will Award, the highest honor the association bestows upon its members. He is also a Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow.

In addition to his Lion activities, PID Thorfinnson is active in numerous professional and community organizations. He is an honorary board member of A Better Chance Foundation Eden Prairie, Minnesota, USA and a member of the Financial Planning Association. He has also served as a member of the Eden Prairie City Council, chairperson of the Eden Prairie Human Rights and Services Commission, troop committee chair of Boy Scout Troop 479, an American Red Cross disaster assistance team volunteer and a softball coach for the Eden Prairie Girl's Athletic Association.

Ross and Lynda live in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. Ross is a Financial Advisor, with offices in Eden Prairie and Spicer, MN.

Ross Thorfinnson is first and foremost a Lion. He truly desires to help our organization to do the best that it can to follow its motto "We Serve". Lion Lynda is a tireless partner. As one Lion described her, "Lynda is the most approachable and open spouse he as met". MD5M is proud to support PID Ross Thorfinnson and his wife Lynda in their quest to seek the office of International 2<sup>nd</sup> VP.

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### Location! Location! Location!

It all depends on our registrations! Right now the MD5M delegation hotel is the Marriott Tremont (which is subject to change) located in the Theatre District of Boston. We are only 1.6 miles away from the Boston Convention and Exhibition Centre where the International Convention will be held. Lions International picks the delegation hotels based on the approximate number of Lions they believe will be attending the convention from each district. We can be moved! If we are a small delegation from MD5M, they can move us to a different hotel to make room for a larger delegation. This is why it is important to get our registrations into Lions International as soon as possible. The deadline for early registration is January 31<sup>st</sup>.

Here are a few points of interests (and their websites) that are located near the Marriott Tremont hotel

([www.marriott.com/property/propertypage/BOSDM](http://www.marriott.com/property/propertypage/BOSDM)); this website gives you a lot of information about the hotel and the surrounding area. The Boston Common

([www.aviewoncities.com/boston/bostoncommon.htm](http://www.aviewoncities.com/boston/bostoncommon.htm)) is the oldest park in the United States and it is located about 2 blocks away from the hotel. From the park you can start on the Freedom Trail ([www.cityofboston.gov/freedomtrail](http://www.cityofboston.gov/freedomtrail)) walking tour that will show the attractions that made Boston famous. There are four theatres in the downtown district near the hotel: 1) The Colonial Theatre, built in 1900, is the oldest theatre in Boston, 2) The Charles Playhouse which is the home of the Blue Man Group, 3) The Wilbur Theatre and 4) The Opera House

([www.broadwayinboston.com/html/theatre/](http://www.broadwayinboston.com/html/theatre/)).

#### **Remember to Vote!**

The schedule for the international convention can be found on the website [www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org). On the morning of July 4<sup>th</sup> each Lions delegate is asked to vote for the candidates running for office. This is how Lions International counts how many delegates there are from each district. So when you make your reservations for the convention, be sure to stay through the morning of July 4<sup>th</sup> and remember to vote. The Thorfinnson for Int'1 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Campaign committee would like to have 500 voting delegates from MD5M at the convention.

The convention dates are Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup> through Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup> 2006. Take a few extra days, if you can, before or after the convention to explore the city of Boston and experience the history that you learned about in school. What an exciting experience this can be for you!

## On the 5M4 Trail With DG Kent

Dec. 8 Bird Island Club visitation  
 Dec. 12 Morris Club visitation  
 Dec. 13 Elbow Lake/Wendell Clubs visitation  
 Dec. 15 Hector Club visitation  
 Dec. 25 Merry Christmas  
 Jan. 1 New Year's Day  
 Jan. 6-8 5M6 convention  
 Jan. 9 Benson Club visitation  
 Jan. 10 Willmar Evening Club visitation  
 Jan. 17 Dawson Club visitation  
 Jan. 19 Kingston Club visitation  
 Jan. 27-29 Mid-Winter Convention-Alexandria Holiday Inn  
 Feb. 3-5 5M8 convention  
 Feb. 6 Grove City/Atwater Clubs visitation  
 Feb. 7 Brandon Club visitation  
 Feb. 10-12 5M2 convention  
 Feb. 13 Fairfax/Buffalo Lake Clubs visitation  
 Feb. 21 Watson Club visitation  
 Feb. 27 Milan Club visitation

### WANTED

#### 5M4 Vice District Governor Candidates

**Qualifications:** A desire to use your time, talents and resources to serve others.\*

**Benefits:** Personal satisfaction in knowing you're making peoples' lives better every day.

Equal Opportunity Employer

Contact: VDG Jim Demaree  
320/269-7568

jmdemaree@maxminn.com

\* see VDG Jim's article 'News From the Southwest' on page 3 for other qualifications

## EXTENSION

Don Clauson, Chm.

Isn't it GREAT to be a LION? Think of what your club does for your community and the people who live in it. They really appreciate the service of your Lions Club and the activities and gifts you bring to them. Thanks for your clubs' activities and great service.

But what could you do for communities without a Lions Club? Someone came to *your* town and gave *you* membership opportunities and your Lions Club was formed and began its service. Gov. Kent and I recently attended a meeting for Extension conducted by the 5M Extension Chairman. We chose some locations. However we need clubs to come forward to be a sponsor and then I will come and start the building process.

Possible sites are:

**Blomkest-Lake Lillian**  
**U of M -Morris Campus**  
**Alexandria Technical College**  
**Villard-Westport**  
**Dassel**  
**Forrest City**  
**Clinton-Graceville**  
**Terrace**  
**Browns Valley**  
**Herman**  
**Sunburg-Murdock**

You don't need permission to start another club in a location that already has a club.

As extension chairman, I will meet with you or your club any time. Please call me at work (507)426-7242 or at home (507)426-8130.

Thanks, and let's get started today.

Don't forget to register for the Mid-Winter Convention~~January 27-29 at the Holiday Inn in Alexandria. Registration form is on page 6.

### Donor and Family Recognition Service

For many years the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank has searched for a way to adequately thank those who have donated their eyes or corneas to the eye bank. Such a wonderful gift is not easily acknowledged, so the eye bank now holds two recognition ceremonies a year to honor eye donors and their families. Sunday, October 30th, was dedicated to eye and cornea donors from January through June, 2005.

"It is important to recognize the selfless gift that eye donors give to strangers," said Jackie Malling, executive director of the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank. "And it is equally important to help the *families* of these donors. The recognition service is a healing tool we offer families in grief."

The service includes inspirational readings and songs, the stories of both corneal recipients and donor families, and a University of Minnesota scientist's thank you to eye donors for ophthalmic research. The finale of the program is a moving donor photograph presentation.

The recognition service is just one component of the eye bank's family support offerings. Families also receive a thank you letter and a certificate of recognition soon after donation, a letter at three months that explains the outcome of the donation, and an anniversary card on the day of the donor's death. All of these services are made possible by the Minnesota Lions.

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Kevin Crowley of the Pennock Lions was presented a Melvin Jones Award by District Governor Kent at our joint Governor's meeting with Kerkhoven on November 3. Kevin is a 23 year member of the Pennock Lions, a past president, and has been Mayor of Pennock for a number of years.

### Thanksgiving for Vision

Thanksgiving for Vision is a wonderful observance that brings together many special people: Minnesota Lions and Lioness members, Minnesota Lions Eye Bank staff, University of Minnesota Department of Ophthalmology surgeons and researchers, corneal transplant recipients, and eye donor families. Each is connected to the exciting sight-saving work occurring in Minnesota. Around 480 guests attended the 19th annual celebration.

Thanksgiving for Vision has three parts: an educational symposium, a silent auction, and a lunch program.

"The Promise of Research" Symposium this year featured doctors J. David Brown, Stephen Christiansen, Deborah Ferrington, Dale Gregerson, Jay Krachmer, Linda McLoon, and Timothy Olsen. Topics included: new glaucoma surgery (involving a drain that is the size of a grain of rice!); repairing the retina with the help of stem cells; using donor eyes to study macular degeneration; and developing a "growth factor" pill that will treat strabismus (misaligned or crossed eyes). Whether the research involves new drugs, new surgeries, new treatments, or new approaches to old problems, it is happening at the U!

Many people helped to make the silent auction a success, and thanks goes out to each and every one of them. Goods, gift certificates, and services were offered up to hungry bidders, and the auction raised more than \$4,000 dollars for the Lions sight programs at the University.

Guests and presenters alike agreed that the Thanksgiving for Vision committee had put together another magical celebration.



Better be good.....  
Santa's watching!

## Minnesota Lions Eye Bank

submitted by Gregg Cunningham--MN Eye Bank Board of Directors

Did you know?

- The Minnesota Lions Eye Bank was the first transplant organization in Minnesota.
- As the only eye bank in Minnesota, the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank is devoted to preventing blindness, and restoring or enhancing sight through transplantation, research and medical education.
- Eye donation changes lives in many ways. Healthy donor corneas, the clear front part of the eye, are transplanted to replace unhealthy corneas in living recipients.
- The sclera, the white part of the eye, helps restore vision to those who have experienced eye injuries. Sclera is also used to repair cleft palate and other dental and medical conditions.
- Eye donation and corneal transplantation have a long, successful history. 2005 is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first corneal transplant in the world, performed in what is now the Czech Republic.
- Cornea transplant is one of the most frequently performed human transplant procedures.
- Since 1905, nearly one million cornea transplants have been done worldwide.
- Nationally, more than 46,000 cornea transplants are performed annually.
- The Minnesota Lions Eye Bank received more than 2,100 eye donations in 2004. More than 1,000 people have sight restored annually.
- Corneal transplants have been performed on men, women and children ranging in age from nine days to 107 years.
- More than 90 percent of corneal transplant operations successfully restore vision to the recipients.
- The need for corneas continues...worldwide, more than 2 million people, currently suffer from corneal blindness. A cornea transplant could possibly restore their sight.
- Throughout the world, the leading causes for cornea blindness are infections, cornea cloudiness and inherited and degenerative diseases.
- The World Health Organization reports that corneal disease is a major cause of blindness, second only to cataract blindness.
- 45 million people in the world are bilaterally blind meaning they can't see at all.
- One child goes blind every minute somewhere in the world.
- Hundreds of thousands of people in the United States are helped by research to find cures for blinding conditions conducted with donated eye tissue.
- Cataracts, poor eyesight or age do not prevent eye donation.
- Eye donation does not delay funeral services or prevent open reviewal services.
- One person's donated eyes can restore or enhance the vision of up to 10 people. Corneas from one person's eye donation go to two different people and each eye's sclera can be divided up to help up to four people.
- Minnesota Lions have given more than \$18 million to the people of Minnesota through the University of Minnesota. These funds have helped build the Lions Sight Program at the University which includes the Minnesota Lions Eye Bank, Lions Children's Eye Clinic, the Lions Research Building, the Minnesota Lions Macular Degeneration Research and Rehabilitation Center.
- For more information about eye donation, please visit [www.mnlionseyebank.org](http://www.mnlionseyebank.org) or call 1-866-887-4448.

# 28th DISTRICT 5M-4 MIDWINTER CONVENTION

January 27, 28, 29, 2006 Alexandria Holiday Inn, Alexandria, MN

PLEASE MAKE YOUR OWN HOTEL RESERVATIONS!

Call Alexandria Holiday Inn 320 763-6577 Ask for Lions Convention Rate(\$74.95+tax)

**IMPORTANT! Rooms must be reserved before Jan 1, 2006 or they will be released to the public!!**

Reserve Hospitality Rooms through the Holiday Inn (320) 763-6577 *Don't forget to have a theme!!*

## INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Club \_\_\_\_\_ **Saturday Banquet Choice**  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_ Club \_\_\_\_\_ Pork Medallion( ) Baked Chicken ( )  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Pork Medallion( ) Baked Chicken( )  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of children \_\_\_\_\_ Ages \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to help bag food between 2:00 - 5:00 Friday for "Kids Against Hunger"?  yes  no

All District Chorus Participants  yes  no (Saturday rehearsal)

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### EARLY BIRD CONVENTION PACKAGE (INCLUDES ALL MEALS) BEFORE DECEMBER 15, 2005

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \$65.00 Regular Attendees \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$55.00 First time attendees

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \$20.00 children 12 & under

### CONVENTION PACKAGE (INCLUDES ALL MEALS) AFTER DECEMBER 15, 2005

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \$75.00 Regular Attendees \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$65.00 First time attendees

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \$25.00 children 12 & under

**Registration and payment of ALL Packages MUST be received by January 10, 2006**

# of tickets	INDIVIDUAL MEAL TICKETS (if you don't select package)	Price	EXTENED AMOUNT
_____	Friday: International Director's Reception (Everyone Welcome)	No Charge	_____
_____	Saturday Awards Breakfast .....	\$15.00	_____
_____	Saturday Lunch.....	\$20.00	_____
_____	Governor's Banquet Saturday Evening.....	\$30.00	_____
_____	Sunday Brunch .....	\$20.00	_____
Total Amount Enclosed .....			\$ _____

List any special dietary needs: \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: DISTRICT 5M-4 LIONS CONVENTION

SEND TO:

CONVENTION COMMITTEE, % BRIAN SHEEHAN

78454 310th ST.

OLIVIA, MN. 56277

PHONE: B-(320) 365-4027 x 111

C-(320) 212-7330

Email: bsheehan@rccbi.com

Additional information on our website at [www.5m4lions.org](http://www.5m4lions.org)

