



On the Trail of 5M4



Kent Beissel District Governor

Vol. I No. 2

September, 2005

CHANGING PEOPLES' LIVES

by District Governor Kent Beissel

It was only three short days, but what an exciting and educational time. These days were spent on August 13-15. One day at **Lions Clubs International Headquarters** in Oakbrook IL, and two days in Rochester MI visiting Leader Dogs for the Blind. At LCI Headquarters the 12 governors and spouses from MD5M were able to tour the entire facility. We heard presentations from various department heads giving us tips on how best to complete forms and make requests for their services. During a couple of breaks in the presentations we were visited by outgoing International President Clement Kusiak and by newly elected Second V.P. Mahendra Amarasuriya from Sri Lanka. During the tours we went to International President Ashok Mehta's office. He was not there at the time so everyone took advantage of the chance to sit at his desk and pretend. (NO, I have no aspirations to hold that office).

The time we spent in Rochester Michigan at **Leader Dogs for the Blind** was truly inspiring. As a past 5M-4 Leader Dog chairperson it was a dream come true. Up until then, my relationship with them was strictly financial. I would collect the funds from clubs and forward them to Leader Dog. Now, I was able to see first hand how those funds were used. What I saw was truly remarkable. I know now, that the Lions money is well spent--from the breeding program that produces those loveable puppies, to the recipient with their new best friend and finally to some of the newest innovations in guiding blind people. This new system, called Trekker, allows the blind person, either with a cane or a dog, to navigate through their environment with the use of a Global Positioning System.

They can now be independent in their movement, and also not have to ask directions, since the system will give them auditory directions. They are truly "changing peoples' lives" each day.

I want encourage all of you, if at all possible, to check into attending the **USA/Canada Leadership Forum**. This can be a very educational and uplifting

experience. You do not have to be in a leadership position to enjoy this event. If you cannot attend this years' Forum, from **September 22-24** in Peoria IL, then think about it for the future. This 3-4 day event is filled with great speakers and informative seminars for all levels of Lions.

Another item to get on your calendars now is the **Mid-Winter Convention**. The dates are **January 27-29** in Alexandria, at the Holiday Inn. Our special guest this year will be International Director Roy Barnette and his wife Barbara from South Carolina. A fine selection of seminars is shaping up nicely for Saturday morning. With my major theme for this year being "proactive wellness" there will be a couple of sessions directly related to that topic. It is sure to be fun and memorable weekend. Get it on the calendar NOW! The district's PDG's will be visiting your individual clubs to provide you with all the details and registration information.

The Lions year is off to a great start. I hope that you are able to have the same feelings about your local clubs' endeavors. Judy and I have been able to get out to several clubs for visits and special celebrations--a couple of these being the **Spicer Sunrise Lions** 25th anniversary and installation of NINE new members by Past International Director, Ross Thorfinnson. That club is definitely going to make their "Plus One" membership goal. The **Madison Lions** also celebrated their 25th anniversary this summer. It was fun being able to present each club with a 25 year patch, that I was able to obtain for them during our visit to Lions' headquarters.

As I previously mentioned, one of my special themes this year will be an emphasis on "pro-active " wellness. My goal is to have each club create an activity in their community that will further pro-active wellness. In other words, some activity that will enhance people's health and wellness, rather than to try and deal with it after people have been stricken. The zone chairs will provide more information about this activity during the first Zone meetings.

I hope that all of you and your clubs are getting off to a good start in the Lions year. It is through your individual and club efforts that we, as Lions, are able to help needy individuals make their lives better. Lions change peoples' lives!

NEWS FROM THE SOUTHWEST

VDG JIM DEMAREE

Has your club asked anyone from the MERLO Team to put on a program at one of your meetings? If you haven't, you are missing an opportunity to enrich the knowledge of your club members about Lions. Membership, Extension, Retention, Leadership and Orientation. These chairpersons have all held their positions for at least the past year and are very knowledgeable in their field. Don't pass up the chance to have one or more of these Lions come to your club.

District Governor Kent will soon be unveiling his programs for the coming year. Marge & I are looking forward to helping him achieve these goals. While we are talking about helping DG Kent, let me say that I have deeply appreciated the way the he and PDG Council Chair Brian Sheehan have kept me informed starting about a year ago when I announced my intent to run for Vice Governor. They are affording me the opportunity to be an observer and thus learn the ropes. A big thank you to both of them!

On July 24, Marge & I were invited to attend the MD5M Youth Exchange International Banquet in Mankato. This event is put together by PDGs Elvera & Orville Trettin and Zone Chair Darwin Mathwig. Let me say this: If you ever have the chance to attend this event, don't pass it up. There were 27 young adults from 15 countries and each of them prepared a dish for the meal that was native to their country. If you are familiar with what I call "Church Supper Tables", it took five of them to hold all the food. They made sure that some youth and some adults sat at each table to dine. All of them spoke at least some English and following the meal each got up and told a little bit about their home town, family, etc. There were three staying with Lions in 5M4, Ruud Vullers from Holland staying with PDG Ron & Ann Branch at Alexandria, Rikke Poulsen of Denmark staying with Judy & Jerry Spencer of Atwater, and Guro Afseth of Norway staying with Jean & Dale Ruter of Spicer.

The other countries represented were Taiwan, South Korea, Italy, Germany, Turkey, Sweden, France, Poland, Brazil, Finland, Mongolia, and Japan.

I would also like to congratulate the Madison Lions Club on a very nice 25th Anniversary party. Marge and I enjoyed the evening renewing friendships and meeting new Lions friends. Thank you for a wonderful evening!

Remember, if you need help or have a question, we are only a phone call or e-mail away.



Group picture of all the youth.



Left to right: VDG Jim, Guro Afseth – Norway, Ruud Vullers – Holland, and Rikke Poulsen – Denmark.

Hearing and Service Dogs of Minnesota

by PDG Keith Johnson

Hearing and Service Dogs of Minnesota is going strong doing a wonderful job of providing services for the Hearing and Mobile impaired citizens of Minnesota. If anyone knows of a person in their town, or area, that is in need of a dog to help with hearing door bells, fire alarms, telephone calls, stove alarms, CO and smoke alarms, or help with everyday chores of opening doors, getting newspapers, or a companion, contact Al Peters at Hearing and Service Dogs of Minnesota, 2537 25th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55406--or apeters@hdsd.org. You may also call Al Peters at 612/729-5986. People with MS, crippled from Spina Bifida, diabetes or any paralyzing ailment and those with severe hearing problems can be a candidate for help from HSDM.

MD5M Council of Governors 2005-06 appointed PCC Frank Loken of Sandstone to be the liaison between HSDM and MD5M. His job will be to give information about HSDM and also from MD5M to HSDM about Hearing and Service Dog matters. This is a way for us to stay informed about their operation. PCC Frank will sit in on the Board of Directors meetings of HSDM twice a year. This is a great step forward to deeper understanding of our partnership between MD5M and HSDM.

Any contributions coming from clubs in 5M4 should be sent to Keith Johnson at 626 Turnberry Lane, Litchfield, MN 55355 and he will forward them to HSDM.

Peace Poster Reminder

Get your Peace Poster information soon.
The theme this year is **Peace Without Borders**.

For more information contact our Peace Poster Chairperson, Nancy Dokken at 210 20th St. So. Benson, MN 56215, or 320/843-3619, or nancydokken@charter.net. The deadline for entries is November 15.

Let's have a great showing of students' work at the Mid-Winter Convention in January.

Diabetes Awareness

by PDG Woody Dokken

The Diabetes Awareness Committee (DAC) is excited to inform you of the new equipment we have purchased this past year to further enhance the diabetes screening program.

We have been experiencing an increased number of Lions Clubs using the blood glucose kits that contain all the necessary supplies to conduct a screening in your community. The supplies included are 3 blood glucose monitors, test strips, disposable lancets, examination gloves, alcohol swabs, tissues, sharps container, literature, examination forms and liability release forms. On the average, about 10% of those screened have been advised to seek further medical attention.

People have many excuses as to why their blood glucose reading is high. This can vary from "I had too much to eat last night" to "I had a cookie before coming here". Consequently, we have purchased an A1c machine that will give the patient a reading of their average blood glucose for the past 90 days. This number should fall between 6 and 7 for normal blood sugars. Anything above 7 should be referred to a doctor. We do not recommend giving this test to all, as the cost of the test strip is around \$8.00. This test should be suggested to anyone whose blood sugar level is above a 140 reading on the glucometer.

As long as diabetes has such devastating effects on the eyes, a vision screening instrument was also purchased. This instrument is very adaptable and can be used in most screenings. We also have equipment available for hearing screening. This equipment is very user friendly and is the latest in technology available.

The long range goal will be to utilize this equipment not only for Lions activities, but to offer our services to the schools, churches and businesses in our communities. This will greatly enhance the image of Lions in our area.

There are a number of people who have volunteered to serve on the screening committee. It is the intention of the DAC to have Lions trained in the proper operation of these new instruments who can then oversee the proper use of them at the club level. The suppliers have agreed to come to our area to instruct us.

If you would like to have more information or schedule a visit to your club to talk about diabetes awareness contact...

PDG Woody Dokken
210 20th St. S. Benson, MN 56215
320/843-3619 (home)
320/766-5408 (cell)
woodydokke@charter.net

OR

Lion Terry Neubarth
18 Golf Dr. Olivia, MN 56277
320/523-5466 (home)
rhcrcna@tds.net.

Help for Hurricane Victims Through LCIF

The devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida is deeply troubling. Our hearts go out to those who are suffering and face an uncertain future. We are acutely aware of the struggle for clean water, food and shelter, to say nothing of the need to be able to return to work and school.

LCIF will do all it can to help victims recover their lives. LCIF has awarded a US\$200,000 Major Catastrophe Grant to help victims. I also have approved emergency grants for districts affected by the hurricane. Three US\$10,000 emergency grants have been awarded for Districts 8-O, 8-S & 8-I in Louisiana. I expect many emergency grants to be approved very soon when district governors are able to contact us.

LCIF has set up a designated fund for Lions and others who wish to help the hurricane victims. Make the check payable to LCIF and indicate on the memo line that the donation is for Hurricane Katrina. **Mail checks to PDG Ron Branch, LCIF Chairperson, 1301 Firemans Lodge Rd. SW, Alexandria, MN 56308-9114.**

All donations for Hurricane Katrina count toward a club's and district's giving totals. (Donations from U.S. residents also are tax deductible.) However, these donations are **not** eligible for Melvin Jones Fellowship recognition.

As with other large-scale disasters, I am sure Lions are eager to assist victims in various ways besides donating funds. To help facilitate the expected volunteer efforts of Lions, with the approval of the executive officers, I have appointed a steering committee of four leading Lions from the four states most affected by the tragedy to serve as liaisons between LCIF, Lions in the disaster areas and Lions who want to help.

We are aware that in past disasters of this magnitude goods often are collected and shipped to a disaster area that are not needed and ultimately are not used. So please refrain from collecting items until more about immediate needs is known.

You should also know that International President Ashok Mehta has issued a statement on the hurricane on the Lions' web site. Please take a minute to read his words of consolation and encouragement.

Our thoughts and prayers are with those in the affected areas. Thank you in advance for any assistance you can provide.

Yours in Service,
Clement F. Kusiak, 2005-2006 LCIF Chairperson

Campaign SightFirst II

In its 15 years, SightFirst has enable Lions to do more to prevent blindness and restore sight than in the previous 75 years. It has touched the lives of millions of people in ways that could not have been imagined when Lions first promised to be 'knights of the blind'. Lions created SightFirst by raising US\$143 million in Campaign SightFirst, which grew to nearly US\$200 million through investments and additional gifts. SightFirst has:

- made Lions a recognized world leader in eye-health
 - removed cataract as a public health threat in several countries and pushed river blindness to the brink of elimination in Latin America,
 - encouraged national governments to become partners in the fight against blindness, and
- helped ensure that eye-health is recognized as a serious public health issue by the World Health Organization and other international bodies.

Despite the extraordinary success of SightFirst, much work remains. If no new action is taken, experts predict that the world's blind population could double to 74 million and those with low vision to double to nearly 250 million by 2020.

SightFirst has a three-part strategy to prevent a catastrophic increase in world blindness. This strategy of the SightFirst approach defines the goals of Campaign SightFirst II.

Goal 1: Control and eliminate major causes of blindness by developing comprehensive eye-care services and eliminating infectious eye diseases that cause blindness.

Goal 2: Combat emerging threats to sight by strengthening low-vision services, eliminating a avoidable childhood blindness, developing sustainable approaches to refractive error in children and developing new capacities for controlling glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy.

Goal 3: Provide "Vision for All" by funding rehabilitation efforts and education for the already blind, invest in research incentives at Lions Eye Research Institutes and expand and enhance Lions sight programs for high-risk populations in developed countries.

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE LIONS, LIONESS AND LEOS OF DISTRICT 5M4 HAVE GIVEN OVER \$139,000 TO THE LIONS EYE BANK SINCE 1998?

OUR MULTIPLE DISTRICT MD5M HAS CONTRIBUTED OVER \$2,600,000 DURING THAT SAME PERIOD OF TIME.

WE'RE MAKING PEOPLE'S LIVES BETTER EVERY DAY!

On the Trail With DG Kent

Sept. 8 Lowry Lions visitation
 Sept. 13 Milona Lions visitation
 Sept. 22-25 USA/Canada Forum-Peoria, Ill.
 Oct. 3 New London Lions visitation
 Oct. 10 Alexandria Evening Lions visitation
 Oct. 14-15 Council of Governors, Mahanomen
 Oct. 19 Glenwood Lions visitation
 Oct. 22 5M4 Cabinet meeting
 Oct. 26 Sauk Centre Lions visitation
 Oct. 29 Thanksgiving for Vision
 Nov. 3 Kerkhoven/Pennock Lions visitation
 Nov. 9 Wheaton Lions visitation
 Nov. 14 Litchfield Lions visitation
 Nov. 15 Spicer Sunrise Lions visitation
 Nov. 21 Starbuck Lions visitation



The Sauk Centre Lions do more than just 'clown around'!! Check out the article on page 40 in the September issue of the LIONS magazine. Pictured with DG Kent is Lion Jason Kerfeld.

CLUB ACTIVITIES

The **Cedar Mills Lions** invite you to their annual **Char Grilled Pork Chop Dinner** on **Friday, Sept. 9, from 5:00-8:00 PM** at the Cedar Edge Ballroom.

Adults \$7.50, children under 6 \$3.00, extra chop \$2.00. Free Dance from 7:00-11:00 PM with music by Wally Pikal.

Prizes every 5 minutes, 2 drawings for \$50 and 2 drawings for \$25. The last drawing is at 10:30. You must be present to win. Proceeds to be used for local donations.



Hector Fly-in Breakfast

Join the Hector Lions on Sunday, September 18, 2005 for their Fly-in Breakfast. Serving from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Hector Airport.

All proceeds will go to the Hurricane Relief Fund.

Your Club activities could be in this space!

Send information to **John Olson**, editor, at robertaolson@mainstreetcom.com

Congratulations to these NEW members....

Dawn Pennie	Brandon Lions Club
Donald Pennie	Brandon Lions Club
Lynda Bast	Spicer Lions Club
Darwin Bast	Spicer Lions Club
Mary Gabbert	Spicer Lions Club
Patti Lewis	Spicer Lions Club