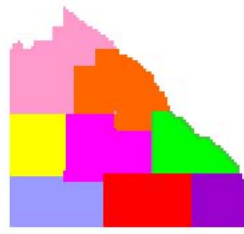




5M-1



Dear Lion or potential Lion:

You have chosen to either inquire about or join the world's largest and most effective community service organization, the International Association of Lions Clubs. This association consists of more than 1.35 million members world-wide. The club you have chosen is one of almost forty five thousand Lions clubs in 202 countries and geographical areas. Regardless of which language the members speak, religion they practice or politics they espouse, all Lions are dedicated to seeking out and helping those in need.

This association has a proud heritage of service dating to 1917. With your help, the future of the Lions clubs will be even greater. The first step is your active participation in your club's service, fundraising and social activities, and your understanding of the history, structure and activities of this association. It is only from your fellow club members that you will learn what this can mean to your community and the world.

As you become active and more knowledgeable, please share your experiences and pride of accomplishment with your friends and family. Few things can be as gratifying as bringing another person into our community of service.

A Short Synopsis of Our History

In 1917 a Chicago insurance agent named Melvin Jones convinced his luncheon club, the Business Circle of Chicago, that it should ally itself with other independent clubs to form a national organization that would be dedicated not only to networking for business and social purposes, but to

the improvement of the community as a whole. Among the groups invited was the Association of Lions Clubs, headquarters in Evansville, Indiana and led by Dr. W.P. Wood. At the time of the meeting, June 7th, 1917, there was several Lions Clubs already in existence, some having been organized in 1916. They were an outgrowth of the now-defunct fractional organization called the Royal Order of Lions.

The Business Circle and other clubs agreed to rally under the Lion's name and a convention was called for October, in Dallas, Texas. Thirty-six delegates representing twenty-two clubs from nine states heeded the call. They approved the "Lions Clubs" designation and elected Dr. Woods as the first president. Guiding force and founder Melvin Jones was named acting secretary, thus beginning an association with the Lions that ended only with his death in 1961.

This first convention in 1917 also began to define what the association was to become. A constitution and by-laws were adopted, the colors of purple and gold approved and a start made on the Lions Clubs Objects and Code of Ethics.

Remarkably, considering the materialism of the era, both the Objects and Ethics encouraged Lions to put service ahead of profit and to uphold the highest standards of conduct in business and the professions.

Community leaders began to organize clubs throughout the United States. The association became truly "International" with the formation of a club in Windsor, Ontario, Canada in 1920. Clubs were later organized in Mexico, China and Cuba. By 1927, just ten short years later, membership stood at 60,000 in 1,183 clubs.

Perhaps the single event having the greatest impact on the association's service commitment occurred in 1925 when Helen Keller addressed the Lions at their International Convention in Cedar Point, Ohio. It was there that she challenged the Lions to become "*Knights of the Blind in the crusade against darkness*".

In 1935 Panama became home to the first Central American club. The first club in South America was organized in Columbia the following year. Sweden, followed by France brought Europe into the association in 1948. Japan had clubs by 1952 and the so-called “Eastern Bloc” was unblocked in 1989 with the formation of clubs in Hungary, Poland and Estonia. In 1990, a club was chartered in Moscow and today over one hundred clubs are demonstrating the value of service in countries once closed to voluntary action.

Our Name

The legal name of this association is “The International Association of Lions Clubs.” It is entirely proper, however, to use the shorter form of “Lions Clubs International.”

Our Emblem



The current Lion emblem was adopted at the convention in 1919. Today, Lions throughout the world are recognized by the same emblem. It consists of a gold letter “L” on circular purple (or blue) field. Bordering this is a circular gold area with two lion profiles facing away from the center. The word “Lions” appears at the top and “International” at the bottom. The lions face away from each other symbolizing facing our past and our future – showing pride in our heritage and confidence in our future.

- **Always wear our Lion’s emblem pin proudly** •

And, since it is a registered trademark in most countries, remember it may never be reproduced or used for commercial purposes without prior written permission from the Legal Division at International Headquarters in Oak Brook, Illinois.

Our Motto

The official motto of this association is simply “***WE SERVE***”. What better way to explain our mission.

Our Slogan

The slogan of this association is “Liberty, Intelligence, Our Nations Safety”.

Official Colors

The royal colors of purple and gold were selected as the official colors when this association was organized in 1917. Purple stands for loyalty to friends and for integrity of mind and heart. Gold symbolizes sincerity of purpose, liberality in judgment, purity in life and generosity in mind, heart and purse to those in need.

How This Association is organized

The individual Lions club is the most important unit of this association. After all, it is the International Association of Lions Clubs that now wishes to count you as a member. As an individual, you belong to your club. It is the club that is a member of the association. This means that when it comes time to elect international officers and directors or to amend or change the International Constitution and by-laws, it is the club that casts the necessary votes through its authorized delegates. Every Lions club in good standing is entitled to send at least one delegate and alternate to vote at the International convention, regardless of the number of members it has. Most clubs are entitled to more than one vote, since the rule provides for one delegate or alternate for each twenty five members or major fraction thereof. Delegates may be appointed by the club’s Board of Directors, or elected by the membership.

District Organization

With Lions clubs active in 202 countries and geographical areas worldwide, it would be very difficult for the International Board of Directors to exercise control without the help of knowledgeable and dedicated Lions. The association has therefore been organized into more than 760 districts. The Chief Executive Officer in each district is the District Governor. He or she is an officer of the International Association.

In 1994 the office of Vice District Governor became mandatory. In most cases he or she will likely be elected Governor the next year.

Our District: 5M-1

This club is a member of district 5M-1, which is one of twelve districts of Multiple District 5M (MD5M) which includes all of Minnesota, Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario. District 5M-1 consists of all the clubs in Houston, Fillmore, Mower, Winona, Olmsted, Wabasha, Dodge and Goodhue counties. It contains approximately 2000 Lions in 49 Lions clubs – around 100 Lioness members in four Lioness clubs - and around 30 LEOs in two LEO Clubs. The district governor is elected by delegates from the Lions clubs in 5M-1 at the district's Mid-Winter Convention, held annually in February. Because of the importance of this office, district governors-elect from around the world gather just prior to the International Convention for a series of seminars designed to broaden their knowledge of the association and its programs. They then assume the office at the close of the international convention.

For administrative purposes, districts are generally subdivided into regions and zones, with region and zone chairs responsible for their areas. District 5M-1 has three regions, each containing two zones. These Lions, as well as the district governor, vice district governor, the immediate past district governor, the cabinet secretary and cabinet treasurer and various other activity chairs make up the district cabinet. Working closely with the governor is the Governor's Advisory Committee, comprised of the president and secretary of each club in the district.

The Lions Club

The Lions club is the most important single element of Lions. It is the club, after all, which carries out the programs and activities that have made this association what it is today --the largest and most active humanitarian organization in the world.

Membership is by invitation only and is open to persons of legal majority

who have demonstrated high moral character and commitment to community betterment.

Every club has been chartered by the International Association and has agreed to abide by the International Constitution and by-laws. It has the same rights as any Lions club – proportionate to membership.

A typical Lions club is governed by a board of directors consisting of a president as chief executive officer, three vice presidents, the immediate past president, a secretary, treasurer, lion tamer (*custodian of club property*), tail twister (*who adds fun to the meeting*), and four or more directors. Most boards meet once each month.

Assisting the board are the various administrative and activity committees appointed by the president. Administrative committees might include: attendance, constitution and by-laws, convention, finance, lions information, membership program, public relations, newsletter, greeter and leadership development. Activity committees generally conform to the major activities of Lionism.

The club president will appoint as many club members as possible to a committee. In many clubs, every member is assigned to a committee. Committee Chair positions in particular are an excellent method of encouraging and developing future club leaders.

Each club sets its own fees and annual dues. In addition, the club collects the district, multiple district and Lions International dues. Currently, District 5M-1 dues are \$9.00 per year, multiple district dues are \$8.30 per year and International dues are \$39.00 per year. In addition to whatever the individual club sets its own dues for the operation of the club. These dues are by far the lowest of any major service club organization. Individual club dues are used to pay the clubs administrative costs.

MONEY RAISED FROM THE PUBLIC FOR ACTIVITIES MUST NEVER BE USED TO DEFRAY THE ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES OF THE CLUB. Lioness Clubs

In many communities, Lions clubs also sponsor a Lioness club - which usually works with the Lions club on community projects and also conducts its own service activities and community projects. Lioness clubs add an important dimension and make many valuable contributions to Lions and their community. District 5M-1 has an active Lioness program with four clubs in our district

LEO Club Program

Lions clubs in 118 countries sponsor more than 4,500 Leo clubs worldwide. The more than 113,000 members, ages twelve through twenty-eight, perform various community service activities and support a special worldwide literacy and culture program. District 5M-1 is proud to have two active Leo clubs – in Winona and St. Charles

Club Meetings

Lions clubs are required to meet at least twice each month. One of the meetings can be a Board of Directors meeting. Originally, most clubs met weekly at noon, but as social and business patterns changed over the years, many clubs found that the needs of their members were better served by an evening or even breakfast meeting.

The important thing for you as a member though, is to attend every meeting of your club if at all possible. It is at the club meeting where the bonds of friendship are formed that contribute so much to the ultimate success of the club. Important business takes place as well, including votes on projects and expenditures, approval of new members, planning for future events and reports of committees.

You should aim for perfect attendance! If you must miss a meeting, usually just a call to your secretary will make your absence excused. You may also make up a meeting by going to a zone, board or region meeting. Also, if on vacation, try to attend a meeting in another state or country – be sure to tell your secretary.

This is but a very short outline of what Lions are all about. If you are already a Lion, we hope this information will add to your enjoyment in serving as a Lion. If you are not already a Lion we hope this information will encourage you to become part of the largest service organization in the world. Are you ready to join us? ...Only **YOU** know the answer. If you have any questions about this organization we not only believe in, but **LOVE** - please ask one of our members! We would like to have you as a member, but we want you to be an **INFORMED, ACTIVE MEMBER!**

Take your time, think it over ...then, **JOIN US AND SERVE!**

This document was prepared by Lion Jim Morcomb of the Houston Lions Club.