



District 11-E1

Sept 2026 Newsletter



Michigan Lions Serving 16 Counties & 35 Clubs!

Upcoming

Governor's Visits

Greenville Spaghetti
Dinner September 11

Stanwood
September 14

**Council of
Governors Meeting**
October 2-3

Traverse City
October 8

**Cabinet Meeting/
Fall Conference/
Parade of Checks**
October 10

Midland
October 20

Coleman
Charter Night
October 23

White Cloud
Anniversary
October 24

Governor's Corner:

Dear Lions,

Now that our children are back in school, let's focus on how our Lions Clubs can make a difference for them!

Make your club's presence known, get involved, wear your vest, show the children and their parents "We Serve" all ages of our community populations!

One of the most meaningful ways our Lions Club can serve our community is by partnering with a local elementary school. By supporting children, teachers, and families, we can make a lasting difference while helping build a stronger future for our community.

Serving Our Children, Building Our Future

10 Ways a Lions Club Can Support an Elementary School

1. Vision Screening and Eyeglass Assistance

Support vision screenings and help connect students who need additional eye care with appropriate resources.

2. Backpack and School Supplies Program

Provide backpacks and essential school supplies to students whose families may need assistance.

3. "Read with a Lion" Literacy Program

Lions members can volunteer to read with students, encourage young readers, and provide books for children to take home.

4. School Library Book Project

Partner with the school to purchase new books and help expand the school's library resources.

5. Weekend Food Assistance Program

Work with the school or a local food organization to help provide food for children who may experience food insecurity outside of school.

6. STEM and Science Day

Sponsor hands-on activities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to encourage curiosity and learning.

7. Playground and Outdoor Improvement Project

Help fund or provide volunteer support for playground improvements, gardens, benches, outdoor learning areas, or other projects that benefit students.

8. Hearing and Health Awareness

Support appropriate hearing screenings and health-education programs in partnership with qualified professionals.

9. Arts, Music, and Enrichment Programs

Help provide art supplies, musical instruments, educational experiences, field trips, and other enrichment opportunities.

10. Teacher and Classroom Grants

Establish small grants that allow teachers to purchase classroom materials or develop special educational projects.

Building a Lasting Partnership

The best way to begin is by listening to the school. We can meet with the principal, teachers, counselors, and other school representatives to learn what needs are most important and where our Lions Club can have the greatest impact.

We do not have to take on all ten projects at once. We could begin with two or three programs—such as vision services, literacy, and school supplies—and gradually expand our efforts as funding and volunteer participation allow.

Most importantly, we should remember that the youth of today are the future Lions of tomorrow. The children we serve today may become tomorrow's volunteers, community leaders, and Lions Club members. By introducing young people to the values of kindness, compassion, service, and helping others, we are not only supporting their education—we are helping develop the next generation of people who will carry the spirit of Lions service forward.

By investing our time, resources, and compassion in elementary school students, we are helping children succeed today while strengthening our community for tomorrow.

When Lions serve children, we are not simply supporting a school—we are investing in the future of our community and in the future Lions of tomorrow.

Thank you for considering how we can make this important service project a reality.

Yours in service,

DG Laura Johnson



District Team

District Governor:

Laura Johnson (Baldwin)
(231) 250-0537
Lionlaura1952@gmail.com

1st Vice District Governor:

Vacant

2nd Vice District Governor:

Roger Gilbert (Mt. Pleasant)
(989) 330-1908
sullysdad@chartermi.net

Cabinet Secretary:

Donna Vangessel (White Cloud)
(813)-713-4909
walmartredhead@yahoo.com

Cabinet Treasurer:

Jaymie Ricksgers (Weidman)
(805) 551-0248
jaymie.ricksgers@gmail.com

Global Membership Chair:

PDG Jackie Glazier
(231) 534-4932
Jackieglazier14@yahoo.com

Global Leadership Chair:

IPDG Jeff Schafer (Coleman)
(812) 325-3130
jeff.schafer1@comcast.net

Global Service Chair:

Steve Adsmond (Fremont)
(231) 740-7076
adsmond@comcast.net

LCIF Chair:

PDG Sheryl Schafer (Coleman)
(812) 325-7762
sheryl.schafer1@comcast.net

District Administrator:

Peggy Frank (White Cloud)
(616) 217-6840
pfrank1219@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor:

Paula Rigling (Arcadia)
(512) 791-4701
district11E1Newsletter@gmail.com

Zone Chairperson Corner: Lions 11 E-1 R2Z1 September Zone Report

Chuck Dinsmore, Zone Chair

As we begin the new Lions year, I am pleased to report that the first 11 E-1 R2Z1 Zone meeting was attended by representatives from 100% of the clubs in the zone. Of the 26 Lions present, many were newly elected club officers.

The primary goal of this first meeting was to provide information, encourage communication and emphasize the importance of service. Discussions included upcoming Zone meeting dates, district events, available training opportunities at the Leadership Institute in Roscommon, and the criteria for achieving Club Excellence Awards. Club contact information was also distributed, along with the new District Roster books.

Following the dinner break, each club was invited to share updates about its activities since the April meeting. Although many service activities are reduced during the summer months, several clubs took advantage of local events to conduct successful fundraisers.

Three Zone clubs—Midland, Mt. Pleasant and Shepherd—hosted chicken dinners, providing a combined total of approximately 4,200 dinners. Harrison's new Leo club completed a cleanup project at Wilson State Park, demonstrating an early commitment to community service. At least half of the Zone's clubs reported holding their White Cane drives.

The Weidman Lions Club supported Weidman Sawmill Days and is preparing for its upcoming fundraising activities at the Wheatland Music Festival. These reports highlighted the continued dedication of our clubs, members and Leos to serving their communities and working together to make a difference.

Prayer Corner

Our thoughts and prayers are with those Lions who lost family members, those that have family members or friends that are sick or in the hospital or at home, and all others whose losses are unknown to us at this time.

Lions if you have prayer requests, please let me know so we can add you to the prayer list. If anyone has a concern and would like for me to pray with you over the phone, I will be glad to do that too. Prayer and trust are powerful in our lives.

Hope to hear from you, Blessings. - Lion Steve Adsmond, District Chaplain



We Serve

LIONS INTERNATIONAL Peace Poster CONTEST

Young Artists.
Big Dreams.
Brighter
Futures. ♥

2026-2027 THEME:

HARMONY IN HUMANITY

We invite youth ages 11-13 to express their vision of peace through art. Show us a world where people of different cultures and backgrounds live together in harmony—celebrating differences, finding common ground, and treating one another with respect and kindness.

Creativity today. Peace tomorrow. ♥



IMPORTANT DATES



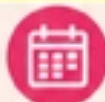
OCTOBER 1

Deadline to purchase
Peace Poster Contest
kits from the
Lions Shop.



NOVEMBER 15

Lions International's
postmark deadline for
clubs to send their
winning poster to the
District Governor.



NOVEMBER 20

DISTRICT DEADLINE

DG Laura Johnson would like
all district Peace Poster
entries received by
this date.

Thank you! ♥



MAIL POSTERS TO:

DG Laura Johnson
1298 E. 15 Mile Rd.
Bitley, MI 49309



QUESTIONS OR ARRANGE A DROP-OFF?



Call DG Laura
231-250-0537



Email DG Laura
lionlaura1953@gmail.com

*We can't wait to see
the amazing artwork
from our young artists! ♥*



Let's encourage the young artists in our communities
to show us what "*Harmony in Humanity*" looks like!

For official contest information and resources, visit lionsclubs.org/peaceposter

KINDNESS
INCLUSION
RESPECT

**LIONS CLUBS
INTERNATIONAL**



LCIF: Lions Helping Lions When It Matters Most

LCIF Chair PDG Sheryl Schafer

What happens to the money we donate to Lions Clubs International Foundation?

Sometimes the answer is much closer to home than we realize. Last year, **23 of our 35 District clubs**, along with **13 individual Lions**, made donations to Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF). Together, those contributions totaled an impressive **\$13,355**.

Thank you to every club and every individual Lion who contributed!

But this past spring and early summer, our District experienced firsthand why supporting LCIF is so important. When flooding affected communities within our District, **LCIF responded with a \$15,000 emergency grant** to help Lions provide assistance where it was needed. Think about that for a moment. We often hear about LCIF responding to hurricanes, wildfires, earthquakes, floods, and other disasters around the world. It can sometimes feel like LCIF is something happening somewhere else. **This time, LCIF was helping right here in our own District.**

Our Foundation Makes Our Service Possible

LCIF allows Lions to accomplish things that would be difficult—or sometimes impossible—for an individual club or District to accomplish alone. When Lions from clubs around the world contribute to LCIF, those individual gifts become something much bigger. Together, we create a resource that enables Lions to respond when communities face extraordinary needs.

This year, our goal should be simple:

Can we achieve 100% club participation in District 11-E1?

Last year, 23 of our 35 clubs contributed. That's a great start, but imagine what it would say about our District if **all 35 clubs** made an LCIF contribution this year. The amount doesn't have to be enormous. What matters is participating and demonstrating that we believe in the work of our Foundation. And LCIF giving isn't limited to clubs. Individual Lions can make a difference, too. Last year, 13 Lions in our District personally supported LCIF.

This year, let's grow that number as well. Consider making LCIF part of your personal Lions giving. A gift of \$25, \$50, \$100, or whatever amount is meaningful and affordable to you joins the gifts of Lions around the world to create an incredible collective impact.

We Were There for Others. Others Were There for Us.

One of the most powerful things about being a Lion is knowing that we are part of something much larger than our individual clubs. When disaster strikes another community, Lions respond. When disaster strikes our community, **Lions respond here, too**. Our District's \$15,000 emergency grant is a powerful reminder that LCIF isn't simply a Foundation we donate to. **It is our Foundation.** It represents Lions helping Lions so that together we can help our communities.

As your club begins another year of service, please consider including an LCIF contribution in your club's plans. And as an individual Lion, consider making a personal contribution as well.

Let's set a new goal for District 11-E1:

35 clubs. 100% participation. More individual Lions giving. One Foundation supporting our service around the world—and right here at home.

Last year, our District gave **\$13,355** to LCIF.

When our communities needed help, **LCIF provided a \$15,000 emergency grant.** That's Lions helping Lions.

That's the power of our Foundation.

**Together, let's support LCIF so that LCIF can continue supporting
Lions wherever—and whenever—we are needed.**



District Governor Laura Johnson met 2026-2027 LCI President Mark S. Lyons at the 108th Convention in Hong Kong this summer.

Leadership Starts When Someone Steps Forward

PDG Jeff Schafer

Every Lion has leadership potential.

Some Lions discover it while chairing their first service project. Others find it when they become a club officer, mentor a new member, or agree to take on a responsibility they never imagined themselves doing. And sometimes leadership begins with a simple question:

“Why not me?”

This year, District 11-E1 is still looking for a Lion willing to step forward and serve as **First Vice District Governor.**

We have many Lions throughout our District who are eligible and capable of taking on this important leadership role. Yet, so far, no one has accepted the challenge.

Why?

Perhaps you have thought, “I’m not ready.” Maybe you believe someone else is more qualified. Perhaps you have never pictured yourself serving at the District level.

But almost every experienced Lion leader started in **exactly the same** place. They didn't begin with all the answers. They began by being willing to learn, serve, and grow.

What Is Your Next Step?

Leadership in Lions isn't only about becoming District Governor. Strong District leadership begins with strong leaders in our clubs, and we need to continually develop Lions who are prepared to become committee chairs, club officers, Zone Chairs, District leaders, and mentors for the Lions who will follow us.

One of the best opportunities to begin that journey is coming this November. The **2026 Lions Leadership Institute** will be held **November 6–8, 2026**, at the **MacMullan Training Center on Higgins Lake**. This year's Institute offers two different leadership tracks designed to meet Lions where they are in their leadership journey.

Emerging Lions Leadership Institute (ELLI) is designed for Lions who have never held a leadership position in their club. If you've wondered whether you could become a committee chair, club officer, or another type of leader, ELLI is an opportunity to develop the skills and confidence to take that first step.

Regional Lions Leadership Institute (RLLI) is designed for Lions who have leadership experience and may be thinking about taking the next step, including serving in leadership at the District level.

And District 11-E1 wants to help make that opportunity affordable. The cost of the Institute is **\$350 for a single room or \$300 for a double room**. Registration includes two nights of lodging, six meals, snacks, and course materials. **District 11-E1 will reimburse \$100 to District Lions who attend**. We also encourage clubs to consider investing in their future leaders by providing an additional \$100 toward the registration fee. With both the District and club contributing \$100, a Lion's personal cost could be reduced to just **\$100–\$150**. That isn't simply paying for someone to attend a training program. **It's an investment in the future of your club and our District.**

Could You Be the Leader We're Looking For?

Our District will continue to need Lions willing to step forward. Today, that need includes finding our next First Vice District Governor. Tomorrow, it will include club presidents, secretaries, committee chairs, Zone Chairs, District committee leaders, and many others. Someone will need to fill those roles.

Why not you? If you're an emerging leader, consider attending ELLI. If you've already served in club leadership and have wondered whether District leadership could be your next challenge, consider RLLI.

And if you're eligible to serve as First Vice District Governor—or you know a Lion who would make an outstanding District leader—now is the time to start that conversation.

Leadership doesn't begin when someone gives you a title. **Leadership begins when you decide to step forward.**

2026 Lions Leadership Institute

Date: November 6–8, 2026

Location: MacMullan Training Center, Higgins Lake

Registration: <https://lionsofmi.com/index.php/leadership-institute>

Cost: \$350 single occupancy / \$300 double occupancy

Includes two nights lodging, six meals, snacks, and course materials.

District 11-E1 Lions receive a \$100 reimbursement for attending. Clubs are encouraged to consider providing an additional \$100 sponsorship for their participating Lions.

*The future of District 11-E1 leadership is already among us.
We just need Lions willing to take the next step.*



District Float Repair Needed

The upholstery on our district float was badly damaged by mice while in storage and needs repair to restore it from its current condition to its prior glory. If you have a resource to assist with this, please contact DG Laura Johnson at (231) 250-0537 or email Lionlaura1952@gmail.com.





Lions of Michigan 2026 Lions Leadership Events

Two training opportunities, one location
Which training program is right for you?

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE: (ELLI)

Michigan Lions Leadership Institute is a highly regarded leadership skills development program for individuals who are ready to serve at a club, district or multiple district level

REGIONAL LIONS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE (RLLI)

Designed for individuals who are ready to grow, lead and serve at a higher level. Individuals who may be serving as Vice-Presidents or seeking to take on the role of Zone or Region Chair positions

EVENT INFORMATION

Dates: **November 6-8, 2026**

Location:

R.A. MacMullan Center
104 Conservation Drive
Roscommon, MI 48653

Questions? please reach out to
PID Jenny Ware
pdg10jen@hotmail.com
906-399-8214



LIONS OF MICHIGAN

Leadership Institute



Registration Fee

\$350	Single
\$300	Double

Registration Fee Includes:

- 2 - Nights Lodging
- 6 - Meals
- Snacks
- Course Materials

Registration/Check-In

- Friday, November 6 9:30 - 11:30 AM

CheckOut/Departure

- Sunday, November 8
- Check out Morning
- Departure 1:00 PM

Classes include:

- Team Building
- Managing Change
- Time Management
- Public Speaking
- Conflict Resolution
- Leadership Skills
- Effective Listening
- and Much More

Skills acquired can be used not only in Lions, but also at work and in everyday life.

Join us for Fun and Fellowship on Friday and Saturday evening. Make new friends, network and exchange ideas

Send completed form and payment to:

Lions Leadership Institute
5730 Executive Drive
Lansing, MI 48911

Online application and credit card payment available:
lionsofmi.com/index.php/leadership-institute

Applicant Information:

First Name: _____ Last Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____ Ema _____

Club Name _____ District _____

of Years in Lions _____ Roommate (if double occupancy) _____

Have you previously attended a Michigan Lions Leadership Institute: Yes _____ No _____

Which institute do you plan to attend: Leadership _____ Emerging Lions _____

Deadline to Register: October 1, 2026



ALL LIONS YOU'RE INVITED!



DISTRICT MEETING

Fall Conference • Parade of Checks • 2nd Cabinet Town Hall



ISABELLA COMMISSION ON AGING

2200 S. Lincoln Rd.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858



9:00 AM – 3:00 PM (Approx.)

Mark your
calendar and
bring a friend!



LEARN. CONNECT. GIVE. MAKE AN IMPACT!

TWO GREAT TRAINING SESSIONS!

SESSION 1

LIONS PORTAL

IPDG Jeff Schafer
will lead



SESSION 2

LIONS VIRTUAL AI

PDG Brent Beracy
will lead



LUNCH AVAILABLE!

\$15

(TENTATIVE COST)



PARADE OF CHECKS

Our Clubs Present Checks to Support
These Amazing Organizations:

- ✓ Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF)
- ✓ Lions of Michigan Service Foundation (LMSF)
- ✓ Oversight
- ✓ Leader Dogs for the Blind
- ✓ Lions of Michigan All State Band (LMASB)
- ✓ Bear Lake Camp
- ✓ Paws with a Cause
- ✓ Project Kidsight



2ND CABINET TOWN HALL MEETING

Your voice matters!
Let's collaborate,
share ideas, and
continue to grow
stronger together.



SERVICE PROJECT

WE'RE COLLECTING PILL BOTTLES!

DON'T
FORGET
YOUR
BOTTLES!



Please bring your
cleaned pill bottles
to the meeting!

COME FOR THE INFORMATION, STAY FOR THE FELLOWSHIP,
AND HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

TOGETHER,
WE SERVE!



We Serve

2nd Cabinet Town Hall FALL CONFERENCE & PARADE OF CHECKS

Learn ★ Connect ★ Give ★ Make an Impact



Same
Lions.
Bigger
Impact!

REGISTRATION FORM

ALL LIONS ARE INVITED!



**Saturday,
October 10**

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM



**Isabella Commission
on Aging**

2200 S. Lincoln Rd.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Join us for a full day
of learning, fellowship,
service, and Lions fun!

ATTENDEE INFORMATION

Name: _____

Lions Club: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____



LUNCH RESERVATION

\$15 PER PERSON
(TENTATIVE COST)

- ☐ **YES** — Save me a lunch!
- ☐ **NO** — I'll just bring my Lion-sized appetite
for service!

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: **District 11-E1.**

WHAT'S HAPPENING?



Fall Conference



Lions Portal Training

Led by IPDG Jeff Schafer



Lions Virtual AI Training

Led by PDG Brent Beracy



Parade of Checks

Clubs will present checks to
state and district organizations
we support.



2nd Cabinet Town Hall Meeting



Service Project – Pill Bottle Collection

Bring your empty,
preferably cleaned,
pill bottles!

Small
Bottles
Make a
Big Difference!



RSVP TO DG Laura Johnson



231-250-0537



lionlaura1953@gmail.com



1298 E Fifteen Mile Rd.
Bitely, MI 49309

Please submit your
registration in advance
so we can plan
appropriately
for lunch!
Thank you! ♥

Together, We Make a Difference! ♥

PEOPLE • SERVICE • COMMUNITIES • A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

WE SERVE

2027 District 11-E1 Convention Service Project

District Governor Laura had such a good time with her grandsons at the Bed Build at Sleep In Heavenly Peace during our last convention, she requested we do it again for the 2027 Convention. This will happen Sunday afternoon at 1pm in Lake City.

Sleep In Heavenly Peace, 1551 S. Morey Rd., Lake City Mi has a wood shop that will accommodate a maximum of 50 Lions and family who want to participate. All the wood will be cut ahead of time so we will do all the fabrication of bed sections and finish the wood, including staining so the beds will be ready for delivery when we are done.



**NO KID SLEEPS
ON THE FLOOR
IN OUR TOWN!**

We also need to pay for the materials to make the wood beds plus new mattresses for bedding. We are looking for 15 Lions or Lion Clubs in our District 11-E1 who will sponsor a bed for \$250. For Lions who would like to be involved in this project with a smaller donation, we also need blanket sponsors for \$24 each, for a total of 15 blankets.

Two Beds were sponsored at the announcement at our District Cabinet Meeting in August, one by convention chairperson Chuck and Barbara Dinsmore, and the other by Audible Hearing Centers, Peggy and Mark Frank. Thanks to these two bed sponsors, and now we are looking forward to announcing more names soon.

We will sign up for participation on a first-come basis. Please send your bed sponsorship or blanket sponsorship to Cabinet Treasurer Jamie Ricksgers and reservation for participation in either the bed build and blanket tying to Service Chair Steve Adsmund, 411 E. Maple St., Fremont MI, 49412. Checks made out to Lions District 11-E1. Email adsmond@comcast.net with Subject: LIONS BED BUILD



District 11-E1 Service Project

Thank You to our 17 Bed Sponsors!

Weidman Lions – 2 Beds
Remus Lions - 2 Beds
Evert Lions
Onkama Lions
Central Montcalm Lions
Mt. Pleasant Lions
White Cloud Lions
Midland Lions
Coleman Lions
Fremont Lions
Chuck & Barbara Dinsmore
DG Jeff & PDG Sheryl Schafer
Audible Hearing Center-Peggy & Mark Frank
Brenda & Steve Adsmund
PDG Bill Bradfield



**NO KID SLEEPS
ON THE FLOOR
IN OUR TOWN!**



District 11-E1 Service Project

Thank You to our Blanket Sponsors!

Ann and PDG Al Roeseler-4 blankets
DG Jeff and PDG Sheryl Schafer-2 blankets
Onkama Lions-2 blankets
Jaymie & Jake Ricksgers-2 blankets
Steve & Dana Rudoni – 1 blanket
Coleman Lions – 4 Quilts

Thank you to these generous clubs and members!



**NO KID SLEEPS
ON THE FLOOR
IN OUR TOWN!**

2026 Bear Lake Camp September News

Lion Steve Glazier District

11E1 Chairperson

bearlakecamp.org Camp information site



Bear Lake Camp is on a two-week staff recovery vacation after another hectic but fun 11-week Summer Camp ending. Here are some snippets about Bear Lake Camp from previous articles in case you missed reading them.

Spotlight on Lions Bear Lake Camp: A Year-Round Sanctuary of Empowerment and Community

Owned by all Lions Clubs in the State of Michigan as an ongoing state project, **Lions Bear Lake Camp** serves as a vital resource for youth development, specialized adaptive recreation, and community gatherings.

Location and Setting

The camp is nestled on **120 acres of scenic land in Lapeer, Michigan**, located roughly 20 miles west of Flint. Bordering pristine State Forest land, the property feels even more expansive than its acreage suggests. Visitors approach the camp via a leisurely, scenic drive through small towns and rolling Michigan farmland.

Facilities and Accommodations

Operating at full capacity, the camp can accommodate up to **160 campers and visitors**. Designed to blend modern comfort with the classic camp experience, the year-round facility consists of:

- **10 modern, two-story dorm-style cabins**, each built to house 16 individuals.
- A **Main Lodge** and **Main Dining Hall** positioned along the camp's private lake.
- An **Indoor Sports Building** to ensure activities continue rain or shine, alongside a dedicated **Nature Center**.
- A **four-apartment residential building** utilized for the nurse's office and summer staff lodging.
- A large pole building for equipment storage, and a private on-site home for Camp Director Traci and State Director/Head Cook Chrissy (which also provides overflow housing for summer counselors).

The Summer Camp Experience: Fostering Independence

The summer camp season runs from June through August, welcoming youth aged **6 to 16 years old**. Activities are diverse and highly adaptive, including trail hikes on **wheelchair-accessible paved trails**, archery, a 50-foot climbing tower, a zip line, bonfires, camp song sessions, crafts, fishing, and boating.

A core tenet of the camp is moving past over protectiveness to teach and emphasize true independence. Campers who arrive quiet or shy regularly finish the week enthusiastically participating. For example, blind or visually impaired campers learn to navigate dining routines—using guide ropes to independently gather their own plates, silverware, and food. With very few exceptions, all campers are responsible for making their own beds.

The camp's community impact is highly visible in its staffing model: **85% of the summer staff are returning campers themselves**, showcasing a deep, lifelong connection to the facility's mission*(Fun note from the grounds: While cell phone and email signals are notoriously limited, counselors note that tech-savvy campers quickly discover that standing on a specific anthill at the hill tent site yields one to two bars of service)*
***UPDATE: A property rental agreement was reached this spring for a cell tower lease at the camp. The lease is with an internet provider and includes free internet service for the camp.

Specialized Camps and Operational Models

Initiated by "Big Al" Kassin in 1982, the camp officially opened its doors in July 2000 with just 53 campers. It has since served **more than 10,000 campers and visitors**.

The historic heart of the camp—its **programming for visually impaired youth**—has been operating for 38 years. Over time, programs expanded to include summer camps for **deaf and hard-of-hearing children**, as well as a specialized Hard of Hearing and Visually Impaired weekend camp that includes family members so parents and siblings can share experiences and support networks. *(Note: Diabetes camp programming, while previously supported here, has been transitioned to another juvenile diabetes camp located about 20 minutes away).*

Attendance Growth & Financial Structuring

The camp is experiencing unprecedented growth. Attendance has surged from **785 kids three years ago** to **1,079 kids two years ago** with a record just over **1,500 kids** by the end of last summer. I have not received this year's 2026 attendance report from Camp Director Tracy yet.

To manage this massive volume, the camp relies on two distinct operational models:

1. **Lions-Sponsored Camps:** Only the Visually Impaired and Deaf/Hard of Hearing camps are directly funded by the Lions of Michigan. Campers pay a nominal fee of **just \$100**, and the Lions Clubs pick up the remaining balance per camper.
2. **Contracted Camps:** The majority of summer attendees—including groups focused on Autism, Foster Care, Grief/Loss, and Cancer—are not financially sponsored by the Lions. Instead, these weeks are contracted out to independent partner organizations at negotiated rates. Rates are flexible based on their specific utility needs: whether they bring their own counselors, medical staff, and coordinators; whether they require dining hall meals or use the hillside tent sites; and whether they utilize specialized elements like the lake lifeguards, rock wall, or zip line, which require Bear Lake's certified safety staff.

Funding and Year-Round Maintenance

Operating a premier, year-round facility requires significant capital. Lions Bear Lake Camp covers its costs through a strategic mix of revenue streams:

- **Grants & Donations:** The camp targets approximately **\$100,000 in grants** each year. . Funding is further sustained by individual and family donations, alongside the critical **"Parade of Checks"** donations from regional Lions Clubs.
- **Fundraisers:** Popular annual events include Golf Outings, a Wild Game Dinner, Ultimate Marathon, sporting clays event and the signature winter **Ice Plunge along with other events..**
- **Off-Season Rentals (September–May):** During the off-season, the facility generates revenue by renting its grounds to schools, churches, corporate groups, bands, and sports teams for retreats and practices. It also

hosts unique community classes like knitting groups, sailboat/kayak training, and specialized open-water and remote rescue training for local fire and police departments.

These funds directly support camp operations, staff safety certifications, and heavy machinery maintenance (including camp tractors, lawn equipment, and utility vehicles). Upcoming capital projects include vital building upkeep, such as **replacing aging roofing across the campus**.

Upcoming Fund-Raising Event:

- **Clay Shoot (September 26):** Whether you shoot, sponsor a station, donate raffle items, or simply invite community members to attend, every district can play a role in making this event a success.

2nd Annual
LIONS BEAR LAKE CAMP
BUSTING CLAYS
FOR BEAR LAKE FUNDRAISER

BREAKFAST & LUNCH PROVIDED

2026
SATURDAY SEPT 26
FENTON SPORTSMAN CLUB
1140 BUTCHER RD.
FENTON, MI

8:00AM REGISTRATION
9:00AM START

Test your skills in friendly competition while supporting our mission to provide transformative outdoor experiences for individuals of all abilities.

REGISTRATION FEE
\$75
PER PERSON
LOCK & LOAD FOR A DAY OF PRECISION & THRILLS!

Secure your spot by visiting:
BEARLAKECAMP.ORG
Limited slots available, so don't miss your chance to be part of this shooting extravaganza!

ONLY MEALS: \$20

Gun Raffle & Squares

For More Information: Kurt Stromlund
stromlund@comcast.net 810-923-4252

Special Invitation for all Lion Members

Michigan Pin Trading Club is holding their Official Pin Swap on September 17-19, 2026, at the White Lion's Den. The application is included in this September District Newsletter. Not sure if you want to be a Swapper? Want to learn a little about Pin Swappers? Well, here is your chance: **You are invited to attend our swap as a Newbee for only \$10.00.** You will sign in as a newbee, pick up the picture of the new Michigan Pin Traders pins, get a free bag of pins to use for trading and your lunch is included in your \$10.00 fee. Your goal is to trade with the pin swappers there for all 8 new Michigan Pins. If you get all eight pins, you'll be put into the drawing for 50% of all the \$10.00 collected! What a deal! Low cost, have fun and meet lots of wonderful people swapping pins!

Note: Newbee bags of free pins have been donated by Michigan Pin Traders Club President Jackie Glazier, Vice President Pam Schroeder and Janalee McClure, author of this opportunity for newbee swappers!



18th MICHIGAN PIN SWAP September 17,18,19, 2026

Lions Pin Trading Club of Michigan

White Cloud Lions Den, 294 N. Charles (M-37), White Cloud, Michigan 49349

Thursday, September 17th, Set up 9am to 12:00 noon. **Pin Trading** from 12 noon to 6 p.m. Lunch and Dinner included with our famous homemade pies and then **Pin Bingo tonight!**

Thursday and Friday: attendee silent auctions with 10% of sales going to the Lions Project.

Friday, September 18th, **Pin Trading** from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Lunch and Dinner included with business meeting & wine tasting in the evening before Dinner. Then **special games all evening!**

Saturday, September 19th, **8 a.m. Breakfast** with **awards** and **special breakfast pin**.

We will have **50 - 50** drawings, **silent** and **live auctions** plus surprise activities, plus a memorial service and our business meeting with election of officers on Friday. Hope you join us for a great time. ***Be sure to bring something for our live auction, anything will be OK!***

Pin Trader Rooms are available at:

Trailside Motel, 3993 S. Evergreen Dr. (M-37), White Cloud, MI 49349 **231-679-2188**

Please make check payable to: Lions Pin Traders Club of Michigan (LPTCMI). Mail check and form to: **Lion Peggy Frank, 21899 22 Mile Rd., Paris, MI 49338 phone: 616-217-6840**

Name _____ Lions Club _____

Guest _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Registration _____ x \$55.00 = _____ includes the 4 meals, table, & ***lighthouse & ship swap pins***

Your Guest _____ x \$30.00 = _____ includes the 4 meals and all planned activities

Saturday _____ x \$ 5.00 = _____ **8am Breakfast** with awards & special **breakfast pin**

Extra Table _____ x \$ 5.00 = _____

Total Amount Due \$ _____

Questions? Call Treasurer Peggy or Pam 231-510-0137 or Janalee 231-689-1321 home or Janalee cell 231-730-6122

Chapter Chronicles

Arcadia

For the fourth consecutive year, the Arcadia Lions Club, Arcadia Community Center and Trinity Lutheran Church joined together to host the annual Migrant Farmworkers Appreciation.

Working with liaisons from the Migrant Affairs office of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the local organizations identified six area migrant camps, representing approximately 150 workers, to receive donations of new household items, clothing and personal hygiene products.

The community responded generously. Donations included new physical items, monetary contributions used to purchase needed supplies, and more than 50 items made available through an Amazon Wish List. Volunteers then gathered at the Lions Clubhouse to sort and organize the donations, packing them into large bags and backpacks for delivery.

During the week of August 17, teams of Lions and local volunteers partnered with Migrant Affairs representatives to deliver the donations directly to the six camps. Volunteers also extended an invitation to the workers to attend an appreciation dinner held Sunday, August 23, at the Arcadia Community Center.

More than 110 guests attended the dinner, which provided an opportunity for migrant farm workers and community members to gather, share a meal and build connections. The dinner was catered by one of the migrant workers, who holds a catering license, and served by Lions.

Guests also had the opportunity to meet representatives from local agencies that provide services and resources to migrant workers and their families. The evening concluded with a door prize drawing and plenty of fellowship.



Lion Harvey and Lion Brian took our “We Serve” Motto to heart!



Lion Roger (l) led a team to make deliveries to the camps.



Guests enjoying a catering Latin meal.



There were plenty of Door Prizes to be won!

Hart

The Hart Lions were at the Oceana County Fair from August 24-26 hosting the Brat Booth. The Hart Lions booth is famous for the hot beef sandwiches and the brats they sell during the fair.

All our members participated in one way or another. We have 45 plus local volunteers that help too.



Lion Cathy and volunteer Tammy have helped for many years.



PDG Jim Patterson came and set up the Lions KidSight trailer on Saturday.
Lion Nancy and Lion Pat assisted.

Luther

- Our All You Can Eat Breakfasts continue: Every first Sunday of the Month, 8:30 am to 11:00 am. Cost is \$12 for adults. Children 6-12 years old \$6.00 . Under 6 years are FREE!
- Feed America is Thursday, September 10. Line up is around 2:30 pm + or -.
- Our Annual Lions Auction and Dinner is set for Saturday, Sept. 26. Dinner served at 6pm and Auction starts at 7:00pm
- Our Annual Craft Show and Bake Sale to be held Saturday, November 14th from 10 am to 4pm.

Midland

The annual chicken dinner was a success in spite of it being a rainy day. Most of the dinners were distributed at the off-site pick-up location (that's typical for us now) and many diners took advantage of the tent. Many thanks to Chairman Scott Berry and everyone who worked hard on our main fundraiser. Also, thanks to Midland Foundation for making sure our tent and everything surrounding that were in place; and of course, to Valley Foods for delivering our supplies and letting us use their refrigerated truck for the day. They are all great partners in our dinner! A special thank you goes out to all the Lions and their families who worked in advance of the dinner Thursday, Friday and Saturday to ensure its success!



On the evening of August 18th, Midland Lions, spouses, and friends gathered at Emerson Park's Pavilion C for an evening of great food, fellowship, and lively fun at our annual Lions Potluck and Auction.

Falling right between our busy Chicken BBQ and the White Cane Fundraiser the evening was a great opportunity to unwind and relax. The Auction items were highly sought after as well!



On August 18th, the Midland Lions Club participated in the MyPros Think Tank event, hosted by the Midland Business Alliance. As part of the Service Club Alliance, our club was proud to send two representatives—President Lynda Stark and Past President Scott Berry—to connect with local young professionals passionate about community service.

At the one-hour Think Tank gathering on August 18th, Lynda and Scott met directly with attendees to answer questions, share stories of our impact in the Great Lakes Bay Region, and discuss how prospective members can get involved.

The event provided a great platform to introduce the next generation of community leaders to the heart of Lionism and showcase how our club serves Midland. Thank you to the Midland Business Alliance for hosting such an engaging collaborative event!



Send news and photos from your club's activities to Editor Paula Rigling at district11E1Newsletter@gmail.com by the 27th of each month to be included in the next issue.