

District A4 - Club Officer Schools
Region 22 – Bryson Lions Club - 29 April 2008
Region 13 – Barrhaven Lions Club – 4 May 2008
Region 41 – Plantagenet Lions Club – 10 May 2008
Region 30 – Smiths Falls Lions Club – 8 June 2008

“WE SERVE”

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE SESSION

By: Lion Ray Lebeau
District A4 MERLO Team
Membership Chairperson

INTRODUCTIONS

Greetings followed by round-table introductions.

We will attempt to keep this session as inter-active as possible. As well as listening to me, I want to learn from your comments and feed-back.

For the past number of years, **new member recruitment and member retention have been the number one priority** of Lions Clubs International.

A strong, active membership is the foundation of our District A-4 Lions Clubs and their mission to serve Lions Clubs International, District A4, Multiple District A and their respective communities.

Therefore, **the focus on membership growth and member retention needs to be a continual 365-day-a-year activity**, ie. a program of Year-Round Growth.

(LCI Brochure: The Year-Round Growth Program YRG-15 8/05)

The President of Lions Clubs International has asked us to *Re-embrace* the **October Growth Award Program**. If you’ve been a Lion for a while, you probably remember the October Growth Award Program and its emphasis on membership recruiting in the month of October.

(LCI Pamphlet: Lions Clubs International’s *Re-Embrace* October Growth Award Program ME-47 08/07 EN)

Clubs that are growing have a strategy for membership development and their **Three-Person Membership Committees** prepare and follow a well planned and measurable action plan.

(LCI Brochure: **Three-Person Membership Committee ME29 8/02**)

Recommendation

Every Lion should make it a habit to regularly visit the **Lions Clubs International website at: www.lionsclubs.org**. Everything you need to know about Lions Clubs International and about being a Lion is posted on this excellent website.

Also, don't forget to check out our **District A4 Website at: www.A4lions.ca**. Our sincere thanks to the District A4 Web Master - Lion Dave Campbell, for this excellent website.

So, the question today is this: "How do we ATTRACT and KEEP New Members?"

CLUB MEETINGS

Does your club president follow a **prepared agenda** and allow for the secretary, treasurer and other committees to give their respective reports?

Do meetings start and end on time?

Are meetings kept interesting and lively?

At club meetings, is there an **atmosphere of friendship and fellowship** where everyone pulls together?

(LCI Booklet: **Focus on Meetings – Smart Strategies For Keeping Your Meetings on Track PRC-3 EN 7-01**)

NOTE: Briefly discuss the important role of the Club Tailtwister)

Recommended Reading:

In Stephen Covey's book 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People', HABIT 6 - is Synergize. This is the habit of creative cooperation or teamwork. Synergy results from valuing differences by bringing different perspectives together in the spirit of mutual respect. To put this in other words, the WHOLE is greater than the sum of its PARTS. Our Lions Code of Ethics teaches us to **be careful with our criticism and liberal with our praise; to build up and not destroy**. Now that is what I call mutual respect!

Is your **meeting place** adequate? Would you feel proud to bring a new member prospect to your current meeting place?

Are all club members given the opportunity to participate and communicate their suggestions and ideas?

Does the Club President seek to encourage each and every one to be involved in your club's business?

What are the areas where your club excels and what are the areas that need attention?
What could your Club be doing better?

(LCI Brochure: How are your Ratings? An Essential Evaluation Tool for Clubs. ME-15B 4/02)

Do you think there is anything that your District could be doing better?

MEMBERSHIP

Why did you become a Lion?

We have to restore the passion in being a Lion and get the Lions message out LOUD and CLEAR! Who would not want to be a part of this volunteer group of service-minded, caring people that regularly extend a helping hand to our youth, our seniors, and those who are less fortunate than ourselves.

When I attended the Lions Leadership Institute in Lisle, Illinois, Past International President Bill Biggs used to rally the Lions by loudly yelling:

“DON'T TELL ME YOU ARE A COMMITTED LION . . . SHOW ME!”

In previous presentations I have sometimes asked the audience this question: “If you were arrested and charged with being a Lion . . . would there be enough evidence to convict you?”

There are approximately 1.3 million Lions worldwide.

Within Canada there are 40,000 Lions. For this Lions Year 2007 / 2008, our International President, Mahendra Amarasuriya, has set a goal of 150 new members for Canada.

Does your Membership Chairperson have a **new member recruitment plan** in place and has he or she set a **membership goal** for Lions year 2007 / 2008?

Are you constantly being challenged to look for ways to build your membership? What are they?

How many Lions would you like to have in your club?

Has your Lions Club heard of **The 20/20 Membership Campaign Challenge**?

(LCI Pamphlet: DON'T LOSE SIGHT – The 20/20 Membership Campaign Challenge)

How many Lions do you need to successfully achieve your goals and objectives?

(LCI Booklet: Developing Action Plans for Recruiting New Members (A Workshop) BUILDING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER MK-1 1M 1/98)

(LCI Booklet: Membership Information and Tools at Your Fingertips ME-46 EN 1/08)

Is the workload in your club shared equally amongst all members?

Do you sometimes feel that you are being asked to do too much?

For larger service projects, has your club ever given consideration to **partnering** with another Lions Club or another service club in your community?

Have your Lions every sat down as a Club and prepared a **New Member Prospects List** (of spouses, co-workers, neighbors, friends, relatives, etc.)? This is an excellent way to get the ball rolling . . .

Do you ever review and discuss various **new member invitation strategies**, ie. 'Bring Your Buddy Nights', 'Bring Your Spouse Nights', 'Bring Your Co-Worker Nights', etc.

Are your Lions enthusiastic about new member recruitment, and have they been encouraged to actively recruit new men **and new women members**?

(LCI Brochure: I AM A LION ME-37 7/03)

When a Lion commits to asking someone to give consideration to joining the largest service club organization in the world, they should be prepared to answer some questions.

Your enthusiasm and the manner in which you answer his or her questions will determine their attitude towards joining your club. We have to be informed if we are going to ask someone else to become a part of this great organization.

I would recommend the following LCI Brochures to help you with this effort:

(LCI Brochures:

LIONS . . . People Just Like You! ME-26 10/98

LIONS make a difference ME-40 6/06

The LIONS – 'WE SERVE' ME-4)

The new member **Induction Ceremony** is the symbolic beginning to a member's service as a Lion. It is also a key element in the lifelong retention of a member. Are your Induction Ceremonies conducted in a dignified and memorable manner? Who is present at these ceremonies?

(LCI Brochure: New Member Induction Ceremonies ME-22 9/03)

Are new members provided with a **Lions Clubs International new member kit, Certificate of Membership and Lions lapel pin?**

(LCI New Member Kit NM-9)

The great philosopher, Norman Vincent Peale, stated that **“Your enthusiasm will be infectious, stimulating and attractive to others.** They will love you for it and they will follow you for it.

Always remember these ten powerful little words:

IF IT IS TO BE . . . IT IS UP TO ME!

When a Lion leaves your club, do you make an effort to find out why?

(LCI Brochure: Lions Clubs International *Exit Interview* ME-31 30M 1/98)

If too many are leaving for the very same reasons, then it may be time for your Board of Directors to re-consider exactly how you are doing business.

At the Officer School Membership Session that was held in Region 13, the question was asked, “What if good Lions are leaving because of an obnoxious and verbally abusive Lion in the Club?” I answered this question by saying that it was up to the Club President, the serving Club Board of Directors and any Past Presidents to address this matter (as soon as it happens) with the concerned Lion and to ask him or her to be more respectful and courteous of others.

One of our Lions Clubs Purposes is:

TO UNITE the clubs in the bonds of friendship, good fellowship and mutual understanding.

One of our Lions Code of Ethics is:

TO BE CAREFUL with my criticism and liberal with my praise; to build up and not destroy.

RETENTION

As I stated earlier, the recruitment of new men and women Lions is one of LCI's top priorities.

Another top priority of LCI is keeping those Lions that we do have. **Retention** is all about keeping quality members and making them feel useful!

(LCI Booklet: President's Retention Campaign PRC-1 7/03 EN)

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

In 1994, Patrick Cannon, the PR Department Head at LCI in an article in the LION magazine made the following statement: "In an increasingly competitive volunteer environment, only clubs that change (adapt) with the times will survive."

Has your club adopted a **Family Friendly Club** Concept? Family friendly clubs and a worldwide family dues structure, which became effective 1 January 2007, were designed to infuse clubs with new ideas and enthusiastic new members while meeting the lifestyle needs of today's families.

(LCI Brochure: Your Family can make a difference MPFM 8 2-07)

Our newest District A4 Lions Club in Cantley, Quebec, has adopted the Family Friendly Concept. Ask their Club President, Lion Lou Brunet, or any one of the Cantley Lions what a family-friendly club means to them.

We have been asked by the LCI International President and our A4 District Governor, Lion Jerome Andre, to put more emphasis on recruiting more women and more young Lions, ie. Lions under the age of forty.

The year 2007 marked the 20th Anniversary of women Lions.

As of 1 April 2008, women Lions represent approximately 18 percent of our worldwide 1.3 million membership. In North America, (Canada and the U.S.), the percentage of women Lions is approximately 22 percent. We are being asked by the IP to increase this to 25 – 30 percent.

Within our own District A4, only 18 percent of our Lions are female. WHY???

Of our 72 District A4 Lions Clubs, we still have a number of clubs, (as of April 2008 there are 18 clubs), that refuse to recruit female Lions. **Does your club allow for the recruitment of women Lions?**

John Maynard Keynes made the following statement, “The difficulty lies not so much in developing new ideas as escaping from the old ones, (ie. Resistance to change or R2C)

What new ideas, (besides the Family Friendly Clubs, more women Lions and younger Lions) would you suggest that would insure a bright future for Lions?

As for recruiting younger Lions, did you know that the average age of Lions worldwide is over fifty-five years. Why are we not attracting younger Lions???

Who will still be here in the next 10 years, 20 years, etc. (Hands up!)

Briefly discuss the ‘**Lioness Bridge Program**’. If your club currently has no women Lions, what would your club do if a Lioness moved into your community and submitted an application for membership in your Lions Club?

(LCI Brochure: The Lioness Bridge Program LP-1 7/04)

Does your Lions club have a **personalized Lions Club information brochure**?

(Show examples of these personalized Lions Club brochures)

MORE INFORMATION ON THE YEAR-ROUND GROWTH PROGRAM

The Year-Round Growth Program – Letter from the International President. Every Lion who sponsors a new member will receive a personalized letter from the international president within a month of the new member being reported to headquarters. Letters will be sent to club secretaries for distribution.

The Year-Round Growth Program – Membership Excellence Lapel Pin. Lions who sponsor three or more members during a given fiscal year will receive the Year-Round Growth Membership Excellence lapel pin. Pins will automatically be sent to club secretaries for distribution to qualifying members following the close of the fiscal year.

The Year-Round Growth Program – Membership Excellence Banner Patch. Clubs that bring in the required number of members in their category will receive a Year-Round Growth Membership Excellence banner patch acknowledging their efforts in strengthening their membership during a given fiscal year. Banner patches will automatically be sent to club secretaries following the close of the fiscal year. The club categories, and required number of new members for the category are as follows:

Clubs with 21 or fewer members; bring in 3 or more new members

Clubs with 22 – 40 members; bring in 5 or more new members

Clubs with 41 or more members; bring in 8 or more new members

ORIENTATION

Are new members being properly orientated? Does your club have regularly scheduled New Member Orientation Sessions? As a reminder to everyone, these sessions are for ALL Lions and not just the new members.

(LCI Booklet: Orientation Guide – An Essential Reference for Planning and Conducting New Member Orientations ME13 EN 5/02)

For your Lions Clubs Orientation Sessions, I would recommend that you go to memberops@lionsclubs.org or memberprog@lionsclubs.org to ask for a supply of the following LCI pamphlets:

- **LCI (ME-33 6/04)**
- **I am a Lion (ME-37 7/03)**
- **Lions Make a Difference (ME-40 6/06)**
- **Lions . . . People Just Like You (ME-26 10/98)**
- **The Lions – WE SERVE (ME-4)**
- **Lions Clubs – Ordinary People . . . Extraordinary Achievements (EX 511 EN 10/07)**

Once a new member is brought into the club, is he or she immediately assigned to a committee?

Are your Lions unique skills and talents being linked to a community project?

(LCI Booklet: Focus on Involvement - Smart Strategies for Keeping Members Involved in Your Club PRC-5 EN 7-01)

I would recommend that all of your Lions sit down and complete a **Community Needs Assessment**. This will help to determine if your club is relevant to the needs and lifestyle of your respective communities.

(LCI Pamphlet: Lions Clubs International *Lions Community Needs Assessment* MK9 60M 7/97)

Remember that new members bring fresh ideas and provide more hands to do the work required for work-intensive Lions projects.

Are all of your Lions encouraged to regularly attend club meetings? If your Lions have made a genuine commitment to volunteer their time, talents and financial support towards community projects, do you really feel that regular attendance at club meetings is all that important? Why?

Let's talk about the new member **Sponsor's Responsibility**: Are new member sponsors mentoring and taking care of their new Lions for their first year in the club?

(LCI Pamphlet: ‘Sponsorship is an Important Responsibility’ ME-21)

When the new member is introduced, is he or she invited to share information about their hobbies, family and background?

We all have to make a real effort to turn words into action. We can sit and talk all day long about declining membership and what we *should* be doing, but until we motivate ourselves into positive action, nothing is going to change.

CLUB ACTIVITIES

Does your club schedule a community service project at least every quarter?

Does your club schedule a fundraising project at least every quarter?

(District A4 – Fall Conference Effective Club Fundraising by PDG James Johnston)

Are you ever given the opportunity to suggest new community service projects and / or new fundraising ideas?

DG Jerome Andre’s slogan for this year was: “Building Our Future”. He encouraged all clubs to become more aware and informed about our youth programs and to get involved.

With more emphasis being placed on youth this Lions year, has your Lions Club been giving consideration to sponsoring:

a LEO Club;

participating in ‘Effective Speaking’;

participating in the ‘Peace Poster Contest’;

‘Youth Exchange’;

‘Lions Quest’; and

Getting involved in the ‘No Child Without’ (NCW) Project

Our youth may not represent 100 percent of today’s communities, but they do represent 100 percent of our future! The onus is on us to make an investment in their future!

Never forget the importance of visibility and a good **Public Relations** program. Does your club publicize its good works within your community? Did you know that LCI has a matching grant of up to \$1750.00 U.S. for Public Relations?

Does your club support District and International projects like Campaign SightFirst II?

Are you continuously being made aware of your club’s service goals?

Does your club publish a newsletter and distribute it to all members?

PERSONAL SATISFACTION

We know that Lions do make a difference! 1.3 million people can't be wrong!

Do you really enjoy being a Lion? Why?

Are you encouraged to set personal goals?

Are you challenged to try new things?

Are you being given the opportunity to gain leadership skills?

Do you enjoy club meetings?

Do you enjoy your club's fundraising activities?

Do you enjoy your club's community service projects?

Have you ever been given the responsibility to Chair / coordinate a club activity? Have you ever asked for this opportunity?

Are you kept informed and up-to-date about all aspects of your club?

Do you feel like an important part of your club?

Are you encouraged to participate in international, district, region, zone and club functions?

Are you encouraged to visit other Lions clubs?

Are awards and other means of recognition presented to deserving Lions in a meaningful manner?

MISCELLANEOUS

Change and you . . . Check your attitude. Do you have a B.A., a **Bad Attitude**?

The power of one Lion. Being a LION means making a commitment of your time, talents and finances.

Encourage Club renewal . . . a new challenge

Give consideration to the former members and spouse fee rebate program

Reward deserving Lions with Melvin Jones Fellows

Reward deserving Lions with Judge Brian Stevenson Fellows

United, we help one another.

Today, I hope that we have all benefited from the exchange of ideas and Best Practices.

ALWAYS let your Lion's PRIDE shine through!

**What Shakespeare said about the quality of mercy applies also to charity:
It is a blessing for both receiver and giver.**

QUESTIONS