

## What Does It Really Mean to be a Lion?

In case you missed it, that was the title of a short article in the June addition of the Lions Magazine, written by Lion Dane LaJoye, the Managing Editor. In the article, Lion Dane helped us look at what being a Lion is really all about. She tells the story of one person (not necessarily a Lion) “paying it forward” in helping a complete stranger with a real life problem. Lion Dane also makes mention of that “aha” moment, when a member of the Lions Club actually experiences the pleasure of being a Lion! Have you had one of those moments lately, or ever? I have had the pleasure of having several just in the last six months, let alone the last two and a half years, while walking the path of 2VDG, then 1VDG, and now this year as your District Governor. Stepping up to Leadership roles gives us many more opportunities to experience those “Aha” moments. For me, it is one of the most rewarding and satisfying advantages of being in a leadership role.

How many of our members are “Real Lions” and not “Just Members”? How many of us have had the pleasure of doing “Service Work” in the past six months and “touched the hearts and lives” of the members of our own communities? I think, based on what I have seen and heard around the District, the percentage of “Real Lions” is relatively small, compared to what I would hope it to be. Too many members of our clubs “Just Belong” and have no passion and commitment to doing our Service work. That is frustrating to me and many other members of Lions Clubs International across the District, across the Multiple District, and around the World of Lionism. The “Sixty Four Thousand Dollar Question”, as they once said on television, is what will it take to develop and encourage an increased “Attitude” of compassion, commitment, and dedication to our motto “We Serve”? Is there an answer or a solution? I wish I knew, because as a Lion and especially as your District Governor, this is one of the most frustrating aspects of the increased awareness in Lionism that has developed within me over the past several years! How do we encourage and develop an increased personal commitment to being a Lion and the understanding that once we join Lions Clubs International, we are a Lion twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. We are Lions in all of our daily activities and especially, when helping other family, friends, and community members.

One of the solutions to this problem of “Part Time Lions” is to become more involved in the “Service Work” that is being done within our own Clubs. With the advent of the Vision Screening cameras and the increased use of the Mobile Health Screening Unit, we have the opportunity to do more “Service Work” than we have ever done before and all we need to do is look to our local schools, day care facilities, and various other areas that can be assisted with the Vision Screening equipment. We have the opportunity to accomplish two goals of Lions: (1) Is to provide the opportunity for more Lions to have that “Aha” moment that will open your eyes and touch your heart as to the “Real Meaning of being a Lion”, (2) It will allow us Lions the opportunity to make the greatest impact on our Children and our Communities that has been made by Lions, ever! In the words of Lion Dane LaJoye, “beginning in 2014, we too will pay it forward and fulfill the oath that we all took when we joined our Lions Club”, we have the opportunity to “Serve”



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**2014-2015**

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I leave you with the following “Words of Wisdom” that a lot of you have heard me express at our Club visits this year:

**Think It Over**

**Are you an active member  
The kind that would be missed  
Or are you just content that  
Your name is on the list?**

**Do you attend the meetings  
And mingle with the flock  
Or do you stay away  
And criticize and knock?**

**Do you take an active part  
To help the work along  
Or are you satisfied to be  
The kind that “just belongs”?**

**Do you ever work on committees  
To see there is no trick  
Or leave the work to just a few  
And talk about the clique?**

**So come to meetings often  
And help with hand and heart  
Don’t “just be a member  
But take an active part!**

**Please just think this over  
You know right and wrong  
Are you an Active Member  
Or do you “just belong”?  
Author Unknown**

We have a lot of “Service Work” ahead of us in the rest of Lions Year 2014-2015. I hope we have more Lions that step up to help with that work and I hope we have many more Lions that are willing and able to step up to the challenges of Leadership in our Clubs and in our District. Happy New Year!

DG Lion Rick Pressly