

1/09/08

By Ann Elsbach

I was talking recently with a friend who belongs to the Trinity Lake Lions Club. Like most folks in the North 40, I was well aware that there is a local Lions Club. Although I thought I knew what the Lions did (besides have meetings), I was in for a big surprise. Here's what I discovered about the Lions International and our local Club:

The first gathering of the Trinity Lake Lions was a breakfast meeting held at the old Ycatapom restaurant in Trinity Center on May 27, 1975. The Trinity Lake Lions belong to the Lions Club International which is an international network of 1.4 million men and women in 201 countries and geographic areas who work together to answer the needs that challenge communities around the world. The Lions Club is the world's largest secular services organization with 44,500 clubs and 1.4 million members in 200 countries. The Club was founded in 1917 by Melvin Jones, a freemason. Jones' personal code "You can't get very far until you start doing something for somebody else," reminds Lions of the importance of community service."

Lions Club International purposes include the following:

- *To create* and foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world.
- *To promote* the principles of good government and good citizenship.
- *To take* an active interest in the civic, cultural, social and moral welfare of the community.
- *To unite* the clubs in the bonds of friendship, good fellowship and mutual understanding.
- *To provide* a forum for the open discussion of all matters of public interest; provided, however, that partisan politics and sectarian religion shall not be debated by club members.
- *To encourage* service-minded people to serve their community without personal financial reward, and to encourage efficiency and promote high ethical standards in commerce; industry; professions; public works; and private endeavors.

Lions Clubs plan and participate in a wide variety of service projects that meet the international goals of Lions Clubs International as well as the needs of local communities. Money is raised for international purposes coordinated by the Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), such as Sight First and Lions World Sight Day, which was launched in 1998 to draw world media attention to the plight of sight loss in the third world. The Lions' focus on work for the blind and visually impaired began when Helen Keller addressed the International Convention at on June 20, 1935 and charged Lions to be *Knights to the Blind*.

The Trinity Lake Lions have been "knights to the blind," as you will read. They have followed the International charter in providing generous and varied community service to the Trinity Lake area. There have been many services and funds provided for the children in the community. In 1976, bus stops were built to protect children in winter. That same year the first garage sale was held to start a scholarship fund. There was also an egg hunt on Easter Sunday, and support given for White Cane Day. Ten area people were helped with their eye care. These activities continue today.

Between 1977 and 1979, the Club donated medical supplies, including a CPR resuscitator, to the Trinity Center Fire Dept. In 1980, the Club was able to purchase one for the coffee Creek Department as well. Broom sales were held to supplement these life support funds. Four years later, the Trinity Center Department was also the recipient of a radio followed a year later by breathing apparatus. Donations were made to the ERT

(emergency response team) and to equip the health van. The Club helped the Coffee Creek Fire Department Rescue Team purchase an ambulance.

During the 1980s, the Lions helped local children in many ways. The Club sponsored and donated funds to the local Girl and Boy Scout troops as well as the Brownie and Cub Scout troops. A glaucoma clinic was held at Trinity Center School and later money was donated to the district for glaucoma testing equipment. It is Club policy to help any child who is in need of eye care or a hearing test. The school received a \$500 donation for a drug free program in 1983 and another donation was given to the Sheriff's Dept. for the purchase of Drug Abuse films. The Club has also contributed to Trinity Center and Coffee Creek schools through donations for their field trips and Halloween parties. Recently a Little League field and bleacher area was completed. Lion "Santa" and his "Little Elf" visit the schools each Christmas with gifts and treats for the children.

The Lions donate \$100 to each school and award three scholarships of \$1,000 to high school graduates yearly. Financial aid is also given to local seniors, fire victims and those in need. Seniors are also supplied with fire wood if they are unable to obtain it themselves.

The number one fund raiser has been the Bingo games held historically at the Wyntoon Resort, now the KOA. Games are run from June through Labor Day weekend. The Lions also hold a Labor Day barbeque every year at the Scott Museum site and across the street. This has become a large annual affair serving approximately 600 people from the local community, vacationers, and fly-in visitors.

Lions have donated to the Lyme disease network helping the community become more aware of the problem. Contributions are given to Camp McCumber, a summer camp for children with sight, diabetes, and hearing problems, and to the San Raphael seeing-eye dog foundation. Helen Keller would be proud of our Lions. The Club also supports district projects such as: City of Hope, Humanitarian Foundation, Hearing association, All-Star Football, School Speakers, Eye Foundation, and White Cane sales. How lucky we all are to have the Trinity Lake Lions who proudly serve their community.

Local doings: Don't forget the 60th anniversary party for Fred and Roberta Boring to be held Sat., Jan 12 at 1 pm (**Not 12**) at the Trinity Center Community Church. Dinner will be provided but guests can bring a small salad or dessert if they wish.

Secret Santa wishes to apologize for the oversight in last week's North Forty. We left off KOA off our thank you list. They were very helpful letting us put ornaments with Children's wishes on their Christmas tree and also had a donation can on their counter. Thank you KOA, and thanks to all the other Secret Santa helpers.

Thanks to John Wagner, president of the Trinity Lake Lions, who provided both historical and current information. Other sources included Wikipedia, and lionsclubs.org.