

# ***Lions Club Survival Manual***

## **Twenty Basic Things Clubs Must Do To Be Healthy and To Grow**

### **1. Set Club Goals Every Year**

At the beginning of each program year, the club president in consultation with the board of directors should set club goals for membership growth, vision services projects, community service projects, fundraising efforts and other unique club activities. These should then be discussed with and approved by the general membership with possible changes.

These goals should all be SMART – Simple, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timed. Goals give direction to club efforts and allow members to review and to celebrate their accomplishments at the end of the year.

The membership goal should, at a minimum, establish the number of new members to be inducted during the year. For example: Our club will induct eight new members during the 13/14 program year.

**Know where you are going!**

### **2. Have Meaningful and Visible Service Projects**

People are motivated to join a Lions Club because they want to serve their community. Therefore, a club must have meaningful service projects and should have at least one service project visible to the community to attract new members.

Our focus on vision service projects (vision screening, eyeglasses recycling, eyeglasses assistance and diabetes awareness/testing) allows clubs to offer meaningful services to the community.

Adoption projects are one way to have a visible project. Your club could adopt a school, park, playground, walking trail, roadway or community welcome sign. Then, on some regular basis, club members can spend a morning working on this project (planting a tree, planting flowers, picking up litter, repainting a sign, etc.).

Be sure to show who you are. Wear your vests, club shirts or club hats. Put up a large sign for the morning: This Park Adopted by the Jonesville Lions Club. Take a photo of members working, write a cutline (you don't have to write a story) and send this to local newspapers.

**People will notice!**

### **3. Put Up A Lions Club Sign**

Let community residents, people moving into your community and even people passing through your community know that you exist.

Purchase Lions Highway Signage products from the Lions Merchandise Shop. Products are on the inside back cover of the 2013 catalog. Place one or more signs on the main entrance road/roads to your community.

The sign will include the Lions emblem, your club name, where you meet and when you meet. You will need to contact your city/county road supervisor for permission and assistance with placement.

**Don't keep your club a secret!**

### **4. Show You Are Lions**

Traditionally, Lions wear their vests when participating in a meeting, service project, fundraising project or other activities. This shows people in the community who we are and what we do and should be done.

Some clubs/members, however, are no longer wearing vests. If a club decides not to wear vests, it still needs to have members show that they are Lions. Members should all agree to wear a dress shirt, t-shirt or at least a club hat with the Lions emblem purchased from the Lions Merchandise Shop. Or clubs can have these items made locally with their club name.

**Be proud to be a Lion!**

### **5. Tell the Community What You Do**

Whenever you have a guest speaker or conduct an awards ceremony, do a service project, work at a fundraiser or even sponsor a social event –Take A Photo.

Then write a brief cutline and send it to your local newspapers. Editors love to fill space with local people, local activities and local good news. They will use it.

Also, at the end of a program year, get the club information from your secretary. Then write a story about what your club has accomplished during the year – membership growth, service projects, fundraising efforts, social events and other activities. Indicate in the story that more could be accomplished with more members and provide a name and a phone number to call for membership information.

Finally, establish a club Web Page. Make it interesting – tell about Lions Clubs International and the great things that your club members do for the community and the fun that they have while serving. Include contact information.

**Get your message out there!**

## **6. Publish a Club Information Sheet/Brochure**

Publish a one-page sheet or folded brochure about your club. This should tell about Lions Club International and your club history, membership, service projects, fundraising projects, social activities, meeting time/location and contact information. LCI provides a customized tri-fold brochure with space for club information. Download MK20A from the LCI Web Site.

Copies should be available at all club meetings for guests. Copies should also be available at all service projects, fundraisers and social events. This sheet/brochure should be provided to anyone who indicates an interest in membership or just asks a question about your club. See Attachment.

**Advertise your club!**

## **7. Create a Club Invitation Card**

Produce a business-card sized invitation to your club meetings that members can distribute to potential members. It should clearly indicate on the front the name of your club, where you meet and when you meet. The back should be a personalized, signed invitation from a member for a potential member to attend your club meeting.

Jonesville Lions Club  
Meets Second and Fourth Monday Each Month  
Meal at 6 p.m. and Meeting at 7 p.m.  
Jonesville Community Center  
101 Main Street

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(guest name)

You are invited to attend our meeting  
for a great meal and an  
opportunity to learn about our club.

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(member/date)

**Invite potential members to your club meetings!**

## **8. Designate a Greeter at Your Meetings**

Always have a person (Lion Tamer, Membership Chair, Membership Committee Member, Immediate Past President, Vice-President or Somebody) designated at each meeting to serve as the official greeter for any guests.

When guest speakers, award recipients, or potential members come through the door; they should immediately be welcomed by the greeter, introduced to other club members, provided with a club information sheet/brochure and explained the meeting plans/protocol. When they leave, the greeter should thank them for coming, provide them with a membership application and encourage them to return as a member.

**Make guests feel welcomed and encouraged to return!**

## **9. Develop a Membership Plan**

Setting a goal to induct eight new members during the year does not automatically mean that this is going to happen. Your club must do something, must make people feel responsible for doing this something and must determine when this something will be done. In other words, you must have a plan.

The club president, membership chair and membership committee members should develop this plan. Are you going to challenge each member of your club to sponsor a new member, are you going to target a specific group, are you going to have a team competition, and are you going to have a membership event???? Details of these plans follow.

**Do what must be done to grow your membership!**

## **10. Implement a One for One Challenge**

Challenge every member of your club to make a very serious commitment to sponsor at least one or more new members during the next program year. This commitment could double the size of your club.

Members should be instructed to review all of those they know in the community – relatives, neighbors, friends, business associates, co-workers, fellow church members, their mail carrier, their electrician, their plumber, their auto mechanic, their barber/hairdresser, etc. Then they should create a list of four to six potential club members to “develop”.

Over the next several months they should make a point to share during general conversations with these potential members how much they love being a Lion – how meaningful it is to participate in service projects, how much fun they have working on fundraising projects, how much they enjoy the club social events and how they are learning about leadership.

Only after this development period, should they then invite potential members to attend a club meeting with them. They should select a meeting when there is going to be an interesting guest speaker, musician, storyteller or other type of special program. They should offer to pick up and drive the potential member to the meeting. The first step (showing up as a stranger and walking through the door) is the hardest for a new member.

At the conclusion of the meeting, they should ask the potential member if they had a good time. If the response is positive, they should encourage the potential member to become a member. They should make sure that the Greeter has provided the potential member with the club information sheet/brochure and a membership application. They should explain the benefits and requirements of club membership.

They should follow-up with a call just prior to the next meeting to the potential member to remind them about the meeting to see if they need a ride.

**Get every club member involved in membership development!**

### **11. Target Retirees in Your Community**

It has been estimated that 10,000 Americans (Baby Boomers) will be retiring every day for the next 15 years. This will be a great recruiting opportunity for every Lions Club. But we must let these retirees know about us.

Have a club member or members establish official or unofficial connections with colleges, schools, hospitals, nursing homes, post offices, utility departments, police departments and fire departments in your community. Find out who is retiring. These individuals have devoted their working life to serving others and now they may be interested in giving meaning to their retirement life by serving their community.

Send these individuals a letter of congratulations and invite them to attend a club meeting anytime in the future. Include a club information sheet/brochure and invitation card. Follow up several months later with a call.

**Help public service workers continue to serve!**

### **12. Motivate Members with a Club Competition**

Divide your club into two, three or four teams depending on your club size. Assign team captains. Have the teams compete to see which team can sponsor the most new members during a specific time period like three or four months.

At the conclusion of the competition, celebrate with a special evening of food and entertainment. The losing team or teams will be required to provide the location,

purchase the food, prepare the food, serve the food, supply the entertainment and clean up the site. The winning team and all new members will just enjoy the evening.

**Enjoy the evening!**

### **13. Sponsor a Friendship Appreciation Event**

Have every club member invite and bring at least one or two friends to this special evening meeting. Allow each member time to introduce and recognize their friends. Serve a great meal and have some live background music.

Then have one or more speakers talk briefly about Lions Clubs International, your club activities and the benefits and requirements of club membership. Close by indicating that the club needs more members to continue providing services to the community.

Give each guest a package with the club information sheet/brochure, invitation card, and a membership form. Encourage guests to consider membership. Make follow-up calls prior to the next meeting.

**Share Lionism with your friends!**

### **14. Plan for Diversity**

If your club is mostly or all male, if your club is mostly or all female, or if your club is mostly or all elderly and you want to induct female, male or young members respectively; then plan for this and work to invite and to bring more than just one new female, male or young potential member to your club.

If you bring just one, they will feel alone and probably will not return. But, if you bring several at the same time, they can bond with each other and will probably return.

**Have a strategy for diversifying your club!**

### **15. Discuss Membership at Each Meeting**

Membership should be an agenda discussion topic at each meeting. The Membership Chair should report on the status of club membership and the status of the club membership plan.

Also, every member should be given the opportunity to mention potential members they have in mind, are developing, have invited to attend a meeting or for whom they have completed a follow-up. This will help to establish the fact that membership is the responsibility of all club members.

**Make membership a club priority!**

## **16. Follow Up on All Potential Members**

If a person moves into your community and is a former Lion, get their name and phone number.

If a person inquires about Lions and is provided with a club information sheet/brochure, get their name and phone number.

If a person attends a club meeting as a guest and is provided with a club information sheet/brochure and LCI membership application, get their name and phone number.

These individuals should all receive a follow-up call to determine their interest in Lionism and to be invited to join your club. The Membership Chair or person making initial contact with these individuals should make these calls.

**Let potential members know they are important!**

## **17. Perform a Good Induction Ceremony and Orientation for New Members**

The Induction Ceremony should briefly cover the history, description, mission, emblem and motto of Lions Clubs International; our focus on vision services; and the obligations of membership. Present new members with their membership package, pin and vest or club garment. Recognize their sponsor. Make this a special ceremony.

New members should be given a personal Orientation. Don't wait four to six months for enough new members to have a class. Just have their sponsor take them out for coffee and cover the basics – (Lions Clubs International, Lions Clubs International Foundation, International Convention, USA/Canada Forum, State Council, State Convention, Tennessee Learning Retreat, District Cabinet, District Convention, District Information Forum, White Cane Days, Day with the Lions and Club Operations.)

**Be sure new members get started right!**

## **18. Keep New Members – Have Interesting Meetings**

The number one reason why Lions leave is long and boring meetings. Let your Board of Directors have long discussions about the issues at their meetings. The general membership meeting should be for reports, awards, guest speakers, musical programs, story tellers and always some fun. Have an agenda, stick to it and end on time.

**Don't have long and boring meetings!**

### **19. Keep New Members – Make Sure They Become Involved**

The number two reason why Lions leave is lack of participation in club projects. Make sure every new member understands the service projects, fundraising projects and even social events your club sponsors. Make sure they select at least several projects in which they want to participate. Make sure the chair of these projects has their name and gets them involved.

**Get new members involved in projects right away!**

### **20. Keep Members – Praise Members and Have Fun**

If your club does a service project, holds a fundraiser or sponsors a social event; then at the next meeting those providing service, raising money or organizing the event should be asked to stand and to be recognized by the other club members. Always praise any positive efforts of your members.

Have a member recognition program at your club level (member of the quarter, member of the year, member of the decade) and participate in the District level membership recognition and awards program. Nominate persons for appropriate recognition.

All work and no play makes membership dull. The club president, tail twister and others should strive to add some fun to all club activities. As Lions, we should make a commitment to serve our community and also to have some fun along the way.

**Lots of Praise and Fun are a characteristic of a healthy club!**

**When the going gets tough, the tough get going.  
It's time for Lions in East Tennessee to get going  
and to do what is necessary to grow our clubs.**