

October Newsletter
by 2nd Vice District Governor Bruce LaBelle

NO APPLAUSE NEEDED. I encourage every Lions Club of District 10 to donate to Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF). The donation does not have to be a large donation, every bit helps. Your donations allow LCIF to respond to disasters at the moment they happen, and ensure we can respond when called upon for future emergencies.

In the past few months, the United States and the Caribbean have been hit with two Hurricanes. Hurricane Harvey (Category 4) devastated the south central coast of Texas and areas of Louisiana. More recently, Hurricane Irma (Category 5) struck Florida and other areas of the Southeast United States, and laid waste to islands in the western Atlantic and Caribbean Sea.

LCIF has been working directly with Lions in the affected areas to ensure they have what they need to respond in these emergencies, and disaster relief funds have been made available for Lions in all of the affected areas. In turn, Lions are coordinating their efforts with local agencies to determine the greatest need and how Lions can address those needs. The emergency catastrophe grants in the amount of \$100,000 allowed the Lions in the area of impact to provide life-saving supplies of food, water, blankets and other necessities.

Millions of people around the world have benefited through more than 13,000 Foundation grants, which have totaled more than \$1 billion. That number continues to grow in part from gifts from foundations, corporations, governments and non-Lions. However, the vast majority of LCIF's funding comes through the generous donations from Lions clubs and individual members.

LIONESS CLUBS. In August, we had a Council of Governors meeting in Grand Rapids. At that time we received clarification concerning Lioness Clubs. We learned Lioness Clubs are a project of a club and when working with their sponsoring club, they fall under their insurance. Michigan has around 53 wonderful Lioness Clubs. After the meeting, Council Chair Peggy Allen, who chairs the Council of Governors' meeting, along with myself and other District Governors visited Opportunities Unlimited for the Blind. OUB hosted an Exchange Student Camp for the Lions Clubs in Michigan. We got a chance to meet the Italian exchange students, visit the camp and meet the staff.

LEADER DOG: On August 12th, Leader Dog for the Blind organized a training weekend for 1st VDG's and other Lions. This year our District Governor Jim Whalen, 1st VDG Mike Kobasic, Lion Chuck Kleikamp and his family and myself attended this event. This was an opportunity to learn about one of our District projects in detail and to talk with the volunteers who house the mother dogs and raise the pups for a few weeks, the puppy raisers, the trainers and those individuals receiving their dogs for the next adventure. It's also an opportunity to put a lot of faith in an almost trained dog while wearing a blindfold, as Spencer led me around the course, at what seemed a much too fast pace, I suddenly had a much better understanding of the challenges the blind experience every day.

Our speaker was Lion Mark, he told us that after seeing what Leader Dog was accomplishing he changed from a Lion to a Lion, sounds confusing...? What he meant is that he was a member of a Lions Club, but suddenly he realized what being a Lion was all about and he was hooked, so hooked in fact that he cycled from Portland Oregon to Portland Maine to raise money for Leader Dog. After that he

motorcycled to all 48 States to raise more money. The point he was making was that being an active lion is very different from simply being a member of a Lions Club.

I really urge each of you to visit our projects, they all are always happy to welcome Lions. Just call them or attend one of the many Open Houses that are held annually. Having firsthand experience of your District and State projects will change your life and your whole perspective of Lionism.

EverSight: EverSight formally Michigan Eye Bank hosted an open house and training for the 1st & 2nd Vice District Governor on September 29th in conjunction with their 60th Anniversary. This training was a real eye opening experience to actual see how the Eye bank functions within the various departments from the harvesting of the tissue to the recipient's receiving this precious gift. We were able to speak with each individual that worked in the various departments and learned what they did. One of the most interesting parts of the training\visit was learning how the tissue was harvested by the people who actually do it. There are eight people that take care of the entire Lower Peninsula and the Upper Peninsula with two based out of Marquette. We had the privilege to hear firsthand from the donor's families and the recipients. Their stories were very touching. About 400 people attended the 60th Anniversary celebration. During the 60th Anniversary a number of people were recognized and presented awards. EverSight announced a new program during the event, the "Sustainer for Sight" program in which you can donate money monthly to the program. Additional information will post on the District Website www.district10lions.org. Eversight is currently in five states, Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey and Ohio. If you are not currently on the Donor Registry please consider it. For additional information visit <http://eversightvision.org> or contact the District chairman Bill Munsell.

TAX RETURNS: Just a reminder to all Lions Clubs to get their Annual Tax form (Forms 990, 990-EZ and 990-N) submitted to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) by the 15th day of the 5th month after the end of the organization's annual accounting period. Most Lions Clubs end their year on June 30th so they must file by November 15th. This is an IRS requirement in order to retain your non-profit status.