

The **HEAD LION-ER**

NAPERVILLE NOON LIONS CLUB

SEPTEMBER 2025



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**Opportunity is missed by most people
because it is dressed in overalls and
looks like work.**

- Thomas A. Edison

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

We speak on average 16,000 words each day. This might be a fact to remember on an upcoming Tail Twister.

As president you get mail, emails, and even some calls throughout the week. Clearing my last emails prior to last week's meeting, I found a request that just came in from "Feed My Starving Children." Their new area director asked if he could come and speak to us. We are big supporters.

I printed the email and made a scribble on my meeting agenda notes.

I am concerned that I may inadvertently overlook a Lion, a recent activity, or allow something to be missed.

This time I remembered my scribble and brought up the email from Tony

Bianchi, the new guy with "Feed My Starving Children." His email was read by several Lions. Lion Paul Rewerts had not only read it, but had already spoken with him. Tony is set to speak in our first available slot, which is in 2026.

My mind just relaxed, and I was so grateful to be part of such a great club. So, thanks to Lion Paul on this issue and to Lions Cornish and Strugalla who are completing another successful Raffle.

Remember WE SERVE

Lion Glenn Behnke, President

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**A person who won't read has no
advantage over one who can't read.**

- Mark Twain

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Club News and Guest Speakers

LUPUS WALK

On August 9, members of our club volunteered at the Lupus Walk along the Naperville Riverwalk. We also were proud to present our donation of \$1,000 to the event. Our volunteers helped with registration and marshalling the walkers. In total, the event raised \$54,000.



Lions presenting check to Lupus Walk

107th LIONS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Lion Jim Woodring attended the International Convention in July. Below is his report on his experience.

The Lions International Convention was held this year in Orlando. We know it's the biggest service

organization, with operations in 200 countries, but it was impressive to see such a global gathering. Over 10,600 Lions were housed in 18 hotels and served by frequent shuttle buses on 5 routes. The buses carried banners such as "Powered by Lions kindness". Greetings and photos were exchanged, too many to list but including Mexico, India, Ireland, Nigeria, Nepal, China, Korea, and Australia. Most wore colorful and elaborate clothing representing their culture. U.S. attendees settled for just a shirt and pants with some Lions' gear, although Texans had their big white Stetson hats. Folks were quite happy to pose for anyone carrying a camera. It was refreshing to see politics set aside with the complete focus on Lionism.

The Convention is for the serious business of running a global organization with committee meetings and campaigning for offices in the on-site election. I ended up waving a placard for Tony Benbow, an Australian banker running for 3rd VP. His inspiring speech was followed by 10 minutes of hoopla, including a rousing playing of "The Man Down Under". Most all Past Presidents made an appearance and there was recognition of big donors, some of multiple millions. I believe over \$84 million in donations was raised during the year.

A goal of LCI is the push for 1.5 million Lions (Mission 1.5). International Directors were charged to focus on new clubs; it was

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announced that 400 new clubs were chartered during the year.

A special display reviewed the history of Helen Keller, including when she attended the 1925 Lions Convention in Cedar Point, Ohio and charged Lions to be “Knights of the Blind.”

The Melvin Jones Fellowship luncheon was attended by about 700. I sat with the delegation from St. Kitts (pop 45,000). They were eager to learn more about the Plusoptix vision screener.

Display booths demonstrated projects such as a low-cost concrete cook stove with vent stack, which is economical for fuel and avoids exposure to toxic gases and particulate in the smoke. Another project provides kits to assemble low-cost, wooden, hand-cranked carts for persons living with paralysis. I was photographed taking one for a spin. The Cookies for Kids’ Cancer project raises money to research better treatments for childhood cancers, aimed at improved effectiveness and reduced side effects. They have supported dozens of research projects at \$150,000 to \$200,000 each—with cookies!

A very popular booth used cameras and an AI program to turn images of attendees into “lions”. Repeat shots gave different results.

But a major focus was just fun and a chance to informally talk with those from other countries about their experiences. The plenary sessions

were attended by thousands, with very professional graphics, music, and videos. Of course, Mickey and Minnie Mouse appeared and there was a powerful interview with record-setting Olympian Michael Phelps on his struggles with depression and anxiety. He highly recommends the book “The Power of Now”.

The Parade of Nations was very well-attended and gave countries and states a chance to show their colors.

There was a seminar on a soon-to-be-released AI system just on Lions data at LCI headquarters, which should make searching for and organizing information much easier for users. It’s called Ellie.

A group of short videos from the conference can be accessed by entering #LionsCon25 into your browser. You may also watch the full plenary sessions at (Michael Phelps is in the second session):

[2025 Relive This Year’s Plenaries on Vimeo](#)

The event was a kaleidoscope of sights and interactions. Most of us don’t attend the world conventions, but if you get the chance to make a vacation of one, it will be a memorable experience. They give an idea of the effort and organization needed to coordinate Lions worldwide and generate 22,000 LCIF grants since 1968, totaling \$1.3 billion.

Future conferences are:

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2026: Hong Kong; 2027: Washington, D.C.; 2028: Singapore; 2029: Minneapolis; 2030: San Antonio; and 2031: Helsinki.

Lion Jim Woodring
Reporting from Orlando

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Leap, and the net will appear.

- John Burroughs

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Luncheon Speakers

LOAVES & FISHES

On August 5, Debbie White spoke to the club about Loaves & Fishes. Debbie is the Senior Director of Donor and Community Engagement. She thanked us for several years of support of her organization.

Loaves & Fishes began in 1984 as a food pantry at St. Raphael. In 2008, they opened their first shopping market for clients to visit and shop for their own items. In 2011, they opened their current market in Naperville and opened the Aurora distribution hub in 2021. They are the largest food pantry in Illinois, serving over 10,000 people per week.

The vision is to end hunger and transform lives. They provide healthy food and promote self-sufficiency. Their food comes from a combination of donations, food rescue, and purchasing. They need to purchase many highly perishable items like eggs and milk to ensure clients can receive fresh items.

In 2016, Loaves & Fishes aligned with Naperville Cares. Naperville Cares provides many different methods of support. These include emergency rental assistance, job coaches, and connections to other organizations.

Debbie was on hand to inform the club about their new initiative to buy a large composter. They collect 8 million pounds of food annually and unfortunately, some of it has to get thrown out – to the tune of 300,000 pounds. That food waste is currently going to landfills and costing them a significant amount of money for the haul away. They are in the process of raising money to buy an on-site composter, which will help them to save money on hauling and reduce landfill use and greenhouse gas emissions. This is a large upfront cost - \$290,000. They have already raised \$190,000.

CHICAGO CRUISERS

On August 12, Lion Darryl Kirkland, Lucky McKeown, and Caroline Foote spoke with our club about the Chicago Cruisers and their Ride for Kids.

The Chicago Cruisers are a motorcycle club made up of riders who enjoy riding and raising money for charities. They meet once per month and take rides throughout the area. Some rides last a few hours and some last a few days. Each ride has a ride captain who is responsible for the route, the accommodations, and leading the ride.

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The group is made up of about 30 members, but they allow guests to ride as well. There are all types of motorcycles and three-wheelers that are used and the only requirement is that it can maintain highway speeds.

The group supports many charities, but their primary focus is the Ride for Kids, which benefits the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation. They charge an entrance fee for the ride and sell extra items at the event to raise additional money.



Chicago Cruisers, Lucky, Caroline, and Lion Darryl with Lion Glenn

The Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation provides money for research and to individual families and hospitals. They also provide online support groups and resources for families dealing with pediatric brain tumors. Lucky advised us that with the current federal cuts to cancer research, the foundation relies on the Ride for Kids even more.

DIVEHEART

Jim Elliott returned to the club on August 19 to speak about his organization, Diveheart. Diveheart is an organization that provides scuba

diving services for people with disabilities. Individuals experience weightlessness and freedom while diving that they cannot experience in their everyday lives.

Jim provided the club with an update on the organization's project to build one of the deepest, if not the deepest, pools in the world. They have secured many patents and their design would be 130 feet deep with enough room for 300 people. Currently, the holdup for completion is funding. They are hopeful that the money can be raised so that it gets built in Illinois.

Jim showed the group a video of a Diveheart diver who had lost the ability to walk. Through the program, she felt empowered and like her old self.

The group takes trips to Cozumel for dive trips. These trips are an opportunity for participants to dive and for training for other instructors so that they can return to their home area and continue the program.

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**Between saying and doing, many a pair
of shoes is worn out.**

- Iris Murdoch

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BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

The Board of Directors met at Pomegranate on August 26, 2025. The following is a summary of the Board's acts and discussions. All members are welcome to attend the Board meetings. The next Board

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meeting will be held on September 23, 2025. A copy of the complete minutes can be obtained from the Lions Club Secretary.

Approved the Board meeting minutes of the Club and Foundation for its regular meeting on July 22, 2025.

Approved the Treasurer's Report for months ending July 31, 2025.

Approved the Social Services Report for August 2025.

Approved the following donations:

- Dare2Tri - \$2,000
- Kids Matter - \$1,000
- Diveheart - \$1,000
- Loaves & Fishes - \$2,500

Discussed Turkey Trot. Bibs and chip orders are in. Email blasts are going out soon. Boomer T's is charging half price for volunteer shirts, which had been free in the past. The Naperville Running Company sponsored the race for \$7,000.

Discussed Publicity. Former Lion Dianne Morr will continue to do publicity stories if sent to her. The club is looking for a replacement Publicity Chair.

Discussed Summer Raffle. We are ahead of last year, but have one less week of sales.

Discussed Comfort Toys. Working on ideas for students and mental health situations.

Discussed Membership. Former Lion Jen Brown is working in Naperville again and hopes to rejoin.

Discussed Candy Day. Scheduled for September 20-21 at Casey's and October 10-11 on the street. Sign up sheet is going around.

Approved \$2,000 sponsorship for the School District 203 Crosstown Classic Run for K-5th Grade.

Discussed Plant Sales. Lion Maxwell is working on the Christmas plant sales and orders will likely be due around November 3 with delivery between December 1-12.

Discussed a request for cataract surgery. More discussion is needed.

Discussed blessing/prayer at start of meetings. No changes were made for our club meetings.

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**Only the wisest and stupidest of men
never change.**

- Confucius

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GUESTS

There were no guests of the club in August.

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Good questions outrank easy answers.

- Paul Samuelson

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COMING EVENTS

September 2 – Annual Summer Raffle Drawing at our Lunch Meeting

September 6 – Styrofoam Recycling Event.

September 9 – Gabrielle Nicastrò will be our guest speaker from Easter Seals.

September 16 – Our guest speaker will be Noemi Velazquez from Hesed House.

September 20-21 – Candy Day Sales at Casey's. See Lion Dave Cleveland to sign up.

September 23 – Business Meeting.

September 30 – No Meeting. Fifth Tuesday.

October 11-12 – Candy Day Street Sales. See Lion Dave Cleveland to sign up.

October 18 – Crosstown Classic Cross Country Race. Children from 13 Naperville elementary schools will be participating and our club is sponsoring. For more information, see Lion Dave Cleveland.



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

The following members have a service anniversary in **September** and they are:

Lion Nick Stanitz (44)
Lion Ken Strugalla (17)
Lion Linda Strugalla (17)
Lion Darryl Kirkland (1)

The following members have a birthday in **September** and they are:

Lion Maria Wilson – September 1
Lion Mark Rafferty – September 8
Lion Jeff Naumann – September 20
Lion Kay Albach – September 21

Best wishes and congratulations to these members. If your information is missing or incorrect please contact **Lion Jane Bowers** to make additions or corrections.

DATES TO REMEMBER

September	2 - Luncheon meeting at Pomegranate
September	9 - Luncheon meeting at Pomegranate
September	16 - Luncheon meeting at Pomegranate
September	23 - Board of Directors meeting
September	23 - Luncheon meeting at Pomegranate
September	30 - No Meeting

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OFFICERS

President	– Lion Glenn Behnke
1 st VP	– Lion Dave Cleveland
2 nd VP	– Vacant
Secretary	– Lion Jane Bowers
Treasurer	– Lion Bill Bleecker
Director	– Lion Darryl Kirkland
Director	– Lion Ellen Wolff
Director	– Lion Steve Hertzberg
Director	– Lion Tom Garvey
Director	– Lion Kathy Lukavsky
Director	– Lion Donna Kearney
Immediate Past President	– Lion Bill Cornish

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Appointed Positions and Committee Chairs:

Dues/Membership – Lion Tom Garvey
Tail Twister – Rotating
Lion Tamer – Rotating
Chaplain – At Large
Social Services – Lions Donna Kearney &
Jim Woodring
Peace Poster Contest – Vacant
Program Director – Lion Paul Rewerts
Donations – Lion Linda Strugalla
Budget – Lion Darryl Kirkland
Diabetes Awareness – Vacant
Publicity – Lion Jim Ebers
Hospitality – Vacant
Pizza Wars – Lion Steve Hertzberg
Candy Day – Lion Dave Cleveland
Summer Raffle – Lion Bill Cornish
Turkey Trot – Lions Glenn Behnke and
Donna Kearney

Sight & Sound – Lion Jim Ebers
Counter Mints – Lion Steve Hertzberg
Investment Committee – Lions Bill Bleecker,
Steve Hertzberg and Al Knotek
Newsletter – Lion Chris Williams
Social Media – Lion Chris Williams
Adopt-a-Highway – Lion Glenn Behnke
Comfort Toys – Lion Ellen Wolff
Flower Sales – Lion Karen Maxwell
Lions Little Library Project – Lions Meghan
Williams and Paul Rewerts

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If you have newsworthy information, please
pass it on to editor/publisher *Lion Chris
Williams* at **708-297-1987** or email
chris@pnlawoffice.com This newsletter
will be published monthly after the Board
Meeting (4th Tuesday of the month). Cut off
date for news information will be the 25th of
the month.

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**Liberty – Integrity
Our Nation's Service**

**77 YEARS OF SERVICE
TO OUR COMMUNITY
NAPERVILLE**

**NAPERVILLE NOON LIONS CLUB
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**Meets First 4 Tuesdays – Noon (12:15)
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