

A big hello to the Lions of MD 20-Y1! April showers bring May flowers. In the world of Lions, May ushers in several big events. Among those events are Recycle For Sight; White Cane Week and Lions State Convention. In 1925, Helen Keller challenged all Lions to become Knights of the Blind. Keller's power packed speech gave the Lions of the past a purpose. Today as Lions, part of our core mission is to "serve" those who are visually handicapped. Many clubs recycle glasses in their communities. But do you know what happens after you send the collected glasses to a recycle center? The eyeglasses you collect undergo "processing". They are sorted, cleaned, graded with a lensometer to determine the prescription, categorized and then packed for distribution. Lions and/or mission teams deliver those processed glasses to people in need in developing countries. Imagine giving someone the gift of sight-the ability to see their surroundings in clear images. This gift is made possible by your efforts and the generosity of those who donate glasses to you. Without your dedication to serving others who are less fortunate, none of this would be possible. You may recycle all types of glasses; from the very strong to the very weak prescriptions and everything in between; glasses for adults and children; reading glasses and non-prescription sunglasses.

There are some simple guidelines to follow:

1. Always obtain permission before placing recycling boxes in a collection area.
2. Place collection boxes in public places.
3. Remove donated glasses on the 1st and 15th of the month.
4. Package and ship eyeglasses to an approved Lions recycling center.

For more information visit the LCI website.

Does your club participate in White Cane Week? This year May 11-17 is designated as White Cane Week. Some interesting facts:

1. In 1921 James Biggs, an English photographer, lost his sight as the result of an accident.
2. To make himself more visible, he painted his walking stick white.
3. In 1930, George A. Bonham, a Lion in the Peoria Lions Club in Illinois added a red band to the white cane.
4. The Peoria City Council adopted an ordinance giving those individuals with white canes the right-of-way when crossing streets.

From those humble beginnings, the white cane has given the blind a degree of independence and the white cane is recognized as a device for the blind in every state. During the week, help educate members of your community on the importance of observing the laws which protect the blind and visually impaired in your community.

Another important date is May 15th, the deadline to file the PU101-officer reporting form for your club. Also, the Leo Club Officer and Membership Report (Leo-72) is due.

This is a reminder to all delegates to the State Convention; your club must be in good standing to be eligible to vote.

I believe Helen Keller said it best, "Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much". The success of Lions in the past, now and in the future depends on our ability to work together.

Lion Linda and I look forward to seeing you in Buffalo!

Yours in Lionism,
DGE Kermit