

A Brief History of the Bradley Lions Club

In the early Forties a group of Bradley businessmen organized a club for social and business reasons. Several other local business clubs had been started near this time and nearly all failed. Some of the local people felt that a club would be more successful if affiliated with a national or international organization. At this time a pharmacist named Euclid "Mags" Magnon started working at the Johnson pharmacy. Mr. Magnon was a very active member of the Clifton Lions Club. He started promoting the idea that a Lions Club would be the ideal organization for Bradley because its goal was involvement in civic and community betterment. Through his efforts the Clifton Lions Club sponsored the Bradley Lions Club in 1946. The club got off to a good start, first serving mostly as a social club with only minor activity in community betterment. In a short time many of the members lost interest and dropped from the club. The Bradley Lions Club had several rough years. Often the attendance was fewer than ten members at a regular meeting.

The club finally got its second wind in the early sixties. The membership shot over the hundred mark and the meetings were generally well attended. The club became very interested in community betterment and sponsored many projects and activities for the local community.

One of our members, K. Walter Christensen now deceased (1971), was elected to the very honorable position of District Governor. Many of our other members reached high positions in Lionism.

The Bradley Lions Club has advanced Lionism in the past years by sponsoring the Manteno Lions Club in 1958, the Herscher Lions Club in 1965, the Limestone Lions Club in 1970, the Aroma Park Lions Club in 1971, and the Bourbonnais A.M. Lions Club in 1981.

Little did the original organizers dream that the club they started would still be going strong and successful 40 years later.

This quickly brings us to 1986. Our membership is hovering around 115 and attracting many young active hard working members. We are more active than ever before in community betterment, and Lionism in general. The Bradley Lions Club is eagerly looking forward to an even more satisfying future.

The last 15 years have seen Lionism reach a milestone; we are now over one million strong, serving in some 152 countries. Lions International Headquarters moved from Chicago to Oak Brook. Also, the Illinois Society for Prevention of Blindness was disbanded and the Illinois Lions Blind Foundation was established and located there.

We now raise monies to support local and Foundation blind projects through CANDY DAY. With the efforts of four Lions, Ron Hirt, Walt Christensen, Wm. Harris and Richard Learned, Candy Day was introduced and established in this area. The first Candy Day was held on the drive of Harris's service station, raising about ninety dollars. Now, on the second Friday of every October, almost every street corner is manned throughout the state and country with Lions and workers selling candy. The Bradley Lions have been involved with the eye donor program for twenty years. Through the effort of Lion Doc Jordan, many people throughout the community participate in the eye donor program with several Lions who have pledged their eyes. One Lion has personally taken three pairs of eyes to the Eye Bank; one donor was one of our own Lions members.

Approximately eight years ago the Lions of Illinois started a five-million-dollar project to establish an eye research center to be located at the Illinois University Circle Campus, Chicago, Illinois. Many doctors feel that through research, blindness will be almost non-existent. To date we have given fifteen thousand dollars towards this worthy project. Lions Ron Hirt, Carl Erickson and Steve LaGessee started what has become one of the most successful events ever—BRADLEY FUN DAYS! This project has made it possible for us to meet this goal and many more.

The Bradley Lions support the community in many ways. Students or persons who need eye glasses or hearing aids, who cannot afford them, receive our help. We raised money door-to-door to buy the first emergency ambulance and gave it to the fire department. We also support a little league baseball team; midget football organization; purchased a park and equipped it, then gave it to the Village of Bradley. We help purchase equipment for local police and fire departments, contribute to a holiday food basket project, sponsor a dinner for senior citizens, and purchase equipment for the handicapped.

A number of Lions donated their time to start the Handicapped Training Center which is going strong today.

Elmer Stump was elected District Governor of District 1-B for 1984-85. With Mr. Stump as Governor, Bernie Davis served as Cabinet District Secretary.

As you can see, we have come a long way! We have made many friends, not only locally but in the District, State and International Communities.

Yes, we truly live up to our motto "WE SERVE." (Cont.)

CHARTER MEMBERS

Vernon Bade	Ray Jeneary	Ray Magruder
Lawrence Benoche	Joe Jepson	Lloyd Marlaire
Frank O. Benoit	J. Earl Johnson	Leonard Martin
Joseph Biamont	Si Case	Theodore Martin
Clifford Coash, Jr.	George Kavaney	Dr. W. J. Mayo
Willard Cromwell	Virgil Kinnerman	Robert L. Proctor
Charles DeLong	Delbert Lambert	Ray Rasmussen
A. M. Finefield	Roland R. Legg	Ray N. Shapiro
Elton Guiss	A. F. Longton	Paul Toliuszis
Bruce Hubert	John T. Lustig	Jack Walters
Paul Hubert	J. H. A. Mc Farland	

Past Presidents

Earl Johnson	1946-47	Dr. Harold Jordan	1966-67
Ray Magruder	1947-48	Leonell Deno, Sr.	1967-68
Albert Finefield	1948-49	Basil Emling	1968-69
Dr. W. J. Mayo	1949-50	Ronald Hirt	1969-70
Vernon Bade	1950-51	Michael T. Savoie	1970-71
Theodore Martin	1951-52	William Harris	1971-72
K. Walter Christensen	1952-53	Gerald Trudeau	1972-73
George Kavaney	1953-54	Harry Skalsky	1973-74
Clarence Chambers	1954-55	Richard Learned	1974-75
Roman Smietanski	1955-56	Bernard Davis	1975-76
Clarence Stoltz	1956-57	Harry Martell	1976-77
Donald Boudreau	1957-58	Leo Whitten	1977-78
Hal McCleary	1958-59	Bernard Hassett	1978-79
Jay B. St. John	1959-60	Ora Burke	1979-80
Elmer J. Stump	1960-61	Wayne Weber	1980-81
Frank Jensen	1961-62	Wes Wiseman	1981-82
William Gould	1961-62	Kenneth Hayes	1982-83
Nick Colevris	1962-63	Vernon Bade	1983-84
Leonard Pelehowski	1963-64	Harry Gilbert	1984-86
Wendell Divit	1964-65	Roger Chaplinski	1986-87
Leonard Martin	1965-66		