

Highlights of the 2015-2016 International Theme: Dignity. Harmony. Humanity.

Every year, thousands of small cranes cross over the Himalayas at an altitude of 8000 meters for their seasonal migration. These demoiselle cranes are the smallest crane species, and their survival during this grueling migration depends upon the cooperation, teamwork, family structure, and harmony between every member of the flock.



In Japan, the crane has traditionally been a symbol of long life. In the Japanese art of *origami*, the crane is the most basic form that all children learn how to make. The custom of folding origami cranes is a meditative act that shows the heartfelt wishes of friends and family for the ill to become well again. The crane has also become known as a symbol of peace – not only in Japan, but around the world.

Peace, hope, determination, teamwork and uniting people through service are central elements of the 2015-2016 presidential theme – “**Dignity. Harmony. Humanity.**”

Dignity through Humanitarian Service

One of the basic tenets of human dignity and self-respect is the ability to provide for oneself and for one’s family, yet millions of people face the future with little hope of bettering their lives and caring for their children.

Making a difference through service to children will continue to be a main focus area this year by strengthening or expanding our existing programs with the *Children’s Dignity Initiative*. Under this initiative, Lions are encouraged to expand service to children by:

- Supporting and brightening the outlook of children in hospitals
- Responding to the needs of children in refugee camps
- Addressing the needs of hungry children
- Continuing and expanding the Reading Action Program

Those are only a few of the many services opportunities that address the needs of children. More information about the Children’s Dignity Initiative will be available on www.lionsclubs.org.

Serving others. Our legacy of service has been cultivated for almost 100 years. In order to reach our *Centennial Service Challenge* goal of serving 100 million people between now and June 30, 2018, we must triple our output of service in those areas and continue to encourage clubs to report their efforts via the Service Activity Report in MyLCI. In serving others, we are changing the world and sowing the seeds of harmony, understanding and peace.

Harmony through Cultural Exchange and Joint Global Projects

As an international association, we must understand and appreciate cultures unlike our own. District governors and council chairpersons are encouraged to connect with each other internationally to seek opportunities for joint international service projects. Clubs are also encouraged to participate in this

initiative through our Twinning program. Interacting with members from different cultures and with different points of view will broaden our outlook and provide inspiration for activities in our own communities.

More Members Equals More Service

Our members and our clubs are the heart of our organization, and to continue to serve, we must continue to grow our membership. Our growth depends on many factors, including a dynamic Global Membership Team, effective marketing strategies coupled with membership growth programs, dedicated leaders beginning at the club level, and outreach to women and family members.

Together, we have built our membership to nearly 1.4 million, **and must continue that growth** to stay relevant in our next century of service. Be open to new ideas, and work with the members of your Global Membership Team and Global Leadership Team to find new ways to promote growth, engage members through service, and develop leaders.

Club Presidents Hold the Keys to Our Success

Club presidents are critical to our success as an association. Each club president will be encouraged to transform the atmosphere of their clubs so that members feel confident and work in unison with each other and their communities.

“Ask One” Begins at Home

Share your commitment and enthusiasm for Lions with your family members. Families that serve together as Lions establish a family tradition of serving others. The *Ask One* membership campaign starts at home. If Lions *families* are on the front lines serving their communities, we will gain the recognition we deserve as the greatest service organization in the world.

LCIF – Restoring Dignity, Promoting Harmony, Serving Humanity

LCIF is at the heart of our worldwide service, using grants to create goodwill, eliminate human suffering, and restore hope and dignity for people around the world. Lions are asked to take every opportunity to support LCIF with your generous donations and Melvin Jones Fellowships.

District governors-elect, as we approach our centennial celebration and strive to serve the needs of others, let us always remember to respect the **dignity** of those we serve; that serving others is not only an act of kindness, but also a means to build understanding and **harmony**; and that serving **humanity** is not a duty, but our responsibility.