

## ASK 1!

Hello Fellow Lions!

So, the District Convention is behind us and the State Convention is the last weekend in this month. In the past, this has generally signified the end of the District Governor's year of office. That is not happening this Lions year! We have too much work to do to fulfill the goals we set for this Lion's Year. We are continuing to make plans to Charter 4 new lions clubs and to do what is necessary to strengthen several if not all of our clubs. The District Governor's year ends when the newly elected District Governor is installed at the Lions Clubs International Convention. That date is June 30<sup>th</sup> this year in Honolulu, Hawaii! So we have another four months of work to do to accomplish our goals. Are you willing to help fulfill those goals of "Strengthening the Pride"?

This past fall, when we visited the clubs in our District, we brought the challenge of International President Joe Preston to each club to simply "Ask One"! Since those visits were concluded and in this Lion's Year, 61 new Lions have been inducted into our District. Now I know that two of those new members were sponsored by your District Governor and I know that several other Lions have sponsored two or more new Lions, so nearly 1000 Lions in our District have not accepted President Preston's challenge so far this year! That means you still have four months to meet the challenge and sponsor a new Lion.

Most Lions seem to find it difficult to find new prospective members and even more find it difficult to ask those around them, or that they meet, to consider becoming a Lion. I don't think that is the problem. I think the whole problem is that most of us are just not in the habit of asking those we interact with or associate with, if they are interested in becoming a Lion! The reason I know that is that is the way I was until in Lions Year 2013-2014, Past International President Barry Palmer came up with the perspective of "Just Ask"! When I heard that, it made perfect sense. Then this past year, President Preston simplified the process by encouraging us to "Ask One"! I really thought that the two together were really going to bring about a major change in our Membership here in South Carolina, across the US, and in Canada. It is so simple! Yet, the opposite is true. Our membership numbers have continued to drop. The only thing that keeps the growth of Lionism steady, or with a slight increase, is the growth of Lions Clubs in Asia and Third World countries. **Please remember we are Lions 24/7, not just on meeting days and at special events!**

What is the solution? All we have to do is get in the HABIT of asking those that we sense would make good Lions and being ready to "Toot" our horn regarding the SERVICE WORK that we do in our communities, across the state, and around the world. You will really have to become familiar with what that is first though. I say that because too many Lions do not have a clue as to what we do outside of our own communities.

Next question: Why do we need New Lions? Simple answer is to fulfill our Motto, "We Serve"! Please do not ask someone to join your Lions Club just to have a larger number of members. If your club is not involved in service projects throughout the year and all you do is have meetings, eat and go home, please don't ask someone to join your Club. We are on the verge of providing more "SERVICE" to our local communities than Lions have ever provided before. With the acquisition of



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the Vision Screening Cameras across the state, we need new members to help with the increase in vision screenings with the cameras and the Health Screening Unit. We need new Lions with energy and enthusiasm for the service work we are providing. Two good examples of such Lions are Christi Coats and Joyce Rambo, the newest members of the Laurens Lions Club. When Lion Christi and Lion Joyce learned about the SPOT vision screening camera this past November (before they became members of the Laurens Lion Club), they both volunteered to help with the vision screenings and for two days in December, eight days in January, and four days in February, the two of them accompanied me to virtually every school in their school district and did what they could to set up future vision screenings. (We screened 3,851 students and staff, with 514 referrals with some type of vision problem.) Christi and Joyce are both retired from the school systems and know the importance of what vision screenings are having and will have on the children of OUR communities. I think there are many more Christi and Joyce's out there that would love to be a Lion and SERVE! All we Lions need to do is "Ask One"!

So what do you say: Do you have the courage to "Ask One" and get in the **HABIT of asking** anyone and everyone you know, to be a Lion? I do and will continue too! As a result of my **HABIT**, several New Lions have been recruited to many clubs across the state and even in Puerto Rico!

District Governor,  
Lion Rick