

Lions Club of Lago Vista



District 2-S3
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DECEMBER, 2025-JANUARY, 2026



A Thought To Ponder The Texas Hill County Holiday season is not known for roasting chestnuts on an open fire, or rosy cheeks glistening with melting snow flakes. or any of those "yankee" stereotypes. We put on our boots for scootin' not for wading through snow! But, we know how to make the season sizzle, not only with a smooth, slow burnin' fire under a brisket but with the generosity of the giving season; the slow burning desire to fill someone's stocking, to make someone's life slightly better, someone's smile, slightly broader, someone's hopes swell and grow because the season engendered care! Keep that sizzle going!





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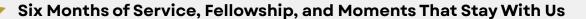
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A message from President Norma Owen



As we come to the close of the calendar year, it feels right to pause-not because the work slows down, but because some moments deserve to be held for just a bit longer.

The past six months have been full. Full of service. Full of meetings, events, phone calls, planning sessions, sign-ups, spreadsheets, grills, tables, bins, flyers, screenings, and conversations that started with "Can you help?" and ended with "Of course." Most of all, they have been full of people.

A Growing Lions Family

One of the most encouraging reflections of this season is our continued growth. We are now 103 members strong.

That number represents something special. It reflects a club that is active, visible, welcoming, and relevant. It reflects long-time Lions who keep showing up and new Lions who see something here worth joining. Growth doesn't happen by accident—it happens because people feel connected, valued, and useful. That is something every Lion should be proud of.

Showing Up, Again and Again

From late summer through fall, Lions were everywhere:

Community Awards & 45th Charter Anniversary, celebrating not just our history, but the partnerships that allow us to serve well.

KidSight screenings across multiple schools, quietly protecting the gift of sight for hundreds of children. **Road Warriors, Blood Drives, National Night Out, Trunk or Treat, Meet the Candidates Night**, and **Jonestown events**—each one another chance to be present.

Support for partner organizations like *Friends of the Library*, *Lifelong Friends*, *the Hope Center*, *and local arts and civic efforts*.

Mental Health awareness and training, reflecting a growing understanding that service includes listening, education, and compassion.

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Fundraisers, both large and small-BBQs, pancakes, silent auctions-each one made possible because Lions stepped up.

Some Lions led projects. Some filled shifts. Some cooked, carried, screened, parked, planned, proofread, donated, or simply showed up when needed. Every role mattered.

Hunger Work That Changed the Year

One of the most significant milestones this year was the \$25,000 grant awarded to the Children's Hunger Initiative by the Stephen & Mary Birch Foundation.

That grant represents more than funding. It represents trust. It represents careful planning, accountability, and a belief that this club understands both the need and the responsibility that comes with addressing childhood hunger in our community. The impact of that support will be felt well beyond this year.

Standing with Sandy Creek – Then and Now

Our support of Sandy Creek and surrounding area residents did not begin in December, nor did it end with one night at Walmart.

In the months following the devastating flooding, Lions were part of the North Shore United Response (NSUR) effort, showing up for clean-ups, coordinating with partner organizations, and helping residents navigate the long, exhausting process of recovery. This work was not always visible and rarely easy. It involved mud, debris, long conversations, and the willingness to stand with people who had quite literally lost everything.

Through continued collaboration and advocacy, we are now preparing for the next phase of that support. A \$65,000 grant is forthcoming to assist Sandy Creek families with building materials as they begin the difficult work of rebuilding their homes and lives. This is what long-term service looks like. It's not a single event or a photo opportunity. It's staying engaged after the headlines fade, listening to what people actually need, and helping them take the next step forward, no matter how long that road may be.

And Then... a Miracle

As the year drew to a close, something happened that reminds us why we do this. The New Braunfels Noon Lions Club reached out with an unexpected \$4,200 donation, designated specifically for Sandy Creek resident needs. The timing alone felt remarkable. Just days later, Tricia from the Sandy Creek Core of Volunteers contacted us with an urgent message: there were 18 families with 46 children who would otherwise go without Christmas toys.



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There was no long planning window. No weeks of preparation.

Instead, there was action.

Rebecca Stone, Susan Nilsson-Weiskott, Pat Evans, Patty Bosco, and I met Tricia and three parents at Walmart in Cedar Park. With those last-minute funds, carts were filled, lists were checked, and gifts were chosen-thoughtfully, intentionally, and with care. Because of Lions helping Lions help neighbors, 46 children will wake up to Christmas this year.

It doesn't get better than that.

What This Year Has Shown Us

At the end of every meeting, we say "We Serve." This year reminded us that those words are not ceremonial. They are lived-sometimes loudly, often quietly, and occasionally in moments that feel nothing short of sacred.

To our newest members: we're glad you're here.

To our longtime Lions: thank you for steady leadership and open arms.

To every Lion who gave time, energy, funds, or heart: you made a difference. As we move forward, may we carry this year with us—not as a checklist of accomplishments, but as a reminder of what happens when people who care decide to act together.

We serve better because we serve together.







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Stuffed with Giving!



Don and Connie Zschoche took a short break from handing out hot dogs to the crowd at National Night Out to also hand out some delightful stuffed animals to our local Police Department. Seen here is Interim Police Chief, Paul Chrane receiving the donation.







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Nov. 4 Meeting

The weather was perfect and spirits were high for the meeting held on election day. A new venue for us was the Grande Pavilion, which did NOT make us feel encarcerated, just playful as Pat Evans and Julie McCreary demonstrate!





Ike Coronis, of Domino's Pizza, made a surprise visit to deliver a whopping big check as a result of the very successful Spirit Day held on Oct. 29. Ike provided 15% of proceeds and YOU provided unparalleled support! Congratulations. We received OVER \$500 for the Hunger Initiative. Well done, Lions!







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TLF Recognition

The Lago Vista Lions Club is proud to have been awarded the Texas Lions Foundation (TLF) Patch for 2024–2025, recognizing our club's meaningful contributions and steadfast commitment to supporting the Foundation's mission. This honor reflects the dedication of our members, whose service and generosity help strengthen the programs TLF makes possible across Texas. We are grateful for the opportunity to support a foundation that directly empowers Lions to provide disaster relief, humanitarian aid, and community support throughout our district and beyond.





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July-September 2025 Rebecca Stone



Rebecca Stone's leadership consistently elevates our club's mission. Through her ability to secure critical funding, build strong partnerships, and guide large-scale initiatives, she embodies the very best of what Lions can achieve. Her dedication inspires us all and strengthens the service culture of the Lions Club of Lago Vista.

Kudos to nominees Dennis Kemp, Chelaine Marion and Don Loeschner who embody the spirit of selfless dedication to Lionism.







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Johnston, John Rupprecht, JoAnne Dewhurst Middle Row: Jess Hall, Gerry Nilsson-Weiskott, Pat O'Dea Rosen, Bonnie Rupprecht, Jacque DeSosa,

Front Row: Susan Nilsson-Weiskott, Pat Evens, Julie McCreary

Lion Jerry Nilsson-Weiskott hás done it again!

His latest adventure for LLL-Lions Laughing Loudly was a roaring success. Jerry earned a round of enthusiastic applause for skipping the bus ride altogether and instead leading a happy herd of more than 40 Laughing Lions straight to Cap City Comedy Club. The group enjoyed a fun-filled evening of dinner, laughter, and a fantastic performance by comedian Karen Morgan. Another unforgettable outingthanks, Jerry!





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Peace Poster

by Adam Benefield

I want to take a moment to thank everyone who helped make this year's 2025–2026 "Together As One" Peace Poster Competition such a wonderful success.



Left to right: Judges Pat O'dea Rosen, Karen VanNess, Adam Benefield, Norma Owen, Chelaine Marion and Jess Hall

Our club completed the judging of nearly 100 entries from Lago Vista Middle School students, and the level of creativity and heart these kids showed was truly inspiring. Thanks to the dedication and generosity of our members, the Middle School art class and the winning participants will share a \$500 donation from the Lago Vista Lions Club in recognition of their incredible efforts.

This year's theme, "Together As One," reminds us that when we unite behind a common cause, amazing things can happen, something our club demonstrates time and again through your service and support.

Special thanks to:

President Norma Owen, for your leadership and encouragement, Rebecca Stone for the Ribbons & Certificates and Clare Long, the Lago Vista Middle School art teacher, for her enthusiasm and dedication to guiding these students through the competition.

Together As One, Adam C. Benefield Lago Vista Lions Club Photos by Chelaine Marion

Please take a moment to admire the winning entries on the following pages!







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First Place-Christopher Henry \$150.00

Photo by Chelaine Marion

The first-place winner will advance to District Competition, representing Lago Vista and our club.

Thank you again, Lions, for making this possible. Your generosity, teamwork, and commitment to our youth and community continue to make a difference every day.







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Second Place-Bailey Montag \$75.00



Third Place-Brighton Stamos \$75.00





Honorable Mention







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Lago Vista Lions Answer the Call to Save Lives



The Lago Vista Lions Club proudly continues its commitment to helping save lives across Central Texas through its longstanding partnership with We Are Blood. Every other month, the Lions transform the CVS parking lot into a bustling hub of generosity as residents and club members alike roll up their sleeves to donate blood aboard the Bloodmobile.

These blood drives are far more than routine events—they are lifelines. Donated blood is essential for trauma victims, cancer patients, premature infants, surgical procedures, and individuals managing chronic illnesses. A single donation can help to save up to three lives, making each donor's contribution both powerful and profoundly personal.

Special recognition goes to Don Loeschner, whose dedication and organization ensure each blood drive runs smoothly, as well as to the many Lions who faithfully "lend an arm" time and again. Their leadership inspires community participation and reinforces the Lions' enduring mission: We Serve.

Through compassion, consistency, and community spirit, the Lago Vista Lions Club continues to make a life-saving difference—one donation at a time.





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Cold Right, Hot Dogs!

On the coldest night of our winter...at least so far...we came together as a club, a community and a FORCE! Santa didn't disappoint, he arrived in full regalia and brave, not-dressed-for-bitter-cold performers did their best to entertain the shivering crowds of hungry people. Did I say HUNGRY?

Once again, over 2000 hot dogs, with all the fixins' were grilled and distributed by the Lions Club of Lago Vista. The food was supplied by the City, but the man/woman power was PURE Lions.

Hear us roar!

<u>CLICK HERE</u> for a short video highlighting the teamwork involved!



The Lago Vista Lions Club would like to extend very thankful Kudos to Gregg Meredith and Chris Cisneros for their assistance at the Christmas Tree Lighting. We experienced some electrical issues with the city supplied electrical bank of receptacles, they kept tripping. After several attempts to correct the problem Gregg and Chris provided two small generators for us to use. Without this we would have had a hard time serving warm hotdogs to the masses. The hard working City Crews make it a pleasure to live in our little town.





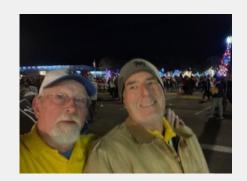


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Everyone pitched in and did their bit...staying warm and warm hearted.









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45 Years of Service Lions Club of Lago Vista Founded 1980 District 2-S3
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Every holiday is special and those who help bring it together and make it an event to remember are extra special in my book. But this year, our Holiday Party was above and beyond...the best decorations ever, a great menu, a fabulous new game in gift exchange that had us all laughing and rejoicing with the spirit of the season. Thank you, GOLDEN GIRLS, for making our Holiday Party one that was ROARING great. Click on the link to see a short video of the evening's joy!

CLICK HERE







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We gave everyone the opportunity to expess themselves at the party about what they appreciated from the year we are leaving behind and what they look forward to in the year to come...here are the uplifting messages from so many of you!

Looking Back

- As a new member...discovering how the magic of the Lions Club shows up in our village.Meeting so many people in Lago. Joined 1 year ago as a result of my daughter asking for suggestions on Facebook. Has been a good year of serving and getting to know my fellow Lions
- · Loosing my wife of 44 years to the Big C
- How lucky I was to get to move to Lago Vista
- Getting to help familes with food needs and getting to know them
- Our daughter's wedding in September was a highlight
- I am so thankful to all of the Lions who came forward & helped my family and me in our time of need
- So thankful for the Lions giving us hope and a way forward. My heart is so full because of everyone that became almost a second family to us
- The response to the July 4th flooding and seeing the Lions and wider community working together
- Our 44 year old daughter got married on September 6/25 and it all went well
- · Loved the awards event
- Our very successful Childrens Hunger Invitiative
- The key is service! Our new service initiative, including hunger and the ramp builds and O+M at the Austin School of the Blind are building membership-Bill Bush
- July flood and efforts regarding support for others that lost so much
- Our community came together in full Lion hearted way to help our neighbors
- Being welcomed as a new Lion and being able to help out at the Kerrville Camp and BBQ Team
- The relationships made and the accomplishments of the club
- Community collaboration during the flood and the follow-up opportunities-Rebecca
- Happy to be working in town and not commuting to the city.







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Looking Forward

- More of the same
- Meeting many more friends
- To getting to know all of you more and serve together
- Meeting a whole new world
- To enjoying more time with friends
- Peace and Goodwill
- We will see our daughters, sons-in-law and grandkids for Christmas
- Not being in need anymore
- To being in a position to give back to all those who helped us so much
- · Summer!
- Traveling, especially to Spansih speaking countries
- To doing great things for the communitySpending the CHI grant!
- To our upcoming Presidents working in and with the community to broaden our impact and increase our visibility-Bill Bush
- Continue to work for others in need
- The community spirit will continue in awe inspiring ways
- I am looking forward to another great year!
- The increasing membership with new blood
- Well, that's a surprise for now-we'll see come March-Rebecca
- Good helalth and positive outlook







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December Birthdays

Pat Evans

John J. Coleman

Ken Johnston

Bonnie Rupprecht

Jim Fry

December 4

December 14

December 17

December 23

January Birthdays

Ann Fry January 1 **Gage** Hunt **January 2** Jay Keany January 3 January 3 **Chelaine Marion Bob McCarty** January 3 **Chad Se**ger **January 19 Eric Povost** January 20 John Rupprecht January 30 January 30 **Paul Roberts**







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Hidden Treasures

At the end of every meeting, we affirm that what we have in common is that "We Serve!". All through the year we prove that is not simply a rote saying, because we actually fulfill that promise day in and day out, and how often we find the depth and treasure hidden in the fellow Lion we are working with.

This section is based on the information circulated by Lion Don Johndrow. We will highlight a couple of new members in each edition of the newsletter...and we predict that new members will keep being added so this is a feature that will have no end in sight!



Chad Cantwell and his wife Sarah Jane are returning to the club after a couple of years' absence. Chad is in sales, and his interests in service include Administration, the Blood Mobile, the Golf Tournament, Marketing/Social Media, Programs and Youth Contests.



Sarah Jane Cantwell – Came back along with her husband, Chad, and we're grateful to have them both. Sarah is interested in helping with our Healthcare Programs, the Hunger Initiative and LEO Mentoring. She is also keeping super busy as the President of the Lago Vista Women's Club!

Marie Diemer – Marie is a businesswoman who takes elections very seriously by working them and registering voters. She is experienced in sales and the associated cold calling. She has worked on fundraising and procuring grants. Of our Avenues of Service, she is interested the Blood Mobile, Food Related Fundraisers, LEO Mentoring, the Scholarship Committee, Silent Auctions and Youth Contests.







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February 7, 11 am - 3pm Lion's Chili Feast

(with or without beans or your choice of Frito Pie, Chili Dogs)

Donation Only! PLUS

Our Famous Silent Auction and Bake Sale!

Lago Vista High School Cafeteria Lohman Ford







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Please Note: Our calendar now includes some community events so we can plan more effectively.

Date Event

December 14-22 Hanukkah

December 25 Christmas Day
December 31 New Year's Eve

December 31 Chamber of Commerce New Year's Eve Party



January 10 Road Warriors

January 20 Board Meeting-4pm Sunshine Room-K-Oaks

January 20 Program Meeting

This edition of our newsletter has been proofread by Lions Norma Owen, Don Johndrow and Dale Mitchell

If you have a planned event please forward it to LionAnnaTX@gmail.com with <u>Calendar Item</u> in the subject line. We are working to avoid conflicts.



