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We Serve

The Challenge of Membership

I know we all agree that membership growth is critical to the future of our great association. It must be a vital concern to every Lion, a motivating force to inspire more quality individuals to wish to become members of Lions clubs.

Indeed, there is something special about being a Lion, something very special about wearing the lapel pin identifying one as belonging to the largest, most involved service club organization in the world. Participation in club activities gives one a warm feeling, a sense of accomplishment, in realizing that we are making a difference, a very positive one, in the lives of others. We feel good about it, happy to be able to enjoy the privilege of not only serving the needs of our own community, but because of our membership in an *international* service club organization, to answer human needs in lands spanning the globe.

It is a privilege to be a Lions club member, but a privilege we should share with others. There are so many qualified men and women in your community who would make fine Lions! So why aren't they members? Quite simply because they haven't been asked to join. This is the responsibility of each and every Lion throughout the world. Invite a friend, a neighbor, a business associate whom you believe would make a good Lion to become a member of your club. Share the privilege of membership. You'll take immense satisfaction in doing so.

Our growth, however, is far below that which is necessary to meet the expanding needs of humanity. And while it is true that some parts of the world are experiencing greater membership growth than others, there is no constitutional area where we couldn't do better. The desire to serve is there; people want to be part of an international movement that is having such a tremendous impact in meeting human needs. If Lions Clubs In-

ternational is to not only continue its tradition of service, but more importantly to quicken its pace, we must get our share of the potential volunteers.

Our two annual membership programs—the October Anniversary Membership Growth Program and the January-February-March District Membership Growth Program—are two excellent opportunities for Lions the world over to join in bringing in new members, and I ask that you make special efforts during these months to strengthen your clubs. Please remember, though, that membership growth is a year-round endeavor. Be on the alert always for individuals who possess the enthusiasm and the desire to become active, dedicated Lions.

One specific area of growth should come to the attention of every current member. This is the role of women in our association. Since the adoption of the amendment to our constitution permitting women to become Lions clubs members, more than 20,000 have chosen to do so. We welcome them into our association, but let us keep in mind that there are approximately 40,000 Lions clubs. Certainly, the potential for bringing women into our clubs is virtually unlimited. Thus far, they have clearly demonstrated their wish to serve as members of Lions clubs and we should thus recognize the wisdom of inviting more women into our clubs. They will be energetic, dedicated Lions and both your individual Lions club and our entire international association will be the better for their membership.

Accept the challenge of membership growth, thereby strengthening the basic structure of Lions Clubs International. Your commitment to this challenge will help ensure that our "We Serve" image will be extended ever further around the world.