

Chestertown Lions Club celebrates a banner year for its service to the community

[Chestertown MD Aug. 12] The Chestertown Lions Club celebrated a banner year for its service to the community this past 2021-2022 fiscal year, providing assistance to local programs and people of all ages. Recently Club members celebrated their year of service with a fellowship dinner cruise on the Chester River (see group photo).

Vision assistance is one of the key programs of the International Lions Clubs, and the Chestertown branch has been involved in that regard by subsidizing eyeglass purchases for those needing financial help, collecting and cleaning over 1,000 pairs of used eyeglasses for distribution in third world countries (U.S. Law does not allow distribution of used eyeglasses in the U.S.). They contributed an eye screening device to screen Kent County elementary school children for eyesight problems; and offered to assist in future screenings. Lions provided free rides to and from thirty eye doctors appointments.

The Club also gave financial contributions of \$2,000 to the Lions Leader Dog Programs, \$2,000 to vision research, and \$990 for a Bioptic Telescope needed for one severely vision-impaired school teacher in Kent County.

In addition to their vision programs, the Chestertown Lions organized the Chestertown Halloween Parade, lead the Peace Poster competition for Kent and Queen Annes County, manned the refreshments booth at the Homeports Health Fair, conducted two road clean-ups on a two-mile stretch of Rt 213, assisted with vehicle flow at Kent County Covid Vaccine Clinics, delivered Christmas Baskets to over 500 needy Kent County residents, and wrote Holiday notes with gift socks to Chestertown Nursing Home residents.

As well as volunteering, the club provided financial contributions for purchase of books for Garnett Elementary's One School-One Book Program, presented three- \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors in Kent and Queen Annes County, donated funds to the Chestertown Food Pantry, and an additional \$1,600 to the Chestertown Community Food Pantry Backpack Program. The Club also gave significant financial assistance to the Salvation Army, the Kent County 4H Club, Kent County youth soccer, \$4,000 to Home Ports which assists elder independence, and donated \$3,700 for the new Wilmer Park Playground (plus obtained a \$3,700 match from District 22B Charitable Foundation).

The Chestertown Lions Club regularly benefits a local little league baseball team through an annual stipend, which the team uses for jerseys, an end-of-season cookout and awards. Coach Zack emphasizes the life skills learned through the team, "It's not just about baseball, it's also mentoring and teaching them how to deal with failure as well as winning. They have to Work hard, get over missed plays, and they have to earn their trophies."

For the upcoming 2022/2023 year, the Chestertown Lions have already committed to \$4,000 in vocational school scholarships and two service projects-- Kent County Fair parking support performed this July, and volunteers to support the KART horse riding therapy program. They are always open to requests from the community.

All of the year's community services were made possible by their 55 local members providing a total of over 1,000 volunteer hours in services and organizing fundraising events to fund these services and programs from a raffle, two bike rides and two chicken BBQs. If you are interested in serving the community whilst enjoying wonderful fellowship within the Club, you can contact their membership chair **Lee Hunley at 410.810.4520.**