

[Chestertown MD Jan. 15 2023] As the New Year arrives, often with those resolutions to do better, have you considered a fun way to serve your community? The Lions Club of Chestertown is actively seeking new members and wants you to consider joining their service organization. In addition to the numerous community services they provide—offering ample choices for member participation—the sense of fun and camaraderie makes their service “work” an enjoyable experience while making many good friends along the way.

Lions Club members come from all walks of life, all demographic backgrounds-- different politics, religions, ages, financial strata, gender, race and ethnicities. Because the historic Club rules disallow discussions of religion or politics, members amiably strive together to give back to their community. They are unified by their shared missions and concern for their fellow community members, as well as those around the world.

“Serving as a Lion makes a positive difference in our community, an opportunity to work and relax with positive and wonderful people, and take pride in time well spent,” says current King Lion (President) Fred Sherriff.

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 disadvantaged countries (U.S. Law does not allow distribution of used eyeglasses in the U.S.). Last year, they contributed an eye-screening device to screen Kent County elementary school children for eyesight problems; and offered to assist in future screenings. Chestertown Lions also provided free rides to and from thirty eye doctor 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 Biopic Telescope needed for one severely vision-impaired schoolteacher in Kent County.

In addition to their vision programs, the Chestertown Lions organize, facilitate and MC the Chestertown Halloween Parade, sponsor the Peace Poster competition for Kent and Queen Annes County, man the refreshments booth at the Homeports Health Fair, conduct road clean-ups, deliver Christmas Baskets to over 500 needy Kent County residents, and write Holiday notes with gift socks to Chestertown Nursing Home residents. Throughout the pandemic, they assisted at Kent County Covid Vaccine Clinics.

As well as volunteering, the club provided financial contributions for books purchases at 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 Kent County 4H Club, district 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). In addition, Chestertown Lions Club regularly benefits a local little league baseball team through an annual stipend, which the team uses for jerseys and awards.

Funds for all these projects are raised through seasonal raffle ticket sales, barbecue food sales, bike rides, as well as generous donations from the business community. For the 2023 year, the Chestertown Lions have already committed to \$4,000 in vocational school scholarships and two service projects-- Kent County Fair parking support in July, and volunteers to support the KART horse riding therapy program. The Club is always open to assistance requests from the community.

For information on becoming a member, please contact Lee Hunley at 410-810-4520 or go to www.ChestertownLions.org.

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