



VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4

January, 2026

As 2026 ends, we want to take a moment to set the spotlight in Lions tireless efforts in Diabetes and Food Insecurity. We would like to thank our many community partners, such as yourself, for coming alongside us and making the impact we have so much more possible. Everyone plays a valuable role in Lionism.

In this Issue

Featured – How Vision Care Changes Lives

Because It Matters - 100+ Years of Vision

Partner Profile – VIPS, Modesto

Vision Action Plan: At-A-Glance

Collaboration Opportunities

Proud Moments

Did you Know???

Calendar | Save the Date

Find a Club |

Appendix: Socials Media Links for District 4-A1 Clubs

How Vision Care Changes Lives

A Shared Mission. A Lasting Impact

Vision is not just about sight –

It is about access, dignity and possibility

For more than a century, Lions International has understood something profound: Vision is not just about sight – it's about access, dignity, and possibility. As Lions Community Partners, you stand shoulder to shoulder with Lions in protecting one of humanity's most essential senses. Together, you help people not only see the world more clearly—but participate in it more fully.

Vision Is a Gateway to Independence

For those of us with reliable eyesight, vision often goes unnoticed. We read signs without thinking, recognize faces instantly, and navigate daily life with ease. But when vision is compromised, the ripple effects are immediate.

Suddenly, routine tasks require planning. Learning becomes harder. Employment opportunities narrow. Social confidence can erode. Vision loss doesn't simply blur images—it can quietly limit independence.

The Emotional Side of Vision Challenges

One of the least visible impacts of vision loss is emotional. Many individuals experience frustration, anxiety, or a sense of grief—not only for their sight, but for the ease and identity that once felt automatic.

Accessible Design Improves Usability for Everyone

Consider small print. Low contrast signage. Visual-only information. Even digital tools can exclude if accessibility is not considered from the start.

The more accessible something it is – the bigger the win for everyone, including older adults, people with temporary injuries, and those navigating busy or unfamiliar environments.

When vision care and accessibility improve, everyone benefits. Better lighting, clearer layouts, assistive technologies, and inclusive design strengthen entire communities – not just individuals.

Just because a man lacks the use of his eyes doesn't mean he lacks vision –
Stevie Wonder

Social withdrawal is common, not from disinterest, but from fatigue. The brain works harder when visual input is limited, leading to cognitive overload that others may misinterpret.

A World Designed for the Sighted

Vision challenges also reveal an important truth: much of the world is designed with sighted assumptions.

People with vision challenges adapt in remarkable ways. Many develop heightened listening skills, sharper memory, and stronger problem-solving abilities. Neuroscience confirms that the brain rewires itself in response to change.

But adaptation doesn't happen in isolation.

Without vision care, training, and community support, resilience can stall into limitation. Lions-led vision initiatives—and the partners who support them—provide the opportunity that makes adaptation sustainable.

A Shared Responsibility—and a Shared Win

When people see better, communities thrive. Healthcare costs decrease. Productivity rises. Families grow stronger. Futures expand.

That's why Lions Community Partners are so essential. Your collaboration doesn't just support programs—it sustains possibilities.

Vision care is not charity.
It is an investment in human potential.

Seeing Forward—Together

Protecting vision means protecting independence, confidence, and connection. It means ensuring no one is left behind due to preventable or treatable vision loss.

Together, Lions and their Community Partners continue a legacy that began over a century ago—and remains just as vital today. Because when we restore sight, **we restore possibility.**

It doesn't have to be

Up to 90% of vision loss worldwide to preventable or treatable with early detection and access to care.

Interventions including:

- eye exams
- glasses
- cataract surgery
- early disease detection

Public health experts consistently rank vision care among the **most cost-effective health interventions worldwide**

Vision correction can dramatically improve educational outcomes, workforce participation, and overall quality of life—often within days or weeks.

VISION CARE RESTORES MORE THAN CLARITY. IT RESTORES CHOICE.

Because It Matters – 100+ Years of Vision

A Century of Vision: 100+ Years of Lions Service Protecting Sight Worldwide

Since 1917, **Lions Clubs International** has made vision preservation its defining cause—because where there is sight, there is opportunity.

The Spark That Started It All

1925 | Helen Keller Challenges Lions to Become
“Knights of the Blind”

A Commitment That Shaped a Century of Action



Vision Is More Than Seeing—It's Living



90% of Vision Loss is Preventable or Treatable

Impacting Education, Employment & Independence



The Power of SightFirst

1990 SightFirst
Program Launches

From Local Service to
Global Impact

- Eye Care Centers
- Surgeries Provided
- Disease Prevention
- Training Specialists



Millions of Lives, One Clear Vision

100+ COUNTRIES SERVED

35 Million+ Treated

Cataracts

Diabetic Retinopathy

Trachoma

Childhood Blindness



Building on a Legacy



Vision Screenings



Glasses & Devices



Health System Support



Helping the Underserved



Because when you restore sight, you restore possibility.

Partner Profile: VIPS of Modesto



VIPS Visually Impaired Persons Support
1409 H Street
Modesto, CA 95354
(209) 846-9027

Website: <https://www.VIPSModesto.org>

VIPS Modesto was founded by Modesto 500 President and former District Governor Jim Syvertson in 2002. His son went blind and he soon realized that there were no local resources to train his son how to live independently with vision loss.

Currently located in an H Street office in downtown Modesto, VIPS teaches independent living skills to no- and low- vision residents of Stanislaus and Tuolumne counties. Skills include a wide range of activities, including cooking, cleaning, daily living skills, personal hygiene, etc. It can also include filling out a variety of documents, such as taking part in recreational activities, or connecting to any number of community resources.

VIPS also teaches how to take advantage of the latest in assistive technologies and navigating the internet. For instance, they help clients configure accessibility settings and smart apps on their smart phones that help them navigate the world. They also train clients on a variety of internet-related assistive technologies specially devised for low-and-no vision individuals.

When asked about VIPS's natural relationship to Lions, he said one of the things he was most pleasantly surprised at was how VIPS helped with recycling glasses for Lions. Clients bring in their glasses that are no longer appropriate, and donate them to others. It's a no-brainer. For more information, contact the Executive Director, Isaiah Siordia, at (209) 846-9027 or email him at isaiah@vipsmoesto.org

NOTE FROM EDITOR: If you'd like to be interviewed for future newsletters, please contact Diana Ringer at (209) 471-8059.

Vision Action Plan: At-A-Glance

HELP YOURSELF



Make regular eye exams non-negotiable



Give your eyes regular breaks (20-20-20 Rule)



Give your eyes good UV Protection and Good Working Light

HELP OTHERS



Talk to others about the importance of eye health



Create eye-friendly spaces with good lighting



Watch out for subtle changes in vision

HELP LIONS



Vision Screenings in Schools & Community



Collect Gently Used Eyeglasses



Vision Outreach Events



Collaboration *Opportunities*

The new year is a beautiful invitation for organizations to step out beyond their walls and shine generosity into the community around them. Connect with your local Lions Club and their trusted community partners they work with. Here are four meaningful ways to give back this year:

Follow Your Local Clubs on Social Media

Stay connected to your local Lions clubs through social media. Regularly check in to see what they are doing, and ways you can come alongside and support. It could be volunteering or donating funds: but it can be as simple as following their pages, liking, commenting on, and sharing their posts. We've provided a handy directory at the end of this newsletter for your use.

Share Upcoming Events / Volunteer Opps with Your Team Members

If you see something you think your friends or team members might be interested in attending or volunteering with Lions, pass it along to them. Include volunteer opportunities in your organizational newsletter and team meetings. Share a social media post with a family member, friend or team member. It can be simple but impactful. Be a good corporate citizen of your broader community.

Offer Time and Talent

Give staff a paid day or half-day to serve at a community nonprofit. Sorting donations, packing meals, reading to children, serving seniors — generosity is contagious, especially when it starts from within. Brainstorm ways to incorporate volunteering into employee incentive programs. Organizations can donate professional expertise — marketing, bookkeeping, tech support, HR consulting, graphic design — services that nonprofits often struggle to afford but deeply need to grow.

Match Employee Donations

Dollar-matching programs can double the impact, boost participation, and turn personal giving into a shared mission. A simple structure — donate \$1, the company matches \$1 — amplifies community love. Offer to be a community collection center for donated items from the community. Think creatively, positively, and out of the box.

Proud Moments

Lions are continuing to serve year-in and year-out!

Building A Zero-Hunger World: LCIF and World Food Program USA Partner to Provide School Meals



Food is as fundamental to students' success as reading and writing. Without it, concentration suffers and academic performance is stifled. Lions Clubs International Foundation ([LCIF](#)) and World Food Program USA started a \$4 million partnership to address food insecurity. The funds are distributed through the United Nations World Food Programme's (WFP) homegrown

school meals program in Ecuador, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Uganda. The program provides for approx. 880,000 children in 7,000 schools.

The program not only feeds children, but is an integral part of supporting local food production and fueling the local economy. "With local farmers producing the food for the school meals, WFP calculates that these "home-grown" school meal programs can create over 1400 jobs for every 100,000 children fed." ([Source](#))

SightFirst's Legacy Continues to Expand



Inspired by Helen Keller's appeal 100+ years ago, Lions have lived out their mandate to become "Knights of the Blind". They have done so by developing innovative projects, partnerships and programs, powered by LCIF. "Since 1990, [SightFirst](#) funds have allowed Lions, health care providers and partner organizations around the world to fight the major causes of preventable and reversible blindness, impacting more than 544

million people." ([Source](#)) Building on the success of SightFirst, LCIF introduced the Vision Grant to support Lions-led service initiatives. Building on the powerful legacy of SightFirst, LCIF's Vision Grant empowers Lions and community partners to work together to prevent blindness and support people who are blind or visually impaired, especially in underserved communities. By investing in essential infrastructure, equipment, and people, the Vision Grant helps create lasting solutions that restore sight, dignity, and hope.

It's not just our international efforts we are proud of the incredible things the clubs in our own District 4-A1 are doing.

Lions AllStar Football Celebrates Its 50th this Year



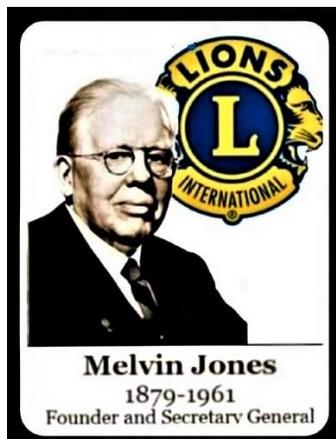
The AllStar Football Banquet will be taking place on **Saturday, April 18th**, at St. Joseph's Hall in Modesto. The game itself will take place on **Saturday, June 20th**, at the Tracy High School Wayne Schneider Stadium in Tracy. Coaches have already chosen the North and South teams. This year, we've added Girl's Flag Football to the event. Girls take the field at 5:00PM. Allstar Football begins at 7:15PM.

California Lions Camp Awards Grants to Community Non-Profits



This month, California Lions Camp Board awarded grants to I Can Swim for \$1500, Jessica's House for \$5,000, and \$5,000 to Candlelighters/Parker's Prom. 40 new swimmers will be joining the "I Can Swim" program in January. Jessica's House will be purchasing additional grief therapy session supplies. Parker's Prom will be preparing for this very special annual event.

Happy Birthday Melvin Jones



Lions Clubs International Foundation is recognizing Melvin Jones's 147th birthday in January 2026. Help honor our organization's founder with your first donation to our foundation — or add to your existing support. Encourage your fellow Lions and others to join you with their financial donations to LCIF. [DONATE NOW](#)

Did You Know???



Lions Clubs International President
Gudrun Yngvadottir
2018-2019

“

True leadership is
measured NOT by
position,

BUT by service.

”

Who is Gudrun Yngvadottir?

Gudrun Yngvadottir made history as the **first woman from Iceland** to serve as International President of Lions Clubs International, leading the organization during its milestone **centennial era**—a time that called for both honoring tradition and boldly reimagining the future of service.

A Lion since 1990, Gudrun is widely admired for her **servant-leadership style**, global perspective, and unwavering belief that leadership is rooted in compassion, inclusion, and action. During her presidency, she championed the idea that *true leadership is measured not by title, but by service*, a philosophy that resonated deeply with Lions across cultures and continents.

Her term emphasized **membership growth, leadership development, and meaningful service**, while reinforcing Lions' role as a modern, people-centered organization.



On the Calendar

Save the Date

UPCOMING PUBLIC EVENTS

JANUARY 2026

| | | | |
|-------|---|-----------|-------------------------|
| 01/01 | Pasadena Rose Parade Lions Float | Virtual | Watch |
| 01/09 | Burson Bingo Night | Burson | Details |
| 01/10 | Lions Club Carnitas Dinner (4PM) | Le Grand | Details |
| 01/17 | Denair Surf-N-Turf Dinner (Drive Thru) | Denair | Details |
| 01/31 | Al Pena Enchilada Dinner | Moke Hill | Details |
| 01/31 | Crab Feed (SOLD OUT – Waitlist Forming) | Linden | Details |

SAVE THE DATE

| | | | |
|-------|---|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 02/06 | Crab Feed (\$80/pp – Call for Info) | Turlock | 209.765.6830 |
| 02/07 | 51 st Annual Crab Feed | Mariposa | Details |
| 02/07 | Tasteful Meet & Greet | Pine Grove | Details |
| 02/07 | Don Osborne Memorial Run | Oakdale | Details |
| 02/07 | Green and Gold Gala | Jackson | Details |
| 02/13 | Burson Bingo Night (2 nd Tuesdays) | Burson | Details |
| 02/21 | 2 nd Amendment | Waterford | Details |
| 02/28 | Health & Vision Fair (9AM-4PM) It will include several FREE medical exams: vision screening and acuity, free eyeglasses, A1C diabetes, STD/HIV testing, blood pressure, blood oxygen, and body mass index. | Moke Hill | Moke Hill Elementary School |
| 03/13 | Burson Bingo Night (2 nd Tuesdays) | Burson | Details |
| 03/14 | Corn Beef & Cabbage Dinner | Escalon | Stay Tuned |
| 03/15 | Corn Beef & Cabbage Dinner | Tank Town | Details |
| 03/20 | Blood Drive | Sutter Creek | Stay Tuned |
| 05/02 | Gardening & Plant Fair | West Point | Details |
| 05/16 | Antique / Wooden Boat Show | Bass Lake | Details |
| 06/20 | Lions All-Star Football Game | Tracy | Stay Tuned |



Find A Club *Near You*

Lions International has a Find A Club search function. To access it, use the following link: [Find A Club](#).

Let's
CONNECT



District Website
<https://lions4-a1.org>



District Email Box
4a1lions@gmail.com



Lions Clubs Intl
<https://lionsclubs.org>



Lion Gail Cates, Editor
newsletter@lions4-1.org



@4a1lionsclub



@4a1lions



@4a1lions

Would Like to Know More About Our Clubs? Follow Them on Social Media

| | | |
|---|---|--------------------|
|  |  | Atwater - Winton |
|  | | Bass Lake |
|  |  | Ceres |
|  |  | Chowchilla Lioness |
|  | | Denair |
|  | | Dos Palos |
|  |  | Escalon |

| | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|
|  | | Hilmar-Irwin-Stevenson |
|  |  | Hughson |
|  | | Jackson |
|  | | Lathrop |
|  |  | Le Grand |
|  | | Linden |
|  | | Livingston |
|  |  | Lodi |
|  | | Lodi Mexican American |
|  |  | Madera Madera Evening |
|  | | Mariposa |
|  |  | Merced Breakfast |
| |  | Merced Healthy Leo Lion |
|  | | Modesto 500 |
|  | | Mokelumne Hill |
|  | | Oakdale |

| | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
|  | | Patterson |
|  |  | Ripon |
|  | | Sierra (Oakhurst Area) |
| |  | Sonora |
| |  | Stockton Delta Pacifica |
|  |  | Stockton Healthy Leo-Lion |
|  | | Stockton Host |
|  |  | Stockton San Joaquin |
|  |  | Sutter Creek |
|  | | Tracy Breakfast |
|  | | Tracy Tank Town |
|  | | Tri-Dams (Burson/Valley Springs Area) |
|  | | Turlock |
|  |  | Upcountry 88 (Pine Grove Area) |
|  | | West Point |