

# Lions International Youth Exchange Report

## Distinct 27-D1 Cabinet Meeting – January 22nd, 2023

Plans are underway for our Wisconsin Lions Youth and Exchange Program 2023. This summer we are back to a more typical camp. We've reserved CAMP VISTA from August 13<sup>th</sup> – August 20<sup>th</sup> which is much later than usual (our camp has typically been mid to late July) due to a new price structure at Camp Vista. The new later date is outside Camp Vistas "preferred" dates (preferential dates now cost significantly more). Our new camp date rental fees are similar to what we have paid in the past.

*We currently have 7 international youth applications from 4 countries and hope to receive ~40 for our summer program.*

### **Outgoing Wisconsin Youth**

We currently have TWO Wisconsin Youth from 27-D1 that have applied to participate in an International Youth Exchange Program.

**Livia Bakken** has applied to attend a Lions camp in France.

**Whisper Erickson** has applied to attend a Lions camp in Italy.

Both applicants have been awarded \$800 District Scholarships

### **Family Hosting**

We are currently seeking families interested in our visiting hosting youth. Our program uses an "open schedule" which is dictated by our host family's availability AND our youths preferred travel dates (listed within their applications). This year, hosting is from approximately late July/early August through August. Camp is August 13- August 20. **Follow the link below to view our current list of international applicants.**

<http://www.wisconsinlionsyouthexchange.org/YEPlacement.htm>

**Fundraising** We are currently soliciting funds from our district Lions and Lioness clubs to finance this year's program. Funds collected are used to pay our districts' share of the Youth Exchange camp-related fees; youth exchange scholarships, host family stipends & other direct expenses. All the funds collected are used only for direct youth exchange related costs. There are no indirect fees; all individuals involved in this program are volunteers including camp counselor & all support staff.

### **Finances/Budget**

Due to covid related camp cancelations we have a significant carryover from previous years.

2022-23 Donations - \$2080

**TOTAL ACCOUNT BALANCE – \$10126.59**

### **Projected Expenses: ~\$4300**

- Camp fee - \$1700 (paid by each of the 10 state Lions Districts) **NO INCREASE!**
- Scholarships - \$800 x 2 = \$1600 (the scholarship amount is determined by # of applications & available funds)
- Host family support \$1000 (activities and expenses incurred within our district including Canoe Trip, Madison Mallards Base Ball Game & other sponsored outings with host families and visiting youth.

There are currently 2 volunteers on the district 27-D1 youth exchange committee: Crystal Riniker – Hazel Green and **Ben August** – Token Creek.

**We are looking for another volunteer for our committee.** If you enjoy working with youth and would like to learn about this awesome program that satisfies the **third objective** of the Lions **"To create and foster a spirit of understanding among peoples of the world"** **Please contact us ASAP**

Lion Ben August - Youth Exchange Committee Chair  
[Ben.k.august@gmail.com](mailto:Ben.k.august@gmail.com)  
608-513-2468

Lion Crystal Riniker  
[cmriniker@gmail.com](mailto:cmriniker@gmail.com)  
608-732-8192

Attachments:

An excerpt from Livia Bakkens Scholarship application & an article recently published in the Wisconsin Lions Newspaper.

### **Your reason for wanting to participate in the Lions Youth Exchange Program?**

*I was born with the innate fear of long-distance travel; of leaving my corn-shielded Midwestern bubble and plunging myself into the unknown depths of a foreign country. Yet I feel drawn to it, like a moth to flame. Cultivated in a small Wisconsin town, my culture is based in casserole and icy roads. The Midwest is a stifling environment, fraught with snow, deer, and “you betchas,” seemingly inescapable at times; I need more. I burn with the desire for a fresh environment, one that I can fully immerse myself and experience without feeling the need to hold back. I am taken by a powerful need to step outside my protective Midwestern enclosure. Last summer when my family hosted a young man from France, I finally glimpsed at the freedom I yearn for. Lions Club provides me with the invaluable opportunity to embrace my freedom at last, and the program makes the possibility of fulfilling my dream become much more concrete. Everything I experienced hosting—from experiencing newfound cultural awareness and forming deep, lifelong friendships—was just a taste of the life-changing opportunities Lions Club offers. Lions Club can make the privilege of a lifetime achievable.*



## International Youth Camp & Exchange Program

Each summer youth from around the world travel to Wisconsin to participate in a Lions International Youth Camp & Exchange Program. Wisconsin is one of about 130 International Youth Exchange Camps worldwide, where the objective of these camps is "World Peace through Cultural Understanding". Typically, our Wisconsin program hosts 50-60 youth from about 20-25 different countries (including local youth representing our own country), where the youth spend 2-3 weeks with a host family and one week together for our international camp. This year was an exception due to COVID-19 related travel restrictions. This year our program only hosted 10 youth from 6 countries including; Argentina, France, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland & Spain. Because of our smaller size, we modified our typical program which includes a week-long stay at a private well-equipped camp and instead, took our youth primitive camping along a river near Crivitz Wisconsin. The wonderful weather and careful planning led to a fantastic experience where we shared our lives and cultures with each other for 4 beautiful days.



At our camp this year we had a busy schedule of team building and cultural exchange activities and as part of our Lions initiative, we also conducted a service project. Our service project involved making adult and youth sized tied fleece blankets to be donated to a facility of choice. We've maintained this service project over the past several years at our annual camps and each year the blankets are given to a Youth Exchange committee member from one of our 10 Lions Districts. This year the blankets were offered to District 27-D1 where Lion Ben August chose to donate the blankets to the Restoring Hope Transplant House.

Restoring Hope Transplant House is a non-profit home away from home for transplant families who are in search of a second chance at life through the miracle of transplantation at nearby UW Hospital and the William S. Middleton Memorial Veterans Hospital in Madison.

Located in The Good Neighbor City of Middleton, Restoring Hope has welcomed bone marrow, stem cell, organ transplant and LVAD families from all across Wisconsin, 44 different states and even as far away as Canada, England, Germany, Hong Kong, London, Nicaragua, Panama,

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## RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

THANKS TO THE MANY WISCONSIN LIONS FOR THE INSPIRATIONAL AND HEART-WARMING ACTS OF KINDNESS THAT YOU AND YOUR CLUBS ARE UNDERTAKING.

SEE PAGE 7

**Lions:**  
spreading kindness  
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**YOUTH CAMP & EXCHANGE PROGRAM**  
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Puerto Rico and Spain since opening our doors to transplant families in 2013.

It was such a pleasure and honor to hand the blankets to Cindy Herbst, the Executive Director of the Restoring Hope Transplant House, and to tell her about our Lions International Youth Camp and Exchange Program and the amazing international path that brought the blankets to her and the community she serves at the transplant house.



For more information about the Restoring Hope Transplant House ([restoringhope.org](http://restoringhope.org)) & The Wisconsin Lions International Youth Camp and Exchange Program ([wisconsinlionsyouthexchange.org](http://wisconsinlionsyouthexchange.org)) please visit their respective websites.

**What is Service?**

PDG DON DREW, MD-27 GST

The definition of service is the action of helping or doing work for someone. Every one of us performs service many times a day. Most of the time we do it without knowing that we do it. Opening a door for someone, helping someone get something off of the top shelf, giving someone a ride, etc.

What doesn't service mean to a Lions Club? There are different ways to look at how a Lions club performs service. One way is a hands-on activity such as having a food drive, picking up trash along a highway or park or building a wheelchair ramp for someone. A second way is through advocacy which is raising awareness of causes that are important to Lions such as diabetes awareness activities, promoting cancer screenings and vision screenings. Vision Screening is both a hands-on and advocacy type of service. Donations are other form of service that many clubs don't think of as service but when a club makes a donation to an individual or organization it allows them to help someone which is the definition of service. Fund raising is important to service. It allows a club to make donations or get materials for a hands-on service project.

When we report our service in MyLion it is important to remember that hands-on, advocacy, donations, fund raising are all things that should be reported. Service support activities such as regular lions' meetings, project planning meetings, working an event and all of the administrative time related to an event should be reported. Another aspect of reporting is probably the most important, how many people did a project affect. How many people were served during the process of an activity?

In conclusion, almost every aspect of a Lions club is considered some type of service and should be reported.



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