



# The Grand Island Lion

June 2025

[www.gilions.com](http://www.gilions.com)



Wednesday June 11th

GI Lions 69th annual Installation Dinner

Buffalo Launch Club

6PM-9PM

Wednesday July 17th

Kids Special Picnic

BLC



Lions,

This is my final message of the year.

As I look back on the club's incredible efforts and achievements this year, I want to express my deepest gratitude to each one of you. Your hard work, dedication, and unwavering commitment have been the driving force behind our club's success and impact on the community. This club has a rich history of community service. Your efforts have added to that extensive history.

Thank you to Lions Dick Crawford and Anne Fahning who continue to lead our most important events. Thank you to Lion Donna Lavalley for bringing a new fundraiser to us with the Clothing Donation Shed. So far this year, we have over \$1,100. Thank you to Lion Jenny Begin for researching a new service project, covering Veterinary expenses for people who can't afford them. I'm sure we will get that started next year.

A special thank you goes to those who are stepping into new roles next year—your willingness to serve and lead ensures that the Grand Island Lions will continue to thrive and make a difference. Your enthusiasm and readiness to take on these responsibilities inspire us all, and I have no doubt that you will guide the club toward even greater accomplishments.

Let us carry forward the spirit of service and collaboration into the year ahead. Together, we can continue to support each other, strengthen our bonds, and bring lasting change to the lives of those we serve. Thank you for being the heart and soul of the Grand Island Lions. Here's to another year of making a difference—one step, one project, one smile at a time.

Lion President Jim



**We are Saddened by the loss of former Lion Jerry Dubiel.**

Jerry and his Wife, Diane were active and valuable members of our Club for many years. A Memorial Mass is being planned at 11:30 on June 7th at St Stephans Church.





Lions Clubs International  
**FOUNDATION**

District	Total Grants Received Since 1974	Most Recent Grant	Need Addressed	Total Donations since 1974
20-N	\$ 432,889	02/24/2025	Knee Scooters	\$1,026,983
20-E1	\$ 538,159	08/14/2016	Equip Miracle League Field of Rochester	\$ 934,377
20-E2	\$ 251,961	09/30/2024	Vision Screener	\$ 665,787
20-W	\$ 186,153	11/08/2019	Flood Relief	\$ 484,253
20-Y1*	\$ 226,961	10/09/2015	Renovate Vera House	\$ 547,795
20-Y2*	\$ 413,941	01/13/2018	Equip CABVI Vision Center	\$ 575,992
20-Y*	\$ 140,410	01/16/2023	Renovate Vera House	\$ 138,491
20-O	\$ 357,275	11/18/2024	Fire Relief	\$ 670,783
20-R1	\$ 938,643	05/13/2023	Pool Renovation for VCB Center on Blindness	\$ 690,025
20-R2** Includes Bermuda 1974-1983	\$ 897,055	05/08/2024	Vision Screener	\$ 2,233,300
20-K1	\$ 409,915	03/25/2025	Magnolia Tree Earth Center	\$ 1,666,031
20-K2** Includes Bermuda 1983-2024	\$ 386,038	08/11/2023	Equipment for Eye Bank	\$ 1,244,407
20-S	\$ 544,637	01/29/2025	Equipment for L I Veterans Home	\$ 1,196,843
MD20	\$ 2,246,108	05/12/2023	Lions Camp Badger	\$ 91,678
*Redistricted	\$ 7,970,145			

WHERE THERE'S A NEED  
**THERE'S A LION**

SINCE 1917



## A World in Need

CAMPAIGN 100  
100% EMPOWERING SERVICE

**2.2 billion** people have vision impairment or blindness<sup>1</sup>

**one-third** of young teens worldwide have recently experienced bullying<sup>2</sup>

**1 in 11** people has diabetes<sup>3</sup>

**300,000** children aged 0-19 are diagnosed with cancer each year<sup>4</sup>

**~1 in 9** people lacks enough food to be healthy and active<sup>5</sup>

Each day, **300** people die from measles<sup>6</sup>

Weather-related disasters have grown more than **50%** over the last 40 years<sup>7</sup>

By 2025, **half** the world's population will live in water-stressed areas<sup>8</sup>

### LIONS AND LCIF RESPOND

Devastation is experienced everywhere, every day. While many say the world's needs are too great to overcome, more than 7.4 million Lions globally say, "We Serve." With funding and expertise from Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), Lions offer hope and positively impact lives.

Today, Lions and LCIF — the only foundation empowering Lions service on a global scale — continue a shared commitment to our world in need through Campaign 100: LCIF Empowering Service. LCIF's comprehensive capital campaign ensures Lions can increase their service impact, fight diabetes, and make meaningful progress in expanded global cause areas.



Lions Clubs International  
**FOUNDATION**



For more information, to make a contribution  
or to leave a legacy, visit [www.lcif.org](http://www.lcif.org)



Human trafficking was the focus of an April 23rd joint meeting of service organizations, which included the Lions Club, Zonta, and the Rotary Club. Two speakers, Julie Palmer of PATH and Bella LaFreniere of Project Mona's House presented. The speakers presented a great deal of information. Part one of this article focuses on some of the statistics that Julie presented, as well as information about the prevalence of human trafficking. Part two, in the next issue, will focus on services provided by PATH and Project Mona's House, as well as information about governmental agencies equipped to help victims of human trafficking. The meeting was held at the Buffalo Launch Club.

Story and photo by Alice Gerard

Human trafficking is a very lucrative industry, generating about \$150 billion per year. "That is the equivalent of Google, Starbucks, Nike, and the NFL and their annual revenues combined," Julie said.

Two types of human trafficking are forced labor and commercial sex.

Anyone can be a victim of human trafficking, Julie explained. She said, "It really is affecting every population group. We are not seeing a specific targeted group of people that are predominant in our tracking. It really is impacting all different demographics. I was surprised by how many zip codes we are serving in Western New York. It is spreading pretty fast."

Julie identified some risk factors as:

- history (physical, emotional, sexual)
- Substance abuse
- Emotional duress
- Involvement in the criminal justice system
- Lack of support
- LGBTQ population

Julie also identified several protective factors, which include:

- Supportive relationships
- Self-image (positive)
- Building trust
- healthy relationships ("A large percentage of the people we serve have not been demonstrated healthy relationships.")
- Understanding consent and refusal
- Understanding privacy settings on social media
- People's basic needs being met is really important. "People end up in these situations if they have no food or nowhere to sleep, they don't feel safe (these are vulnerabilities)"

There is an overlap of substance use and exploitation, Julie said. There are concerns about vaping and marijuana usage, lacing and fentanyl. In one school, Julie said, vapes were confiscated and tested. The SRO (school resource officer) said 90% of vapes were laced with fentanyl.

Both youths and adults are victims of human trafficking.

"Anyone under 18 does not need to prove force, fraud, or coercion for it to be a crime," Julie explained.

Julie also talked about online safety.

"Social media is a widespread recruiting ground. There isn't a lot of legislation to protect from exploitation via the internet."

"Online gaming features have chat features. There is no way to know who is at the other end of that chat feature," Julie said.

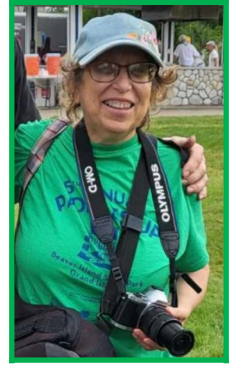
There is also the concept of "double crime." Criminals will get explicit information from you and will then demand payment not to share it."

Profile stealing is easy to do, Julie said. Perpetrators take someone's profile picture and name and they create an account and claim that they are the person who is pictured.

"You think you know who you're engaged with and it is someone else," Julie said.

She also explained that, just because you deleted something, it is not necessarily gone from the Internet.

**The phone number for the National Trafficking Hotline is 1.888.373.7888.**



Lion President Jim Ryan and District Governor Bette Stonebraker show off our donation to the New Hope Project



Julie Palmer

## From the convention:



Labeled each Convention LEGO kit with inspirational message



One of ten LEGO kits our club donated to children being treated at Roswell Park.



Our new table runner.



Featured in the Dispatch-Sentinel



“Group therapy” preparing for the gala at the MD20 convention in Niagara Falls.



The state convention brought the return of Shark Tank featuring Lion Sharks Theresa White, Mike Lawkowski, and Tom Witkowski aka Mr. Wonderful. The purpose of the tank was for clubs and districts to present their proposed projects needing funding from LCIF, New York State and Bermuda Lions Foundation, Lions SEE and Brandel-Murphy Youth Foundation. The sharks’ job was to advise whether or not their foundation could help.





Sunday's Memorial Service



101 year old PID Jack Weber selecting rose of remembrance.



Rev. Dr. Lion Charles Searcy of the Niagara Falls Community Lions was the celebrant.



District N DG Bette selecting white rose in honor of District N Lions who passed this past year. Red roses were in honor of VDGs and DGs who passed.



20N DGE Jeremy Schnurr, Rev. Lion Searcy, Lion Tom Witkowski



PIP Doug Alexander, Rev. Lion Searcy, 2nd VP of Lions International Mark Lyon



2024-2025 Council of Goverors

**BRANDEL-MURPHY YOUTH FOUNDATION**

P.O. BOX 913

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NY 11571

**ANNUAL MEETING****GRANT COMMITTEE REPORT  
MAY 5, 2025**

Without the vision of husband-and-wife team of Lions Past International President Al Brandel and Dr. Lion Maureen Murphy plus the many people who assisted them in bringing their idea of helping children-in-need to fruition and the support through our other fundraising initiatives, the results in helping children enjoy a better life would not have been possible. Because of these efforts 197 grants valued at \$346,153 have been approved benefitting 256,793 children since 2011, all made possible through the support of our annual Super Hero Raffle held every Super Bowl Sunday, the foundation's primary source of funds for grants.

As time has passed and the BMYF team has grown, the combined talents of the team have seen the creation of awarding individuals Everyday Hero fellowships, the development of our cruise offerings, PID Jack Weber's book "Jack Weber, Here!", a legacy and planned giving program, all these hold the keys to the future of Brandel-Murphy and its mission. For this, we thank you!

Since my last report, 17 Standard Grant and one Major Grant applications have been approved for a total of \$39,385 benefitting nearly 8,311 children. Food insecurity and vision screener projects headed the list of needs with all of them equally important to improving children's lives.

LIONS CLUB/ DISTRICT	DIS- TRICT	PROJECT	GRANT FUNDS	# OF CHILDREN HELPED
Brockport	E1	Build-A-Bed Project	\$2,000	20
Cuba	E1	"My Favorite Book" Youth Project	\$375	115
Corning	E2	Children's Vision Screening	\$1,570	3,000
Sodus	E2	Plusoptix Vision Screener	\$500	350
Union Springs	E2	Union Springs Frontenac New Scoreboard	\$2,000	200
Rosedale	K1	Sneaker And Coat Drive	\$750	85
Grand Island	N	Early Childhood Education	\$275	52
Lancaster	N	Step Up For Athletics	\$1,500	55
Lockport	N	Challenger Sports Complex (Major Grant)	\$15,000	250
District O	O	Pediatric Cancer I-pad Program	\$800	64
Marlboro-Milton	O	Fresh Food Vouchers For Food Insecure Children & Families	\$1,615	100
Monroe	O	Dinner4Kids Program	\$2,000	20
Patchogue	S	Vision Screener	\$2,000	500
Chazy	W	Eye Screening	\$2,000	1,500
Clinton	W	KIDSPAKS Food Insecurity Project	\$2,000	200
Duanesburg	W	Vision Screener	\$2,000	1,750
Speculator	W	Backpack Program	\$1,000	15
Town of Schroon	W	Children's Back Pack Program	\$2,000	35

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Working with the BMYF grant committee offers several advantages:

**Expertise and guidance:** the committee provides support throughout the application process ensuring projects align with the BMYF mission and meet necessary criteria vital to approval.

**Financial support:** access to various grant programs allows clubs and districts to secure funding for impactful projects. Whether it be a Standard Grant, a Major Grant or an Emergency Grant, we'll be there to maximize the outcome.

**Networking opportunities:** engagement with BMYF connects clubs with a broader network of Lions and the community at large fostering collaboration and sharing of best practices. For example, vision screeners can be shared with other clubs overing a wider range of children in need of screening. With referral rates at 20%, it is imperative Lions work with schools, pre-K and day care facilities to insure referred children get the help they need to see clearly.

**Enhanced community impact:** partnerships with BMYF amplify the reach and effectiveness of local initiatives leading to more significant positive outcomes for children in need. Once a community is made aware of matching funds for a project are available, community members are confident in the determination to get the project going and head to a successful conclusion.

The bottom line is money is available and we will help in any way to ensure projects are more the success than may have been originally thought of.

Brandel-Murphy Youth Foundation welcomes you to stop by our convention table to chat to give your project a good start. We also welcome you to visit our website, [www.brandelmurphyfoundation.org](http://www.brandelmurphyfoundation.org), to learn more about how you can help.

For fourteen years, Lions, Lioness and LEOs have made a difference by taking on worthy projects. You have reached out for help and we're happy you thought of us. Congratulations and thank you for all your support. Whether it's one child or thousands, you have made life better for over a quarter-million kids!

Respectfully submitted,

*Lion Tom Witkowski*

Thanks to Lions Tom Rusert, Jim Ryan, Donna Lavalley, Dick Crawford, Alice Gerard, and Tom Witkowski for contributions to this newsletter. The deadline for the Summer Newsletter is Friday June 27th. If you have material for the newsletter, you can e-mail it to Lion Dave Chervinsky, the editor/publisher at:

[grandislandliondave@gmail.com](mailto:grandislandliondave@gmail.com).

Visit us at: [www.gilions.com](http://www.gilions.com).

See our facebook page at: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/GILIONSCLUB>

Please return your empties to Bottle and Can Retrieval Center 2447 Grand Island Blvd, Grand Island, **Grand Island Can and Bottle Retrieval Center is now tracking our donations when items are left for them to credit our account.**



**Donations for the Neighbors Foundation are on the upswing so please continue to bring any of the listed items to our meetings or drop off Tops gift cards, food items and checks/cash to me and I will deliver to them. They are also in need of diapers, toiletries and personal care items.**

**Thank you, Lion Tom Rusert**



Stuart Sports has many styles and colors of polo shirts along with other apparel available. Stop in and peruse their catalogs and request that the Grand Island Lions logo be applied to your selection.

It's just a short drive to Lewiston: Stuart Sports 486 Center St. Lewiston, NY (716-754-4895)

<http://www.stuartsportsinc.com/>

Lion Tom Rusert



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

Kelly McGarvey  
Jose Garcia  
David Chervinsky  
Richard Crawford