

DISTRICT DIALOGUE - JUNE 2026

Northeast Kansas Lions District 17A

Chart Your Course



We Serve

**THANK YOU LIONS
LEADERS
CABINET MEMBERS
ZONE CHAIRS AND
GAT TEAM MEMBERS
WHAT AN AMAZING
YEAR
I HOPE WE CONTINUE
TO GROW OUR
MEMBERSHIP AND NEW
CLUBS, AS WE CHART
OUR COURSE INTO THE
NEW LIONS YEAR!**

District Officers:

Irene Haws

*District Governor
785-249-1913,
irene@idesigns.com*

Roger Yost

*District Governor-Elect
620-397-3108*

Cheryl Kerns

1st Vice District Governor-Elect

Stephanie Heisler

*District Secretary
StephanieRHeisler@hotmail.com*

Ron Nichols

*District Treasurer
coachronnichols@gmail.com*

Rick Dodson

*District Administrator
dodsonr23@gmail.com*

**NEED HELP WITH THE PORTAL?
CONTACT RICK DODSON**



Governor's Message

This is my last message to you all as the District Governor for 2025-2026. My Governor's Theme: Chart Your Course was intended to help us focus on putting together a plan of action to guide this year in all things related to

Lions and especially the District Goals for Leadership, Membership, Service and donations to LCIF.

We had large numbers on new Lions added as reported each month. We also lost a record number of Lions who passed away this year. We chartered one new Lions Club and started a Club Branch.

Our last cabinet meeting was held in Olathe and we had a number of club bring boxes of eye glasses to put into storage. The Kansas Lions Sight Foundation has rented a larger storage facility in Topeka moving from 10' x 10' to 20' x 10'. We have record numbers of used eyeglasses that need to be processed and made available for mission trips.

We are working hard to rebuild the Abilene Lions Club and a member information night will be held June 18 at the M & R Grill at 6:30 pm in Abilene. Any Lion in the area is welcome to come as we welcome new prospective Lions. We will have a short presentation on processing glasses to be sent on missions trips from someone who has attended mission trips in person and can speak first hand about that experience. Thank you to incoming GMT Rich Webster and Zone Chair Bart Hettenbach for all their support this Spring to help rebuild the Abilene Lions club that is down to two members.

At the state Convention the proposal for a dues increase of \$7 over three years passed. Look for your new dues statement from the district treasurer soon and it will reflect this new rate. Also at the State Convention the International Leadership Award was presented to Zone Chair Camy Thurner of the Concordia Club. Two other awardees from 17A could not attend, so I will present them at a later date.

Best Wishes to Roger Yost as he attends the International Convention in Hong Kong this July and returns ready to start his year as your District Governor. It has been wonderful to work side by side with the Governor's team this year. Congrats to First Vice District Governor-Elect Cheryl Kerns and enjoy your year as First Vice District Governor.

The community of Woodbine experienced high winds and property damage. See the last page. The Kansas Alert Trailer was dispatched to help aid the community.

DG Irene Haws

MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND THE USA/CANADA LIONS LEADERSHIP FORUM
[register at https://lionsforum.org/](https://lionsforum.org/) **Want to Carpool to Memphis? Contact me.**





District Governor-Elect

Where oh where have our Lion's clubs gone? Where oh where can they be? Summer is upon us, crops are being sowed with many already coming up green. New life to share with us all. What is being harvested in many areas and our Lion farmers are busy doing what they do best.

Summer brings many opportunities for clubs to step up and be seen. Yard sales, food drives, county fairs, ball games, picnics in the park, rodeo's, the list goes on and on. Many clubs don't meet in the summer in this busy time of year.

Remember we serve. Many of the clubs still have service projects that are a common activity in the summer months. Our communities have expected the lions to be there to help and provide the services.

In July, our clubs and our District will plant new seeds and by doing so we will need to nurture and support their ideas and growth. Help us bloom and prosper with your participation, planning new projects, and don't forget our old ones as well.

New news for our Lion year 2026-2027, DG Irene has agreed to stay on as the District Newsletter Publisher. This year I am requesting all articles, reports and any other news worthy articles to be in her email inbox by the 1st Friday of each month. This way it will be new news and not old news! Dates of Lions activities for our District will be in the July newsletter.

I want to take this opportunity to give a great Hoorah to DG Irene for the hard work this past year as our District Governor. Her continuous work and dedication to expand membership and revitalizing clubs so they may continue to do service in their communities.

Let's all unite and continue this endeavor. Again, I congratulate DG Irene for your continued belief that with hard work and perseverance, We Can Succeed.

Remember, we Serve.

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.

Thomas Edison

Roger Yost, DGE 17A
Yostfarms@hotmail.com
620-397-3108 (leave msg I will return the call)

Kansas Lions Directory is online

The Kansas Lions Directory is online - visit KansasLionsoffice@gmail.com This is password protected. Your President/Secretary & Zone Chair have the password (listed in the hardcopy directory). Any changes to club meeting dates/times/locations can be updated on the digital version of the Directory when emailed to KansasLionsoffice@gmail.com

Be sure to update club details in the *Edit Club Details* section on the Lions Portal too! Thank you for keeping your club details current.

District Dialogue Publication Details: *Email news articles and upcoming events to* 17Anews@gmail.com

Deadline is the first of the month for publication at mid-month.

Visit and Join the District 17A Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/kansaslionsdistrict17a> Share your club's posts to this group too! District Website: <https://kslionsdistrict17a.org> (past issues of the District Dialogue are saved here).



First Vice-District Governor-Elect

I hope you were able to attend the State Convention. Opportunities for learning, fun, fellowship, and good music. The kids that attend the Kansas Lions band camp never disappoint!

I hope you'll plan to attend the last District Cabinet Meeting of the 25-26 Lions' year, June 13th in Olathe.

Remember, it is not just for club presidents and club secretaries...all are welcome. Come see the activities across the district and share ideas.

June means the conclusion of my year as Second Vice-District Governor. I met with 29 clubs in 4 zones...you shared your projects and goals and extended the hand of friendship to me. I am grateful! I'm looking forward to my year as First Vice-District Governor.

If you're a planner, mark your calendars with the following:

State Council Meeting, Wichita, August 8th
Cabinet Meeting, Topeka, August 15th
USA/Canada Lions Leadership Forum, Memphis, TN, September 3-5
Fall Rally, McPherson, October 24th

Cheryl Kerns

First Vice-District Governor-Elect



Lead to Serve. Serve to Lead. District 17A Global Action Team

Vania Castro, GLT
Global Leadership Team Coordinator
drvaniacastro@gmail.com

Rick Dodson, GST
Global Service Team Coordinator
dodsonr23@gmail.com

Eric Strimple, GMT
Global Membership Team Coordinator
estrimp81@msn.com

Eric Tweedy, GET
Global Extention Team Coordinator
erictweedy@icloud.com

Reminder:

**Be sure and input your newly elected club officers
into the Lions Portal.**

If you have questions please contact our District Administrator.

**Rick Dodson
District Administrator
dodsonr23@gmail.com**



Building Stronger Leaders, Serving a Stronger District
 GLT & PDG Dr. Vania Castro – 17A Report
 06/13/2026



First, I would like to thank DG Irene Haws for the opportunity to serve District 17-A during this fiscal year. I am also grateful to our club officers, club members, district cabinet members, zone chairs, and Lions from our district and beyond who participated in our leadership training programs through in-person, hybrid, and Lions Learning Center online courses. These opportunities provided valuable resources for learning, growth, and leadership development throughout the year. In addition, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to our outstanding faculty members. Their energy, expertise, and enthusiasm helped create engaging and interactive training experiences that encouraged learning, collaboration, and meaningful participation. Promoting and facilitating high-quality Lions leadership training has always been a passion of mine since becoming the first graduate of the Lions Certified Instructor Program (LCIP) in Kansas in 2018. It continues to be both an honor and a privilege to support the development of current and future Lions leaders as we work together to strengthen our clubs, our district, and our service to others. As the fiscal year ends on June 30, 2026, I am pleased to report the progress made toward achieving our District GLT goals.

1. **Zone Chairperson Training**
 Ensure that at least 80% of Zone Chairpersons attend official training sessions.
2. **Club Officer Training**
 Confirm that at least 80% of Club Officers (Presidents, Secretaries, and Treasurers) complete their required training.
3. **Guiding Lions and Lions Portal Training**
 Provide Guiding Lions training sessions and hands-on Lions Portal training opportunities to improve leadership effectiveness, efficiency, and member engagement.
4. **Accurate Training Reporting**
 Ensure that all completed training is properly recorded in Learn through the Manage Training feature, providing accurate district training records and recognition of participant accomplishments.

Through the collaborative efforts of our district leadership team, faculty, and participating Lions, significant progress has been made toward accomplishing these goals. Thank you to all who participated in these learning opportunities. I am grateful that, through the dedication and efforts of our club officers, we achieved a significant increase in the completion of online training courses during this fiscal year compared to previous years.

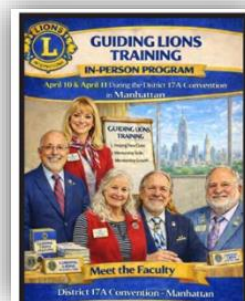
Leadership Excellence & Club Growth: highlights for this fiscal year:

1. **Lions Portal Training Session:** On August 30, 2025, District 17-A launched its first in-person Lions Portal Training Session. The GLT and District Governor's Team were excited to welcome Lions representing nine clubs across our district: Ausburn, Lansing, Leavenworth, Leawood, Lenexa, Miami County Traveling, Overland Park, Topeka, and Topeka Sunflower.
2. **Club Officer Training Opportunities:** Step-by-step instructions and guidance were provided to Club Officers (Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurers, and Zone Chairs) to support and encourage their continued leadership development through the Lions Portal and Lions Learning Center pathways during this fiscal year.
3. **Leadership Resource Spotlight – One-Page Leadership Guide:** A leadership resource entitled "**Strengthening Leadership with the Club President and First Vice President**" was distributed to all District 17-A club officers. This concise, one-page guide serves as a central hub featuring direct links to essential leadership tools, governance resources, best



practices, and frequently asked questions. The resource also includes an E-book on leadership and governance to further support club success.

4. **Guiding Lions Training** Strengthens Leadership Across MD 17 District 17A Convention | April 10–11, 2026. The Guiding Lions Training Seminar, held during the District 17A Convention proved to be a highly valuable experience for Lions leaders across Multiple District 17. This impactful program directly engaged 18 participants, while its influence is expected to extend far beyond the classroom—reaching over 350 Lions through their respective clubs, along with more than 100 Lions represented by our dedicated faculty team. The seminar featured an outstanding faculty, including PID Robert “Bob” Block (MD 1, Illinois, USA), PDG Carleen Rajala, PDG Richard Webster, PDG Rick Dodson, and GLT & PDG Dr. Vania Castro, who served as moderator and coordinator of the event.

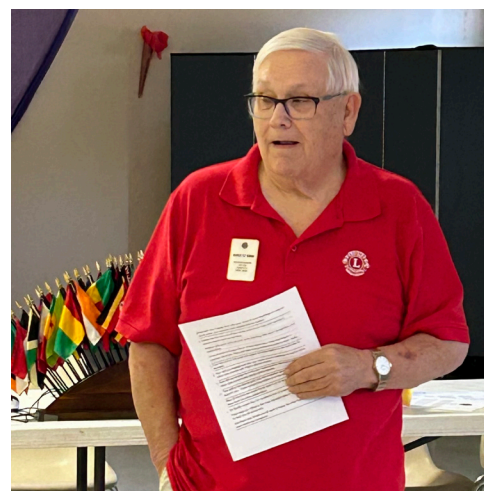
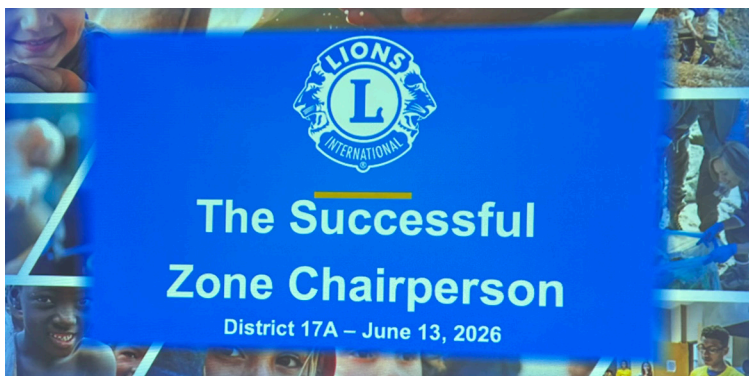


5. **Zone Chair Training:** On June 13, 2026, following the District 17-A Cabinet Meeting, a Zone Chair Training session was conducted to equip incoming and current Zone Chairs with the knowledge, tools, and resources needed to effectively support their clubs and fulfill their leadership responsibilities. The training featured an outstanding faculty, including DGE Roger Yost, DG Irene Haws, PDG Alfred Kimmi, and GLT Chair/PDG Dr. Vania Castro, who served as the moderator and coordinator of the event.



I am proud of the progress made this year and grateful for the dedication of our Lions leaders who continue to invest in their personal and professional development. Together, we are building a stronger foundation for leadership excellence and service throughout District 17-A.

In Service,
GLT & Dr. Vania Castro





News from the Lions Health Program

Thank you to all of the Lions and Lions Clubs that made donations to the District 17A Diabetes fund. Because of your generosity the District has been able to send 7 youth to a diabetes camp in the summer of 2026.

District A has spent \$4,100.00 on these 7 Diabetes Camp Scholarships. To me this is what you Lions do to fulfill the Lions Motto "WE SERVE". These 7 youth will learn how to eat correctly, how to prepare foods that they can eat, how to take their blood sugar and log the results, all of the time having FUN doing it. You Lions have given these 7 Youth a new look at the diabetes they have. On behalf of them, I want to say THANK YOU.

The Camps are in June and if you would like to have one of the families come to give a program for your club I would be happy to contact one of them to see if they would like to visit your club.

We do not give out the contact information unless I contact them and they agree to visit your club. If you want to know more please contact me and I will explain in more detail.

Lion Vern Failor

Lions District 17A Health Program



17A Environmental Report 6-13-2026

We are still collecting used cell phones to be put to use in serving others in need. Encourage members of your communities to put them in the eyeglasses recycling boxes, collect them and give them to your Zone Chair or bring them to the next District Cabinet meeting or our District Convention.

The Environmental Photo Contest for 2025 2026 is done. Thank you for sharing those photos of our beautiful plants, animals, weather phenomenon, landscapes or cityscapes for our 2025 2026 contest. We had 2 MD17 winners and they were Lion Dave Herbster of the Sabetha Lions Club and Olivia Bergmeier of the Council Grove Lions Club

Our 17A District Winners were PDG Richard Webster, DGE Roger Yost and PDG Neal Nichols the two MD 17 winners mentioned above.

Keep doing your local environmental projects and take photos of Lions serving while doing those projects for the next photo contest.

PDG, Terry Weldin



District 17A

A BIG HELLO TO OUR

NEW MEMBERS!



Emil D Keller, Bellville
Sponsor: Waylon Sheetz

Edna Wagner, Leavenworth
Sponsor: Lakei Evans

Rebecca A Chrisco, Delphos
Sponsor: Jack Larson

Uma Desai, U of K Eye Center
Sponsor: Angelo Andoyo

Wayne L Chrisco, Delphos
Sponsor: Jack Larson

Sarah Hommez, U of K Eye Center
Sponsor: Angelo Andoyo

Darel Anderson, Hope
Sponsor: Dan Coup

Anna Johnson, U of K Eye Center
Sponsor: Angelo Andoyo



Lion Eric Strimple, CGL (Certified Guiding Lion)
(He, Him, His)
District 17A Global Membership Team Coordinator

Mobile 785-331-7757
Email estrimp81@msn.com
PO Box 574, Eudora, KS 66025

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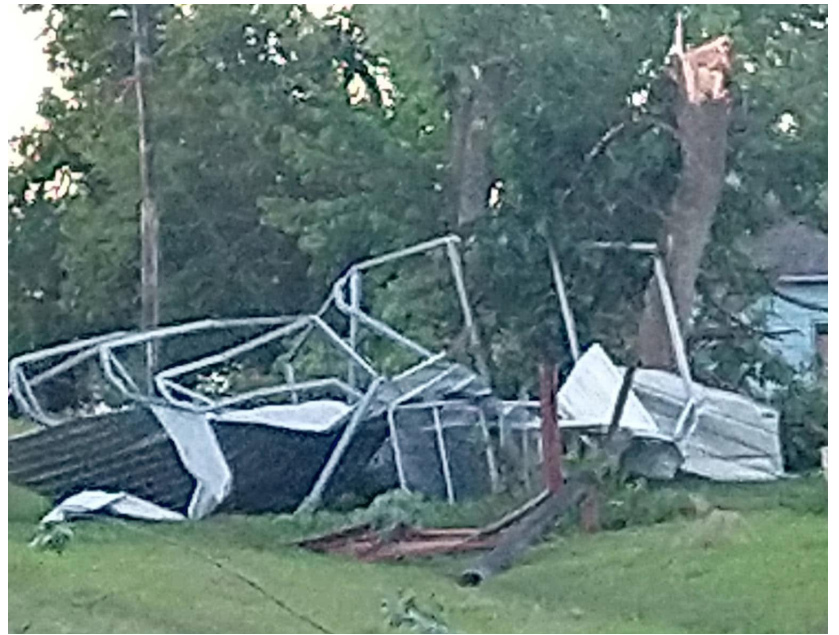
Global Service Team Report - June

1. Remember that "We Serve". Everything else exists to support that.
2. We completed all three of International President A. P. Singh's designated weeks of service: Mental Health and Well-Being, Hunger, and Environment.
3. Many clubs had Environment projects and DG Irene's district-wide Environment project to clean up the Kansas (Kaw) River was completed over two weekends (April 18th and 25th). Four members of the Miami County Traveling Lions Club (8 hours), two members of the Lawrence Lions Club (3 hours), and six Leos from the Blue Valley Leo Club (12 hours) worked a total of 23 hours on April 18th. Three members from the Topeka Lions Club worked a total of 9 hours in Manhattan. District-wide hours of service = 32.
4. DG Irene's service reporting goal: Our team will ensure 90% of Lion and Leo clubs in our district report service. As of June 7th, 46 clubs (68%) have inputted service projects in the Lion Portal. 625 activities with 140,563 people served. 12,513 volunteer hours reported. Some reports have not been closed out, so the numbers may be higher once they are completed. I've sent emails to all clubs that have not inputted data or need to close draft reports.
5. Breakout of activities reported as of the Portal Insights:
 - 15 Childhood Cancer
 - 5 Diabetes
 - 6 Disaster Relief
 - 61 Environment
 - 195 Hunger
 - 152 Humanitarian
 - 107 Vision
 - 75 Youth
 - 9 Administration



Rick Dodson
District 17-A GST Coordinator
(913) 240-5302
dodsonr23@gmail.com

**High Winds brought damage to Woodbine, KS June 10th
The Kansas Alert Trailer was made available to help the community.**



Where there is a Need there is a LION!

