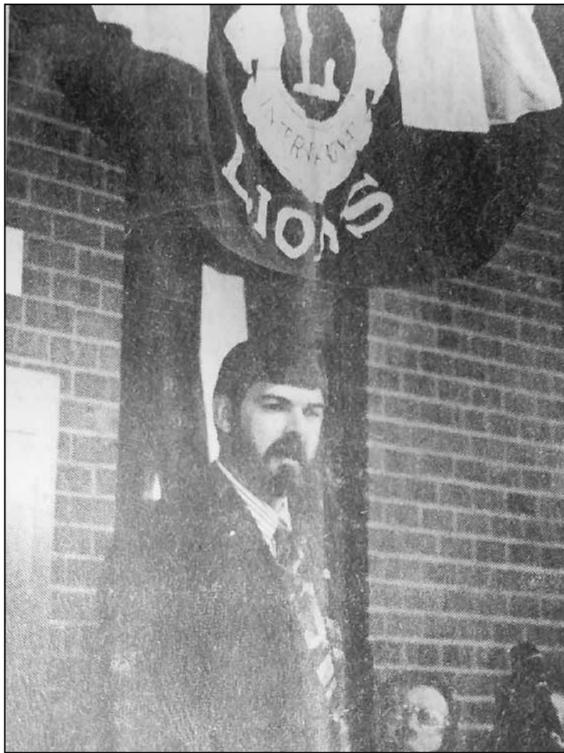


Burlington Lions Club celebrates 25th anniversary



File photo
International First Vice President Dr. William Wunder spoke 25 years ago at the Burlington Lions Club Charter Night.



File photo
Burlington Lions Club President Terry Weldin gives a speech after accepting the club's charter.



File photo
Officers installed during the Burlington Lions Club Charter Night were, from left, Terry Weldin, president; Scott Porter, second vice president; Bob Trendel, Lion tamer; Patty Sanborn, director; Gordon Van Zile, director; Jim Pede, director; Don St. Clair, tail twister; Rick Schmidt, first vice president; and Gen Pede, third vice president.

BURLINGTON — Since being chartered 25 years ago, the Burlington Lions Club has made a noticeable difference in the Burlington community and beyond.

A story in the Monday, March 13, 1995, edition of Coffey County Today recounted the Burlington Lions Club Charter Night. Terry Weldin was installed as the first president, a position he now holds 25 years later, along with other club officers.

The Westphalia Lions Club sponsored the Burlington Lions Club, which required 25 members in order to be chartered. International First Vice President Dr. William Wunder offered encouraging words at charter night.

"As a new club, I urge you to look in your immediate community — look around your neighborhood, identify some needs and jump on them," Wunder said. "Jump on and tell your stories to the members and the citizens of your community. When you truly become a Lion is when you understand how good it feels when you help someone. That says it all. Keep that Lion spirit and you will grow and make this community a better place to live in and work — YOU will make a difference."

Burlington Lions have followed the Lions Club motto, "We Serve." Local Lions Club programs, including the Burlington Lions Club, include sight conservation, hearing and speech conservation, diabetes awareness, youth outreach, international relations, environmental issues and many other programs.

Community Service

The Burlington Lions Club is known for providing free vision screenings to children at Coffey County schools, daycares and at community celebrations. In several cases, the screenings helped detect vision problems that were able to be corrected at an early age.

Burlington Lions recently concluded a major fundraiser to purchase new vision screening equipment. "Coffey County really showed up with support for the vision equipment," Weldin said. "We appreciate all the support from the community for those who need help."

Internationally, Lions clubs have been involved in preventing blindness and conserving eyesight since 1924, when Helen Keller challenged Lions Club International "to become the knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness." Lions are involved in providing free or low cost eyeglasses to those in need.

In the fall of 2017, the Burlington Lions Club marked the 100th anniversary of the international organization by dedicating its Legacy project at the City of Burlington's newly established Happy Tails dog park, located east of Second and

Des Moines streets. With help from the City of Burlington Parks Department, Burlington Lions provided the concrete for a sidewalk and entryway at the park and incorporated a stone with the Lions logo.

Burlington Lions offer ice cream annually at the Coffey County Fair. They provide musical opportunities by sending students to the Lions Club State Band. They support after prom at Burlington High School and sponsor motorcycle safety courses to raise funds for After Prom events.

Since 1995, Lions have volunteered to run the baseball/softball concession stand. They also have provided a meal/breakfast at the Burlington High School Wrestling Invitational Tournament for about 10 years.

Members Share

Weldin explained how he first became involved with Burlington Lions Club. "As a young man in my hometown, Colony, Lions Club sponsored the local baseball teams and I enjoyed that a lot," he said.

After moving to Burlington, Weldin learned in the fall of 1994 that Past District Governor Sol Evans sought to organize a new Burlington Lions



File photo
A stone with the Lions International logo commemorates the Burlington Lions Club Legacy project at the Happy Tails dog park in Burlington.

Club. "I wanted to have a positive influence on someone else; I helped to recruit members," Weldin said.

Others became members after accepting invitations, including Ronda Gilbert. "I had recently moved back to the community and decided to see what it was all about," Gilbert said.

Brenda Klubek was invited to join the Lions Club by another leader at Central National Bank.

Another member, Dale Rein, has been involved in Lions Club for 30 years. He transferred his membership from the Council Grove Lions Club.

"I think the biggest accomplishments for our club have been the dog park, providing all the requests for eyeglasses, sending students to Lions Band with our fundraisers, the Melvin Jones awards our club has received and our vision screening," Gilbert said. "I would like to see a scholarship award set

up for the future."

Klubek would like to see younger people become involved in Lions Club in order to "have a strong club for the next 25 years and beyond." Rein concurred.

Learn More

"Lions clubs have always been service organizations filled with service community members both men and wom-

en," Weldin said.

The 2021 Lions Club theme, "Kindness Matters," starts July 1. Burlington Lions Club welcomes new members to become involved in the club and its service projects. "There is no shortage of good things that can be done in our community," Weldin said.

To learn more about the Burlington Lions Club, call (620) 490-1461 or visit their Facebook page.

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