

Lions International Monthly Letter

From the Secretary General to
Club Presidents and Secretaries

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OUR CONSTITUTIONAL PURPOSES

Dear Lion President and Secretary:

"The Purposes of this association are: (a) To organize, charter and supervise service clubs to be known as Lions Clubs. (b) To coordinate and standardize the activities of Lions Clubs."

In these words the highest authority of the International Association of Lions Clubs, the annual conventions of accredited delegates from the clubs comprising the Association, has directed what the Association shall do. That quotation is Article II, Section 1, of the International constitution.

For more than two decades these have been the "marching orders" of the Association, and the wisdom of these orders has been proved. At the time this constitutional provision was made there were approximately 150 communities in the United States being served by Lions Clubs of diverse character and interests. Today more than 3,500 communities in eight countries are being served by Lions Clubs.

Notice that the purposes of the International Association of Lions Clubs, as established by accredited delegates at early conventions and concurred in by delegates in all succeeding conventions, is not to collect money to subsidize a certain type of boys' work, a health camp, eye conservation work or any other type of general welfare work.

The founders of this Association, as far back as 1917, were faced with the problem of whether or not Lions International would be organized to carry along a certain activity or many kinds of activities, whether or not the Association would collect money from member clubs to establish and maintain these activities or whether it would simply collect dues from member clubs for PURELY ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES.

The founders believed that it was best to have the individual clubs manage their own activities, and that Lions International should make its chief activity that of organizing, chartering and supervising Lions Clubs, and standardizing the activities of member clubs.

From 1917 to 1922 there was a continual pressure from certain groups to force on the Association

their favored form of activity; in other words, to make of Lions International a collecting agency for some other association which would administer the funds and conduct this one activity. The constitutional provision stopped this, and in 1922 the Activities Committee recommended fourteen major activities to be conducted by Lions Clubs. Later these fourteen major activities were reduced to the present eight fields of activity which form the basis of Lions Club community service today.

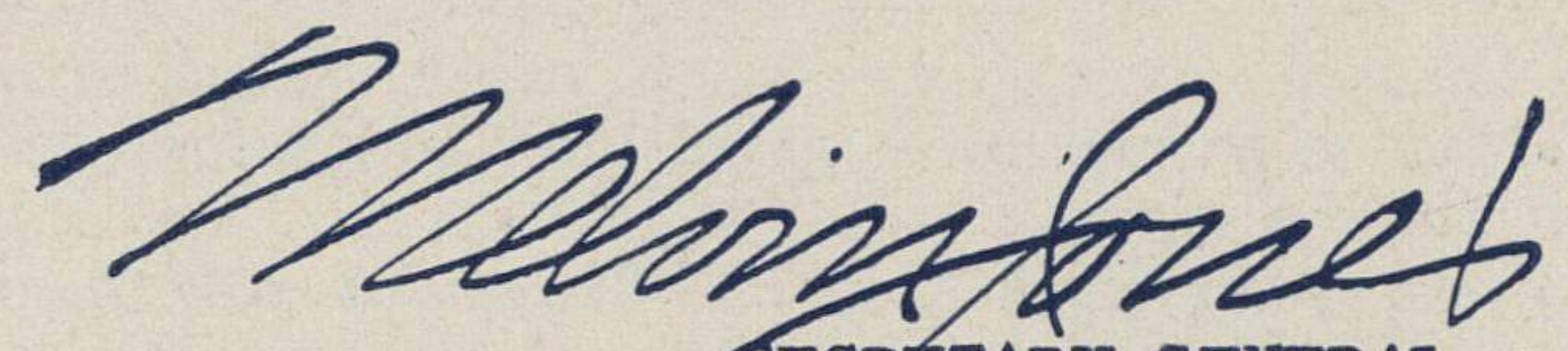
No change, however, has ever been made in the constitution which would empower Lions International to take the per capita tax collected for administrative purposes and give it to clubs for activity purposes or give it to any association that promotes a form of activity in which Lions Clubs might be interested.

Had another policy been outlined for the Association, there would undoubtedly be nearly the same number of clubs now in Lions International as there were in 1917. It is of undeniably greater value to mankind that 3,500 active Lions Clubs should zealously engage in all aspects of community work each year, than that 150 Lions Clubs, as an association, should raise funds to be spent by another organization.

Therefore, the Association is financed to take care of its own clubs which comprise the Association, and the budget for each year is approved by the Board of Directors and the retiring District Governors.

Lion President and Secretary, your Lions Club should be set up on an administrative basis similar to that of Lions International.

Through its administrative budget, based 100% on dues from members, your club provides for its existence as a strong community institution, prepared to undertake needed community activities, whether charitable or patriotic.


SECRETARY GENERAL