



49th Annual MD 27-B1 Convention

Radisson Hotel & Conference Center

- Fond du Lac, WI

November 8-9, 2024



Friday November 8th

The convention kicked off with registration starting at 3:30 pm and ending at 8:00 pm. There were several events that took place between 4:00 and 6:00 pm. Vision Screening Certification, Lions Portal and LEBW Eye Transporter. Bucket Raffles, District Raffle and vendor displays were available from also from 4:00 to 8:00 pm. A great opportunity to meet the International Director – ID Anthony Paradiso was held from 7:00 to 7:30 pm.

Hospitality was held from 7:00 to 10:00 pm in the gazebo area with the theme being “Back to your Roots” DJ playing music, photo opt area and Van Dyne Lions held did the 50/50 raffle.

Saturday November 9th

The convention was called to order at 8:00 am by District Governor Dave Holschbach and then turned things over to PDG Fred Gebhart for the presenting of the colors. Flags included the American Flag, Wisconsin State Flag, New York State Flag, Lions International Flag, Wis Lions Foundation Flag, Eye Bank of Wisconsin Flag and the Leos Flag. Pledge of Allegiance was led by IPDG Greg Kubichka. Prayer was then led by Myra Schneider. PDG Fred Gebhart also recognized the branches of service and those who have served in the Air Force, Army, Marines, Navy, Coast Guard and Merchant Marines. Lion Fred also asked those who are vision screeners to also stand, so far this year 12,789 have been screened with 1,675 referrals! Lion Fred would like to acknowledge Appleton Noon Lions, Lions Dave and Sue Lee, they have been screening since 2014 and have screened over 100,000 children!

2nd Vice District Governor Barb Leichtfuss led the group with a song ‘Lions Spirit’ DG Dave next introduced the head table which held, ID Anthony Paradiso from New York and his partner in service Lion Marie Jordan; PID Connie LeCleur-Meyer and her partner in service Lion Mike Meyer, 1st VDG Roxanne Wendt and her partner in service PDG Tom Wendt and Cabinet Secretary Lion Laurie Sasada. Also present are Cabinet Treasurer Lion Earlene Samz and 2nd VDG Barb Leichtfuss.

DG Dave got things started by again welcoming all to, the convention, there have been sleepless nights, revisions, updates and more revisions and updated but here we are. DG Dave asked what is the made word for this convention.... FANTASTIC was the responds and he thanked all those who have been keeping informed with the Facebook page. This year’s theme is “Back to your Roots” and this can have several meanings, but no matter how we grew up, because we have different backgrounds, it’s how we grew up that made us who we are and how we became Lions with the willingness to serve others!

Business Session – called to order at 8:22 am

PID Connie LeCleur-Meyer introduced our guest and featured speaker for the convention ID Anthony Paradiso. ID Anthony Paradiso expressed how grateful he was to be in the state of Wisconsin and was looking forward to meeting many of the Lions here and learn about how we are “Making Our Mark” here in the state of Wisconsin.

DG Dave gave a report out on the State of the District. Looking at membership, with the Mission 1.5 going on how is membership and what are clubs doing in response to Mission 1.5 and membership. As of November 6th, we have gained 31 members, but have dropped 36, we are at -5 members, looking deeper 4 losses have been due to deaths. Clubs are doing a good job at trying to maintain and retain members. Next DG looked at service reporting. In September we were at 45% of clubs reporting service projects in the portal, yes there has been some issues with the new portal, but as of November we are now at 75% of our clubs reporting. The state % is at 45%. Thanks to PDG Dave Brinkman for getting to clubs and helping them with any issues they may be having and getting them to report. DG Dave’s focus has been marketing and has started a marketing campaign. We are all proud of what we do but it is not always seen. When first started our Facebook page we maybe had 4 posts a month, now we are up to 60 posts a month thanks go out to all the clubs that have submitted items to the Facebook page, we now have 1,200 followers! Other districts are looking at our marketing ideas and using them in their own districts. This is a good way to get ideas out there on what clubs are doing.

State of the State address was given by Council Chair John Reel. MD 27 is in good financial status. State membership is -63. Keep working hard on bringing in new members. If every club would bring in 2 new members we would be at a +1,500 for the state. ELLI Training will January 17-19 at the Lions Camp in Rosholt, and the MD GAT Team Summit will be February 14-16 in Marshfield. Watch for more information, these are great training opportunities. The next COG meeting will be January 10th and IVP AP Sing from India will be there! DG Dave has been very busy, involved in many positions, congratulations on a great convention!

Nominations 2025-2026 Lions year – Lion Gary Colton

Lion Gary proceeded to review the rules and deadlines for nominations

Nominations for District Governor:

1st nomination for District Governor - Lion 1st VDG Roxanne Wendt was given by Lion Bonnie Hughes from the VanDyne Lions Club. 2nd nomination for Lion 1st VDG Roxanne was given by PDG Lion Meg Post from the Valders Lion Club. Motion was made to close nominations for District Governor by PDG Lion BJ Blahnik, second by IPDG Greg Kubichka. **MOTION CARRIED**

Nominations for 1st Vice District Governor:

1st nomination for 1st Vice District Governor - Lion 2nd VDG Barb Leichtfuss was given by Lion Scott Scovronski from the VanDyne Lions Club. 2nd nomination for Lion 2nd VDG Barb was given by Lion David Hartman from the Van Dyne Lion Club. Motion was made to close nominations for 1st Vice District Governor by PDG Lion Tom Wendt, second by Lion Myra Schneider. **MOTION CARRIED**

Nominations for 2nd Vice District Governor:

1st nomination for 2nd Vice District Governor - Lion Laurie Sasada was given by Lion Kailie Heinz from the Grand River Lions Club. 2nd nomination for Lion Laurie was given by Lion Diane Henke from the Berlin Lion Club. Motion was made to close nominations for 2nd Vice District Governor by Lion Jackie Rutkowski, second by Lion Wendy Hartmann. **MOTION CARRIED**

Nominations for WLF Director:

1st nomination for WLF Director - Lion PDG BJ Blahnik was given by Lion Wendy Hartmann from the St. Nazianz Lions Club. 2nd nomination for Lion PDG BJ was given by Lion Pete Southwick from the Town of Sheboygan Lions Club. Motion was made to close nominations for WLF Director by Lion Bill Fletcher, second by IPDG Greg Kubichka. **MOTION CARRIED**

Nominations for Lions Eye Bank of Wis. Director:

There are two nominations: Lion Bill Fletcher and Lion IPDG Greg Kubichka

1st nomination for Lion Bill Fletcher was given by Lion PDG Dave Brinkman from the Grand River Lions Club. 2nd nomination for Lion Bill was given by Lion PDG Tom Wendt from the Van Dyne Lions Club.

1st nomination for Lion IPDG Greg Kubichka was given by Lion Gary Garton Sr from the Chilton Lions Club. 2nd nomination for Lion IPDG Greg was given by Lion Gary Garton Jr from the Chilton Lions Club. Motion was made to close nominations for Lions Eye Bank of Wis. Director by Lion PDG BJ Blahnik, second by PDG Tom Wendt. **MOTION CARRIED**

Nominations closed – 9:24 am

Peace Poster and District Pin designs are on display by registration. Stop by and make note of your selections number which will be needed when voting.

Representative from the Radisson reported that room rates for convention if held there in 2026 would be \$134.00 a night.

Lion Kailie Heinz discussed the QR code which is being used at the convention for Lions to use instead of paper forms for feedback on seminars.

Service of Remembrance was started with a prayer by Lion Myra Schneider, District 27-B1 Chaplain. Music and song were played by 2VDG Barb and Lion Jim, reading of names was done by DG Dave along with 1VDG Roxanne ringing of the bell for each name. There were 31 Lions who passed away last year.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Lion Myra Schneider opened the Luncheon with a prayer which then led into a special song just for DG Dave, to the theme of “Green Acres” played by 2ndVDG Barb.

Lunch was served.

DG Dave then introduced guests, at the head table was ID Lion Anthony Paradiso and his partner in service Lion Marie; PID Connie LeClaire Meyer and partner in service, Mike; 1stVDG Roxanne and her partner in service PDG Tom and Cabinet Secretary, Lion Laurie. Also, at the luncheon are 2ndVDG Barb and her partner in service, Lion Scott; Cabinet Treasurer Lion Earlene and her partner in service Lion Joe; IPDG Greg and his partner in service Lion Amy; PCC Lion Tammy Rockenbach and partner in service Lion Greg; IPID Lion Lee Vrieze with his partner in service, LCIF Coordinator Mary; PID Art Marson and his partner in service; CC Lion John Reel and partner in service Amy; current DG’s from each District. DG Dave then took the time to acknowledge the current 27-B1 District Cabinet. Also, in attendance was: WLF President Pat Hart, WLF Executive Director PCC Yvette Hartwig, Eye Bank Wisconsin President PDG Don Drew and partner in service Cindy; Birch Sturm PDG Brian Dulmas and partner in service Barb; Lion Pride Lion Renee Peterson, Lion-Leo Chair Trevor Nauta, all PDGs, Leo’s, 27-B1 Convention Committee, and First-Timers were asked to stand to be recognized.

PID Lion Connie introduced keynote speaker ID Lion Anthony Paradiso, from New York. ID Lion Anthony spoke on the importance of youth engagement/involvement, Lions Quest, planting the seed to continue the legacy of Lionism and the importance of JUST ASK!

DG Dave presented IPDG Greg Kubichka a Ray Hemple Fellowship in appreciation for his hard work as DG last Lion year. ID Anthony then presented three International President Certificates of Appreciation. The first going to the Van Dyne Lions Club for their work on the medical locker that was recently opened. The second going to PDG BJ Blahnik for his mentorship towards DG Dave and pushing him to strive for more. The third going to Lion Kailie Heinz for her work on the 27-B1 District Facebook page and other marketing material. DG Dave then presented PDG Gary Silah with an “Always There for You” award.

There were 10 first timers in attendance who completed the First-Timer’s Questionnaire, with the prize going to a member from the Hilbert Lions Club. The Luncheon 5/25/25 was hosted by the Grand River Lions Club. Lions Kailie Heinz and Jackie Rutkowski announced the winning ticket – Lion Scott Fryseth from La Crosse Lions Club – winning \$642. The winner for Lions BINGO was Lion Kailie Heinz from Grand River Lions Club. The La Cross Lions had a basket to promote the upcoming State Convention and was won by Lion Monica Debar from Brandon Lions. WLF then acknowledged the Sherwood Lions for the generous contributions and donation over the course of the year.

PDG BJ Blahnik then raffled off Lion Len Quinn Memorial Cowboy Hat which went to the Ripon Lions Club for \$625. PDG BJ then did the 27-B1 Lions Bank Auction which went to the Cleveland Lions for \$6,000. Parade of Checks was then done.

ID Anthony Paradiso then installed 2 new Leo members and 1 new Lion member.

BANQUET PROGRAM

DG Dave Holschbach welcomed everyone in attendance. Lion Myra Schneider gave a prayer. The evening started with the introduction of the dignitaries present. Dinner was served and Andrea Yenter along with 3 campers and their families came in. Andrea, the campers and their families discussed the value of the Lions Camp and the role that it has played in their lives.

ID Anthony Paradiso then gave his final thoughts. He expressed the gratitude that he has for our Lions Camp, our district and DG Dave. DG Dave gave his final thoughts on the convention and presented ID Anthony with a gift.

PDG Gary Colton gave out the results from convention. There were 188 people in attendance. District Governor will be Lion Roxanne Wendt from Van Dyne, 1st Vice District Governor will be Lion Barb Leichtfuss from Van Dyne, 2nd Vice District Governor will be Lion Laurie Sasada from Grand River. WLF Director will be IPCC BJ Blahnik. Lions of Wisconsin Eye Bank Director will be IPDG Greg Kubichka. The 2026 Convention will be at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center in Fond du Lac. The Peace Poster winner was #4 done by Bailey Tesch sponsored by Rosendale, The Pin Design winner was #6 done by DG Dave of Mishicot.

Motion was made by Lion BJ Blahnik and seconded by GLT Tom Wendt to destroy the ballots.
MOTION CARRIED

Acceptance speeches were given by 1stVDG Roxanne, 2ndVDG Barb, Lion Laurie, IPCC BJ and IPDG Greg.

District Treasure Lion Earlene Samz then gave a financial report from the convention. The Parade of Checks brought in a total of \$22,600. The District Raffle tickets totaled \$3,475 – the first-place winner was Winnebago Eastshore Lions receiving \$695, the second-place winner was Town of Sheboygan Lions receiving \$521.25, the third-place winner was Mishicot Lions receiving \$243.25, the fourth-place winner was Bill Hughes receiving \$173.75, the fifth-place winner was Mishicot receiving \$69.50, sixth place winner was Random Lake Lions receiving \$34.75. The 50/25/25 raffle results were then presented. Friday night the Van Dyne Lios hosted and did two drawings. The first drawing the district brought in \$315, and the second drawing the district brought in \$287. The Saturday Luncheon was hosted by the Grand River Lions and the District brought in \$321. The Saturday Banquet raffle was drawn by Lion Kailie Heinz and Lion Jackie Rutkowski of the Grand River Lions. DG Jamie Wilde from 27-C1 won \$372 with the district bringing in \$186. The District Raffle Baskets brought in \$1,705. The Tail Twister brought in \$167 on Friday and \$86 on Saturday.

There were six left over raffle baskets that were then drawn from the 50/25/25 tickets.

Motion was made by Lion John Stephen and seconded by Lion Kailie Heinz to officially close the 49th annual MD 27-B1 Convention. **MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted by Cabinet Secretary Lion Laurie Sasada