



# The Texas Lion



Vol 4 No. 4E

June 2005

**We Serve**

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### Chairman's Corner

Richard "Dick" E Robinson

Hello Lions, Convention 2005 is complete and I submit a brief of the final report for your consideration,

The goal of 500 attendees set over a year ago was not only achieved, but also exceeded. We had 543 official registrations. I want to thank each of you that attended, for part of that success is yours. A goal of \$5000.00 was set for the monies to be raised from silent auction, hot auctions, and tail twister fines. The following was accomplished: Tail twister \$570.00, Live Auction \$1295.00, and Silent Auction \$2640.50. Another successful mission. The credit goes to the generous Lions in attendance, a great auctioneer in PDG Ed Stebbins, the great Lions of 2-X3 who were so generous in silent auction donations and a special kudos to my friend PCC Joe Montag for his generosity, PCC Joe Al for his marvelous support, PCC Mike and Liz for friendship.

Membership, Membership, Membership. I again ask each of you to hit the bushes and bring in that member before the year is out. This is not just a numbers need, however a need for our survival. Just think of all the things you have personally done for Lionism, and how much more could have been done if there was double your efforts. You and only you can make that happen. Again I ask each of you to CLOSE THE BACK DOOR, and OPEN THE FRONT DOOR. Let's search for not only for QUALITY-members, however thanks those that we have, and keep every QUALITY Lion on board. You and I have the responsibility to maintain standards until they are and I have no doubt that we can prevail.

To each Lion in MD-2, it has been an honor to serve as your chairman this council year. To greet old friends and make new ones have been the highlight of this past three years, and Renne and I have enjoyed every single invite to your different districts. The red carpet you laid out for us was above and beyond all expectation. To the wonderful state chairs, your dedicated efforts were instrumental in this year's success and I salute you. I trust that all of you who have been selected by council 2005-2006 will perform to accepted standards. The Texas Lions Camp dues increase passed 1092-138. I believe it was a brilliant and noble decision. You; my friends have taken a giant step to ensure the survival of our camp in the continued well-being of special children of Texas.

To Pat Nations. You have made this year a lot less stressful that it could have been. Your efforts are to be commended. To Our Editor, PDG Lew Vail. I can't say enough for your positive approach to duty. You my friend are deeply appreciated.

Lions we have a great council coming on board in 2005-2006. I trust you will provide the continuous support to these Lion Leaders. I have total faith in their dedication and abilities, and so should you.

To the Hall of Fame member's class of 2005, congratulations and thanks for allowing me to be a small part of your induction.

To the Lions of District 2-X3. I knew you would come through and each of you on the steering committee as well workers can be justifiably proud of your efforts.

**ACCENUATE THE POSITIVE**

### Support Your Texas Lions Camp - Get License Plates NOW!!!

During the 78th Legislative Session, the Texas Lions Camp was authorized to participate in the Texas Specialty License Plate Program. What this means, is that any one who would like to show their **Lions Camp pride**, can support the Texas Lions Camp by purchasing a TLC License Plate for one or more of their vehicles.

The fees for TLC Plates are paid directly to TxDot, and are assessed annually, in addition to your annual vehicle registration. Prices for TLC plates are billed as Specialty plates \$30.00

**After selling 3,500 plates, the Texas Lions Camp will receive a one-time, lump sum payment of \$15,000 and will then begin accumulating a royalty payment equivalent to \$22.00 per license plate, per year.**

If even half of the Lions in the State of Texas were to participate, the Camp could realize a significant increase in its operating revenues, which of course serves to ensure continued, quality services provided to children with handicaps, type 1 diabetes and cancer.

**So don't delay...download the form and order your plate (s) today! You will be glad you did, and will find yourself mak-**

**LIONS INFORMATION**  
Located at the these  
web site...

[www.texaslions.org](http://www.texaslions.org)  
&  
[www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org)



## Extension Newspaper Article

By MARY PITNER, State Chairman

Sharing & Caring thru Extension

The clock is still ticking.

We still have time to form additional new clubs.

Many districts are close to completing one or more new clubs. Please do not delay. Go out and sign up new Lions and submit your paper work to Lions Clubs International. Every new club will become important to the community in which it was formed.

Lions Clubs International reports the following new clubs July, 2004 - March, 2005:

2-X1	Maypearl Lions Cub
2-X3	Waco Heart of Texas
Lions Club	
2-S1	Kountze Lions Club
2-S2	Montgomery Count
Hispanic Lions Club	
2-S5	Blinn College Lions
Club	

Congratulations to the Districts and Lions who have made the new Charter Clubs a part of our great Association.

I would like to thank the Lions of Texas and the Council of Governors 2004-2005 for the opportunity to "Serve" as your MD-2 Extension Chairperson. This will be my last article. The Council of Governors 2005-2006 has chosen another Lion to fill this position. I have enjoyed working with the Council, District Chairs, and the Lions of Texas. Thank You....

A Caring & Sharing Lion,

Mary Pitner  
MD-2 Extension Chairperson  
Home: 817-624-1349  
mary-pitner@bizdialup.com

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

By Lion Bob Nelson, State Chair  
<http://texaslions.org>

The MD-2 Integrated Website Program is now fully implemented on the Internet. The MD-2 Texas Lions Website is located at: <http://texaslions.org> and is designed to be the central location and focal point for all Texas Lions related information. This State website and the 16 District websites form the MD-2 Texas Lions Integrated Website Program.

Each of the 16 Districts has websites promoting their District's Lions programs and supplementing the MD-2 State Website. The District Website should be the on-line version of the Governor's Directory with pages for the District Officers/Cabinet, District Clubs, and District Calendar information. Other pages can be added to the District websites, such as contests, current events, and District Lions programs to promote Lionism in their Districts.

The current status of the MD-2 Information Technology Program is based on a review on May 7, 2005. The status of each District website is based only on the current year's status and if the site links to the MD-2 website. Information provided on each website is the District Governors option. Each of the 16 Districts has established websites and has appointed Information Technology Officers (Webmasters). All Districts have upgraded to the 2004-2005 Lions Year.

This year is ending and it is time to look forward to the 2005-2006 Lions Year. Election of Club Officers should be concluded. The Vice District Governor should be collecting information from the PU-101's and selecting Cabinet/Committee Officers and providing the information to both the Directory Editor and the Information Technology (Webmaster) Officer.

The challenge to the MD-2 District Governors and Information Technology Chairs is to maintain the complete integrated system and provide more Lions information to the Lions of Texas. The 2005-2006 Information Technology Officer and the District Directory Editor should be selected as soon as possible so they can be tasked to publish the district directory and have the 2005-2006 Website placed on-line by July 1, 2005 when Lions Clubs International install the new District Governors. MD-2 State Chairman and District Committees are encouraged to promote their programs on their respective websites.

The MD-2 Texas Lions Website and each District's Website addresses need to be promoted more to the Lions of Texas. The Texas Lions MD-2 website is receiving approximately 600 visits per month. If 10% of the Texas Lions population visited the website it could receive 3,100 visits.

District Governors should consider the Information Technology Chair, the District Directory Editor and Newsletter Editor as a team working together to ensure that all District Lions Information is published. The District Directory cover page and the District Newsletter header should list the District's Website and email addresses to promote the website to all Lions. The District Website and the District Newsletter are the primary means of providing information to District Lions, once the District Directory is published. The website is the most economical means of distributing information.

Promote the Texas Lions Integrated Website Program. Tell your friends, neighbors, other Lions and perspective Lions that the MD-2 Texas Lions website system is the central location for Texas Lions information. When you talk to anyone about Lionism ask him or her to visit the Texas Lions website at <http://texaslions.org> and your own District's website for additional information.

Note: For users that can't afford Microsoft Office an excellent choice is OpenOffice: A free open-source replacement. It is available at: <http://cws.internet.com/file/11808.htm> or <http://www.openoffice.org>. While not as flashy an upgrade as Microsoft Office 2003, v1.1.x of OpenOffice.org adds to what was already the best value in Windows software. The free, open-source, Office-compatible word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, and drawing combo gets a facelift, a speed bump, and improvements ranging from PDF export to macro recording.

## MD-2 LCIF Chairman report

submitted by P.D.G. Ray White

I would like to end this year with by congratulating the Council of Governors of 2004-2005 for a job well done and thank them for allowing me to serve as MD-2 LCIF Chair. It has been an exciting year for LCIF with the devastation of Tsunami tragedy. The response and donations (over \$ 12 million for relief sent) was so unbelievable. The request for Melvin Jones Fellows from contributions was so great, it is taking four to six months to a Melvin Jones plaque out. International sends their apologies for the delay, but there is only one company making the plaques.

It's hard to grasp the full value of SIGHTFIRST. Numbers are impressive but they are faceless. A number is not your child, mother, father, or neighbor. But those helped by SIGHTFIRST are someone's child, someone's mother or father. Also, restoring vision or preventing blindness means so much more than just being able to see a loved one or view a sunset, drive a car, or watch a movie. It means a greater ability to work, to provide for your family, to contribute to society.

For children, it means a much greater opportunity to attend school, get a good job and make the most of their abilities.

People across the world have kept their jobs, or found work, honed their work skills, or advanced in their careers, and hopefully found time and resources to contribute to society as volunteers themselves.

Lions Clubs International's Board of Trustees officially approved the SIGHTFIRST II campaign in October, 2004. The new campaign will kick off at the International Convention in Hong Kong and will culminate in 2007-2008. Campaign SIGHTFIRST II will enable Sightfirst to reduce blindness in developing and developed countries. Its goals are to eliminate blindness from cataract, trachoma, and river blindness as well as reduce blindness from glaucoma, diabetic eye disease, and childhood blindness



## Focus on Club Leadership

PDG Aubrey Cherry, Chairman  
MD2 Leadership Development

District governors and district leadership development chairmen should be well along in conducting club officer and zone chairmen training for 2005-2006 leaders. These sessions should provide the participants with specific information to support what is to be done at the club level. In short, training should be about what to do when the leaders are back home, working with the club.

Please consider that leadership training, for the year, is not finished by July 1. Initial training should be completed by that time or preferably sometime before then. However, some leadership development at each district meeting can provide the needed teamwork support to keep leaders fresh and active. Conducting job-alike question and answer sessions at the second cabinet meeting might be just the thing to help leaders solve sticky problems and provide the spark needed to continue on. If I can help you with leadership development, club or district, contact me. [epgrandma@aol.com](mailto:epgrandma@aol.com), or 915/584/0130,

## Outstanding Youth Contest

PDG Ted Whitley

As I am writing this article, I am preparing to go to Waco for the State Convention. I am sorry to report that the number of entries in the OSY contest is down from last year. The primary cause of this is the conflict with the contest date and high school graduations.

We hope that this problem can be solved in the future.

We have, as usual, some exceptional young ladies and men entered into the contest.

Please let me thank the 2005/2006 council for their confidence in the OSY program and their confidence in me to continue as chairman of the contest. This will be my fourth year to chair the OSY. I had wished for a better showing as the years progressed. However we have been faced with obstructions that were beyond my control. Actually, these are not "problems" they are "opportunities".

I will report on the contest in Waco in my next report.

## LEADER DOGS FOR THE BLIND

by Lion Sandy Griffin  
State Leaderdog Chair  
THE FACTS ARE:

\* \* All certified Dog Guide Schools are governed by the (world wide) "Federation of Guide Schools for the Blind" and the US version "US Guide Dog Council".

\* \* RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA is the leading cause (20%) of blindness in the men and women who attend the Leader Dog School.

DIABETIC RETINOPATHY is a close second (at 12%). About 58% of the students who attend read Braille. More than 41% of the students are between the ages of 21 and 40, with 38% between the ages of 41 and 60. For the person who has been blind since birth, or who is experiencing loss of sight, there is a certain feeling that their future potential is extremely limited. As a recent graduate said, "Training to use a Leader Dog is a promise of a future returned. . a future with grace and human dignity."

\* \* Since 1991, we have also successfully trained deaf-blind teams. We are the only dog guide school in North America that has any full time staff for deaf-blind teams. Leader Dog now has 3 full time instructors on staff who has experience communicating with deaf-blind students and all are American Sign Language (ASL) certified.

\* \* The 1992 Kennel is 65,000 square feet with Over 4.5 miles of plumbing. About 380,000 gallons of water are used every month, and there are more than 100 drains. The electric and gas bills run \$15,000 each month.

\* \* The Polk Residence Center is approx. 70,000 square feet and houses 24 student, 4 private Instructors plus 2 guest suites. Also Orientation and Mobility Program, Banquet facilities to accommodate 300, meeting spaces, several lounges for Student interaction areas and lecture spaces.

## LEADER DOGS FOR THE BLIND

P. O. BOX 5000

1039 S. ROCHESTER ROAD  
ROCHESTER, MI 48307-3115  
Toll Free: (888) 777-5332

## C. LEE SMITH, PDG

Inducted into the Texas Lions Hall of Fame in 2005

Past District Governor C. Lee Smith has led by example in many areas of life including serving his fellowman through his Lionistic endeavors and he is well qualified to receive this honor.

Lion C. Lee joined the Clyde Lions Club in 1965 and has 32-years perfect attendance. During his years in Lionism he has served his Club, District, and State faithfully and has been instrumental in providing valuable leadership to the Clyde Lions Club. Lion C. Lee has served in all the offices of his club, serving as President in 1969 and as Club Secretary for 24-years.

At the District level he has served in many capacities: Zone Chairman, Lt. Governor and Governor of District 2-E1 in 1990-1991. In addition he has served on the District Leadership Development Program, the Ed Skypla Forum, Executive Director of the District 2-E1 Lions Eye Bank, Diabetic Awareness Campaign, and the District Speech and Essay Contest. Lion C. Lee served District 2-E1 as Cabinet Secretary for two terms. Lion C. Lee was elected as MD-2 Council Chairman from District 2-E1 for the year 2005-2006.

PDG C. Lee has been active on the State level serving as a Director of the Texas Lions Camp and as a member of the Camp Public Relations Committee for 15-years. The 1990-1991 Council of Governors elected him to serve as Council Secretary. Lion C. Lee also served as Secretary of the MD-2 Past District Governors Association for eight and a half years. In 1999-2000 he served as President of the Eye Bank Association of Texas.

Lion C. Lee is the recipient of the International President's Award, the International President's Leadership Award, International President's Certificate of Appreciation, two Extension Awards and the District Governor's 100% Award. He has received a Melvin Jones Fellowship Award, a Progressive Jack Weich Fellow, a Life Member of the Texas Lions Camp, and a Century Club Member. Lion C. Lee received a Life Membership in Lions Clubs International from the Past District Governor's Association of Texas.

PDG C. Lee is a dedicated Lions and has worked tirelessly for the benefit of Lionism in every area of service: Membership, Leadership Development, Youth Development, and the Texas Lions Camp.

LION C. LEE SMITH IS TRULY AN  
OUTSTANDING LION AND LEADER  
IN DISTRICT 2-E1 AND MULTIPLE  
DISTRICT 2

## EARL LONG, PDG

Inducted into the Texas Lions Hall of Fame in 2005

Past District Governor Earl Long has led by example in many areas of life including serving his fellowman through his Lionistic endeavors and he is well qualified to receive this honor.

Lion Earl joined the Pleasant Valley Lions Club in Amarillo in 1964. After the Pleasant Valley Club disbanded, Lion Earl was a charter member of the Amarillo Evening Lions Club, then the Amarillo Centennial Lions Club. He has been an extremely active member of the Amarillo North Lions Club since 1991 and has been Club President several times during his Lions career.

At the District level he served three-years as a District 2-T1 representative on the State Fundraising Committee for the International Campaign Sightfirst Program. During this time he traveled the state presenting programs and securing commitments. The Lions of District 2-T1 elected Lion Earl as Vice District Governor in 1994-1995. In 1995-1996 he served as District Governor and was elected by his fellow District Governors to serve the Council as Vice Council Chairman.

During, International Second Vice President, Jimmy Ross' Campaign for International Director in Montreal, Canada, Lion Earl was one of the key members on Lion Jimmy's Campaign Committee and he worked long and hard to help get Lion Jimmy elected.

Lion Earl has always been the first to arrive and the last to leave any project the Amarillo North Lions Club undertakes. Not only does he work his shift, but normally sets up, stays all day, and then takes down the project. For as long as any Amarillo North member has known Lion Earl, he not only works all his club projects, he works all other local Lions Club's projects that he knows about.

PDG Earl is the recipient of a Melvin Jones Fellowship Award, a Texas Lions Fellow Award, a Jack Weich Fellow and a District 2-T1 Lynn Cherry Fellow. He holds a Life Membership in the Texas Lions Camp and has served on the Historical and Financial Committees at the Texas Lions Camp in Kerrville. He also has a Life Membership in the Hi-Plains Eye Bank and the Past District Governors Association of Texas. Lion Earl has attended almost every state meeting since serving as District Governor.

PDG Long works for many humanitarian causes and is often accompanied by his wife June, and granddaughter Whitney. Lion Earl will be an excellent recipient of this cherished award.

LION EARL LONG IS TRULY AN  
OUTSTANDING LION LEADER  
IN DISTRICT 2-T1 AND  
MULTIPLE DISTRICT 2

## IKE FITZGERALD, PDG

Inducted into the Texas Lions Hall of Fame in 2005

Past District Governor Ike Fitzgerald has led by example in many avenues of life including serving his fellowman through his Lionistic endeavors and he is well qualified to receive this honor.

Lion Ike joined the Midland Downtown Lions Club in December 1949 but resigned a few years later due to business conflicts. He has been an active member of the Midland Downtown Lions Club since reinstating his membership in January 1960. Lion Ike has served his Club, District, and State faithfully and has provided valuable leadership.

At the District, and State, level Lion Ike's greatest contribution to humanity and Lionism has been his work in Sight Conservation, especially in the area of eyeglass recycling. Lion Ike was the driving force behind the establishment of the Lions International approved "Texas Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center" in Midland, Texas. The TLERC started as a "kitchen" operation and has developed into a well-managed operation handling over a million pair of glasses a year. Lion Ike has served as MD-2 State Coordinator, and CEO of TLERC, since its inception in 1992. Medical missions have been sent to El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Guyana, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Brazil, and all over the world training teams to do their own eyeglass clinics.

In 1996-1997 he served District 2-A1 as 100% District Governor. Lion Fitzgerald has received the Lions International Leadership Medal and the Top Ten International Understanding and Cooperation Award. Lion Ike holds Life Memberships in Lions Clubs International, the Texas Lions Camp, Texas Boys Ranch, the Western Texas Lions Eye Bank Alliance and the Texas Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center. Lion Ike is the recipient of a Melvin Jones Fellowship Award.

PDG Fitzgerald was the guiding force in creating the Midland Downtown Lions Club Foundation and served as the first president of the foundation in 1994. Lion Ike was recognized by the City of Midland by the proclamation of Mayor J.D. Faircloth declaring June 13, 1993 as "Ike Fitzgerald Day." He was awarded the National Jefferson Award in Midland, in 2004. In 1999 Lion Ike was presented the "Texas Governors Volunteer Award" by then Governor George W. Bush.

LION IKE FITZGERALD IS TRULY AN OUT-  
STANDING LION AND LEADER  
IN DISTRICT 2-A1 AND MULTIPLE DIS-  
TRICT 2

## JACK GROUNDS

Inducted into the Texas Lions Hall of Fame in 2005

Past District Governor Jack Grounds has led by example in many areas of life including serving his fellowman through his Lionistic endeavors and he is well qualified to receive this honor. Lion Jack symbolizes to all what Lionism is, and was meant to be,

Lion Jack has been a member of the Sugarland Lions Club since 1972 and has served in all Club offices. Lion Jack is a past 100% Club President and past 100% Club Secretary. He currently serves his Club as Secretary/Treasurer and Newsletter Editor.

At the District level he has served in many capacities: Zone Chairman, Deputy District Governor, Eye Bank Director, several terms as Texas Lions Camp Director and Lt. Governor. Lion Jack currently serves District 2-S4 in as Chairman of the District Audit Policy Advisory Committee, the District Archives, District Parliamentarian, and Co-Chair for District International Understanding and Cooperation Committee. He is Chairman of the New Member Orientation Committee and has authored a New Member Orientation Program that he presents to Lions in District 2-S4. In 1980-1981 he served the Lions of District 2-S4 as a 100% District Governor.

Lion Jack is the recipient of the International President's Award (the second highest Award given by Lions International), the International President's Commendation Award, the International President's Certificate of Appreciation, the District Governor's Medal of Appreciation, and the Membership Advancement Key (25 New Members). He holds Life Membership in Lions Clubs International, the Texas Lions Camp and the Texas Lions Eye Bank. Lion Jack is a Century Club Member of both the Texas Lions Camp and the Lions World Services for the Blind. He has received the Melvin Jones Fellowship Award and the Jack Weich Fellow.

Most of all, PDG Jack is a valued "Grass Roots Lion" dedicated and committed in service to his Club, District, and Community. It is this dedication of heart, so difficult to measure, that is the paramount attribute of Lion Jack Grounds.

LION JACK GROUNDS IS TRULY AN OUTSTANDING LION LEADER  
IN DISTRICT 2-S4 AND MULTIPLE DISTRICT 2

## S.R. "MOE" CULLY

Inducted into the Texas Lions Hall of Fame in 2005.

Past District Governor Moe Cully has led by example in many areas of life including serving his fellowman through his Lionistic endeavors and he is well qualified to receive this honor.

In 1977 Lion Moe was instrumental in helping organize and Charter the South County Breakfast Lions Club. Prospective members of the club held a fundraising project before the club was chartered; Lion Moe and 3 other members drove to Houston to present a check from the proceeds to "Mr. Bob Hope" who was doing a benefit telethon for the Huguen School in Port Arthur. He served as Charter President of the South County Breakfast Lions Club and currently serves in the office of Club Secretary.

During 28 years as a Lion he has served District 2-S1 graciously, faithfully, and tirelessly. Lion Moe has been a leader, and participant, serving on the District Cabinet continually since 1978. As District Zone Chairman, in 1980-1981, he was responsible for organizing the first Zone fundraising project to benefit a young girl who was to undergo several eye surgeries. He served as District Governor in 1991-1992, organizing 4 new Lions Clubs with a plus 92 new Lion members in District 2-S1. Lion Moe has personally brought 48 members into Lionism.

Lion Moe has been involved at the Texas Lions Camp since 1978. He served 5 terms, 10 years, as an Elected Director from the southern part of District 2-S1. In 1993-1994 he was elected to the position of President of the Texas Lions Camp. He holds Life Membership in the Texas Lions Camp and is a Charter Member of the Century Club. In 1994 he helped organize the Texas Lions Camp Alumni Association and is a Charter Life Member in this association. Lion Moe has received the Progressive Jack Weich Fellow, a Melvin Jones Fellowship Award and is a recipient of 2 International President's Awards.

As an example of his "Lion Heart," he was concerned that there was no public transportation in, mid-and-south, Jefferson County for the handicapped and elderly. Today, due to his hard work, there are 2 buses providing transportation for the elderly and handicapped in this area of the county. Lion Moe has been involved with the Committee for the Employment of the Handicapped Persons, and coined the phrase, "Hire The Hand-Capable." In 2004, as a Board Member of the "Nutrition & Services For Seniors" he established an annual "Fish Fry" fundraising project that raised a net profit of \$7,000.00 for the benefit seniors.

## COMING SOON

Articles on:

Lion World Services for the Blind

Leader Dogs

Texas Lions Camp

Lions Clubs International Fund

Texas Lions Foundation

Leadership

Membership

Youth Exchange

Youth Programs

LEO's

Diabetes

Drug Awareness

Eye Bank Activities

Lionism in the World  
&  
in YOUR Community

### S R "Moe" Cully (contd)

Lion Moe is a big supporter of Lions International, State, and District programs such as the Lions Eye Bank, Texas Lions Foundation, Texas Eyeglass Recycling, East Texas Eyeglass Recycling, Lions World Services for the Blind, and the Lions Clubs International Foundation.

When time permits PDG Moe enjoys golf, going fishing, and working with the Handi-Capable. His tireless commitment to Lions Clubs International, Multiple District 2, and District 2-S1 makes him a perfect and most deserving Lion for the "Texas Lions Hall of Fame."

LION MOE CULLY IS TRULY AN OUTSTANDING LION AND LEADER  
IN DISTRICT 2-S1 AND MULTIPLE DISTRICT 2

## SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP

PDG Ron Knott, State Membership Chairman

A parable is told of a farmer who owned an old mule. The mule fell into the farmer's well. The farmer heard the mule braying – or whatever mules do when they fall into wells.

After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving. Instead, he called his neighbors together, told them what happened, and enlisted them to help haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

Initially, the old mule was hysterical!! But as the farmer and his neighbors continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back, a thought struck him. It suddenly dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back, he should shake it off and step up!

This he did, blow after blow. "Shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up!" he repeated to encourage himself. No matter how painful the blows or distress the situation seemed, the old mule fought panic and just kept right on shaking it off and stepping up.

You're right! It wasn't long before the old mule, battered and exhausted, stepped triumphantly over the wall of that well!!! What seemed like it would bury him actually blessed him—all because of the manner in which he handled his adversity.

That's life! If we face our problems and respond to them positively, refusing to give in to panic, bitterness, or self-pity, the adversities that come along to bury us usually have within them the potential to benefit and bless us. Remember that forgiveness, faith, prayer, praise and hope are excellent ways to "shake it off and step up" out of the wells in we find ourselves.

I equate this parable to our membership problem. We, as Lions, have to shake it off and step up. Membership, or the lack of it, is the responsibility of every Lion in the state of Texas. Membership and extension are also a part of that package. I think three or four districts carried the state for positive growth last year. The responsibility for growth belongs to sixteen districts, not three or four. Realistic goals for every club and every member needs to be established. A plan with a time line should also be put in place. Get commitments on membership and hold Lions accountable for them. We have seen membership numbers increase in the past because Lions were committed to making things happen. We can do that too, but it will take the international family governors, vice-district governors, past district governors, club presidents, vice-presidents, secretaries, treasurers, and all Lions to make this happen. We must make whatever changes need to grow this great organization. The changes need to be made now.

Membership numbers for March show a negative 805. S-2 and S-4 showed a positive membership growth for March. Congratulations on your success.

I leave you with a quote by Mickey Rooney-" You always pass failure on the way to success."