

Lion's Clubs doing something about world problems since 1917

(NC) - Do you want world peace? Are you concerned about teenage drug abuse? How about all of those people affected by these recent hurricanes and earthquakes.

Well, you may not know it, but Lions clubs around the world and in your community are actually doing something about these problems.

Lionism began in the United States in 1917 with the ideals of serving less fortunate members of the community and creating a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world. Lions Clubs International has grown to become the largest service organization in the world represented in 166 countries by 39,000 clubs with 1.5 million members. In Canada there are more than 54,000 members volunteering their time with 1,914 clubs.

And, these folks don't just sit around discussing the weather. The make things happen. Toward fostering world peace the Lions clubs have developed a variety of international programs where clubs from different parts of the world work together. For example, each January Lions club sponsors an amateur radio contest that encourages operators from around the world to make friends. These contacts have proven invaluable during times of natural disaster and crisis.

Lions Clubs International have important ties to the United Nations sponsoring an annual international peace poster contest. Youth exchange and pen-pal programs, youth camps and stamp swapping clubs have all been developed to create friendship and unity around the world.

Lions clubs succeed because they have the autonomy to turn their ideals into practical projects. Each club is free to participate in all of these larger programs as well as to support local causes.

The Lions clubs current targets for support are sight restoration research and diabetes education and treatment. They also sponsor a successful Canada-wide drug abuse prevention program.

Homes for the deaf and blind, eye banks, and medical equipment represent just a few of the hundreds of fund-raising clubs projects undertaken by Lions all across our country. When disasters strike the Lions are also there to help victims of earthquakes, hurricanes and famine.

In Canada, Lions clubs have been working to better their communities for over 60-years. These volunteers are actually doing something to solve many of our most important concerns. They deserve the support and respect of all Canadians.

Social assistance increase effective Jan. 1, 1990

Two major Social Assistance changes, part of Ontario's \$45 million reform of social assistance programs, came into effect on January 1, 1990.

The first improvement, announced in May 1989 will provide a six per cent increase in the basic allowance for recipients of Family Benefits and General Welfare Assistance.

The second improvement, in shelter allowances, will assist renters and homeowners who receive social assistance. Shelter costs will be covered 100 per cent up to new, higher ceilings. Previously, only 80 per cent of the cost of shelter was covered. These changes will benefit most individuals and families who receive social assistance.

Other significant changes were implemented in October 1989. The Supports to Employment Program (STEP) ensures that social assistance recipients have financial incentives to take employment and are increasingly better off with each dollar earned

in the workforce. In addition, to recognize the costs of raising children, \$54 million was provided to improve the rates for families on social assistance.

Recipients can receive substantial increases as a result of the October 1989 and January 1990 improvements. For example, a single parent with two children under ten years of age, on Family Benefits, and paying rent of \$600 per month will receive \$206 more in January 1990 compared to the same month one year ago. This represents an increase of 20.5 per cent.

A two-adult family on General Welfare Assistance, with three children ages 7, 9, and 13 and paying \$700 per month rent will receive \$360 more per month or 30.4 per cent more over January 1989.

These changes reflect the government's priorities to address the problems of child poverty and affordable housing.

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