

# The SCOOP

**Newsletter of the Claymont, Delaware  
Lions Club**

**January 2026**



## **PROVIDING 87 YEARS OF SERVICE-TO-OTHERS IN THE CLAYMONT AREA**

**Carol LeCates, President**

**Dick Gackenbach, Treasurer**

**Lee Bird, Secretary**

**Lisa MB Johnson, SCOOP Editor**

### **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:**

Hello Fellow Lions:

Happy New Year! We had a lot to be thankful for in the last half of 2025, especially in December.

- The Club had a very successful Christmas Tree Sale - thank you to everyone who helped make it such a win!
- The Club did a wonderful job with the Claymont Christmas Parade. People were lined up along Philadelphia Pike to watch, and there was even a little snow to add to the festivities. Adults and children alike enjoyed the festive spirit.
- PDG Glenn and Lion Gail Williams graciously hosted a lovely Governor's Ball in Harrington on December 6<sup>th</sup> honoring DG Gail and Lion Kirt Krebs.
- Claymont Lions proudly participated in the Visually Impaired Holiday Party on December 13<sup>th</sup>, always a heartwarming and impactful event.
- The Club provided Christmas gifts and warm coats to Claymont teens, ensuring they felt remembered and cared for during the holidays.
- Gifts and toys were donated to the Knollwood Community Center, helping bring smiles to children during the holidays.
- Lion Fran and our Vice Presidents planned a wonderful holiday party for our club members—thank you for a wonderful evening of fellowship!

These efforts—and many more, including food collection and medical equipment deliveries—helped make the holidays brighter for so many. This list only scratches the surface of the service our Lions provide.

We truly are a remarkable club, dedicated to serving with compassion, generosity, and teamwork. Thank you to every Lion and every committee for the countless hours you devote to making a difference.

On a personal note, thank you all for your kindness and support following the recent passing of my mother. My family and I deeply appreciate your prayers, condolences, and thoughtful expressions of sympathy.

Happy New Year! Wishing you a year filled with joy, prosperity, good health, and laughter.

KL Carol

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY JANUARY LIONS**



*Happy Birthday to the following Lions born in January:*

<b>1/05</b>	<b>Frank DeMarinis</b>	<b>1/08</b>	<b>Michael Elder</b>
<b>1/21</b>	<b>David Ganfield</b>	<b>1/21</b>	<b>Joe McCole</b>
<b>1/29 Amy Vitsorek</b>			

Those Lions whose birthdays fall in a month of the meeting are reminded to bring a wrapped gift for auction at the first dinner meeting in that month. If your birthday falls during non-meeting months, Lions are asked to bring a wrapped gift to the next dinner meeting. Monies collected from this activity are deposited in the club Administrative Account and used to support member activities and club financial needs.

## **JANUARY & FEBRUARY DINNER MEETINGS**

**Meeting Location: Duffer's Mills** (1600 Naaman's Creek Road, Garnet Valley, PA).  
**Social Hour begins at 5:30 p.m. Dinner begins at 6:30 p.m. Cost for dinner is \$30 (including tax and tip).**

If any Lion or their guest has a dietary restriction, please let Lion Frazier know when you make your reservation so that he can arrange for a special meal that will meet your dietary needs.

Program Chair, Lion Frazier Van Velsor, has scheduled the following speakers for our upcoming dinner meetings. The following speakers are scheduled for January and February.

### **January 14, 2026**

Peace Poster Awards & Claymont Lion, Lisa Lawson

### **January 28, 2026**

District Governor Gail Krebs & Cabinet

### **February 11, 2026**

Delaware Special Olympics - Lion Barbara Spence & Athlete

### **February 25, 2026**

Brandywine School District – Communications Officer, Bill O'Hanlon

## **JANUARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

The next Claymont Lions Club Board of Directors meeting will be held on **Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.** at the home of King Lion Carol and PCC Don LeCates, 19 Cameo Rd., Claymont, DE.

**Remember that all club members are invited to attend Board meetings where the official business of the club is conducted.** Those present may participate in meeting dialogue. Only Board members vote on items requiring Board action.

## **DECEMBER DINNER MEETING SPOTLIGHT: SOJOURNER'S PLACE RESTORING HOPE AND STABILITY**



*L to R: Lion Frazier VanVelsor, Morgan Ikonne, and King Lion Carol LeCates*

Our final dinner meeting of 2025 was held on December 3, and it was both meaningful and inspiring. As we gathered, we were reminded that December 6 is Lions Day in Claymont, a celebration we proudly mark each year with our Annual Claymont Christmas Parade, bringing joy and holiday spirit to our community.

We were honored to welcome Morgan Ikonne, Executive Director of Sojourner's Place, as our guest speaker for the evening. Morgan shared the powerful story and mission of Sojourner's Place, an organization that has been transforming lives in our community for

more than 36 years.

Founded by Sister Jeanne Cashman, Sojourner's Place was built on a simple but profound vision: to create a true *home* for individuals experiencing homelessness—one where residents are not rushed out, but instead are given the time, dignity, and support needed to rebuild their lives. Unlike short-term shelters, Sojourner's Place allows residents to stay as long as necessary while they work toward independence.

Since its founding, more than 3,000 individuals have “graduated” from Sojourner's Place, moving from homelessness to stability. Residents receive far more than a bed. Sojourner's Place provides:

- A safe, supportive living environment
- Three nutritious meals each day
- Hygiene products and personal care items
- A clothing closet, including professional attire for job interviews
- Life-skills training and workforce readiness support to help residents become employable and secure stable housing

Every donation helps restore hope, dignity, and opportunity for individuals working to reclaim their independence. Financial contributions, as well as in-kind donations, make a real and lasting difference.

#### How You Can Help:

- Donate online: [www.sojourners.org](http://www.sojourners.org)
- Arrange to drop off donations by contacting the Program Coordinator at 302-764-4713.

We thank Morgan Ikonne for sharing this impactful message and reminding us that when we support organizations like Sojourner's Place, we are not just giving assistance—we are helping change lives.



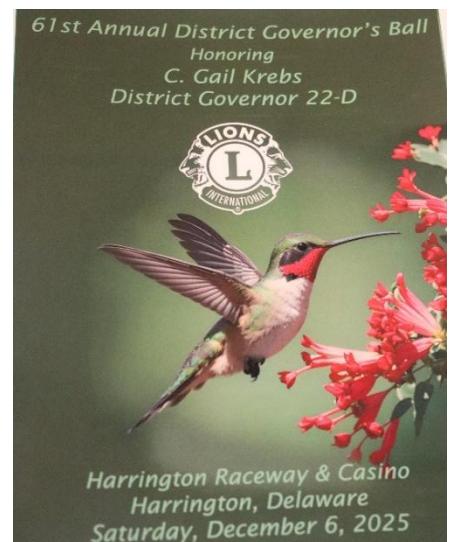
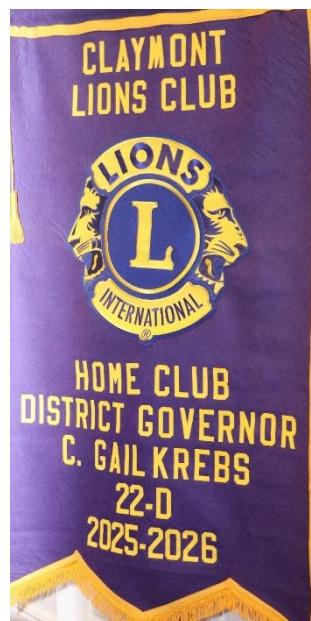
*District Governor Gail Krebs is pictured with her Partner in Service and Administrative Assistant, Lion Kirt Krebs, along with Connie Bozovich, Gail's supervisor at State Farm, who joined in the celebration at the Governor's Ball.*

#### 61<sup>st</sup> Annual DISTRICT 22D GOVERNOR'S BALL

Several members of the Claymont Lions Club attended the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual District 22-D Governor's Ball, honoring District Governor C. Gail Krebs on Saturday, December 6, 2025 at the Harrington Raceway and Casino in Harrington, DE. The guest speaker was International Director (ID) Robert "Ski" Marcinkowski from Fairbanks, Alaska. ID Ski was accompanied by his wife, Lion Janis who is a past district governor and Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow.



*District Governor Gail Krebs with her husband and Partner in Service, Lion Kirt Krebs, as he escorts her to the dignitary head table.*



## More District Governor Ball Photos



## **CABINET MEETING**

District Governor Gail Krebs will be hosting the District 22D Third Cabinet Meeting on Thursday, January 29, 2026, at the Modern Maturity Center in Dover, DE. The Cabinet Meeting is open to all Lions. The cost is \$28, and registrations are due by January 18<sup>th</sup>. Please send RSVP and payment to CT Gina Daniels (checks made payable to District 22-D) at 175 Oak Hill School Road, Townsend, DE 19734. When you send your reservation, please provide an email address so that you may receive a confirmation of your reservation.



## **FEBRUARY PANCAKE BREAKFAST**

Our next Pancake Breakfast is scheduled for Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at the Claymont Fire Hall.

## **PANCAKE DAY BAKE TABLE - CALLING ALL BAKERS!**

Our Pancake Breakfast wouldn't be complete without the ever-popular **Bake Table**, filled with delicious treats generously donated by our talented Lions and supporters. If you love to bake, we invite you to bring a homemade goodie to share when you come to help—or when you stop by to enjoy breakfast! Your baked donations add extra sweetness to the morning and help make this event a favorite year after year.

## **HOLIDAY PARTY HIGHLIGHTS: FOOD, FUN & FELLOWSHIP**



Wow! We had a *full house* for our Holiday gathering at Duffers Mill, and what a wonderful evening it was! From the moment we arrived, the room was filled with laughter, warmth, and true Lions fellowship.

FOOD, FUN, and FELLOWSHIP—need we say more? After taking care of club business, the evening quickly shifted into celebration mode. Lion Dick

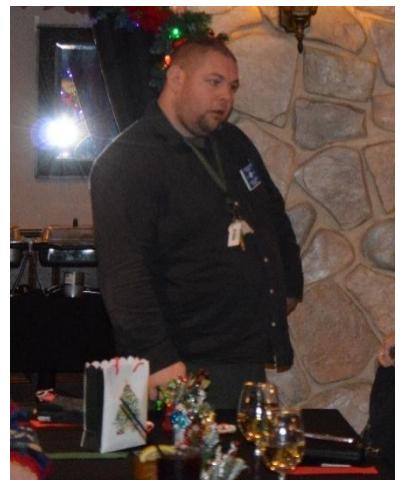
Gackenbach treated us to *Story Time*, leaving everyone chuckling and smiling. He also shared the great news that our Christmas Tree Sales were a success—a wonderful accomplishment for our club!

The fun continued with HOLIDAY TRIVIA! Our 3rd Vice President, Lion Fran Herschberger, hosted three lively holiday trivia games, keeping everyone engaged and on their toes. Lucky winners went home with festive gifts, adding extra cheer to the night.

Lion Fran also coordinated a fantastic Basket of Cheer and created beautiful holiday table centerpieces, which were gifted to members at the end of the evening—a thoughtful and festive touch that made the night even more special.

The laughter, friendly competition, and generous spirit made for an unforgettable evening. Members left with smiles on their faces—and some very nice prizes to place under their Christmas trees!

Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make this holiday celebration such a success. This is what being a Lion is all about—coming together in service, friendship, and joy.



## 2025 Holiday Social Photos



## 2025 Holiday Social Photos



## **CLAYMONT LIONS CHRISTMAS TREE SALE REPORT 2025**



This year the Club received 997 Balsam Trees from Canada and 100 Frasers from our supplier in Chester County. The trees from Canada were unloaded the Friday after Thanksgiving with the assistance of the Brandywine High School Soccer and Football teams along with the Scouts from Troop 70, and many Lions and family members.

Once unloading was complete, stands and lighting were set in place and the Scouts began opening the trees. Pricing began and we were ready to sell by 4 PM. Sales were strong on Saturday but light rain limited sales on Sunday. Unfortunately, we lost 2 Sundays of sales to snow and rain. However, we still

had a successful sale and will be able to provide lots of services to the Claymont Community.

Our Chief Program Co-Chair, Lion **Dick Gackenbach**, sends a heartfelt **thank you** to everyone who helped make our Christmas Tree Sale such a tremendous success:

- **Our loyal customers**, whose support year after year makes this fundraiser possible.
- **The Claymont Fire Company**, for generously allowing us to use their site for the past 22 years—and for their continued partnership well into the future.
- **Lion Sallie Ann Conner**, for providing storage containers at no cost to the club.
- **Brandywine High School Soccer and Football Teams**, along with **Scout Troop 70**, for their hard work unloading and opening trees.
- **All Lions who supported the sale**, from tagging and setup to teardown, sales, and cashiering—every role mattered.
- **Lions and spouses** who volunteered their time to prepare warm food on the weekends, helping keep everyone energized.
- **Frazier VanVelsor and JT Walton**, who generously opened the lot on nearly every weekday.

A very special **thank you** to our dedicated **Co-Chairs—Keith Guzma, Don LeCates, Tom McDonough, Mandy Scarborough, and Matt Yoder**—for the countless hours and tireless commitment you gave each day throughout the sale.

The Christmas Tree Sale is a major undertaking, and its success truly depends on everyone's efforts. We could not have done this without you! Your teamwork, generosity, and Lions spirit made this fundraiser a true success.

## CLAYMONT LIONS LIGHT UP THE COMMUNITY WITH THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARADE!

We proudly hosted our Annual Christmas Parade, and what a tremendous success it was! Spectators lined the parade route, filling the streets with holiday cheer as they enjoyed an impressive lineup of festive floats, dancers, marching bands, and decorated vehicles. The excitement and smiles along the way truly captured the spirit of the season.

The **Claymont Lions Club float** was a standout, beautifully decorated by our dedicated members and showcasing the creativity and pride of our club.

We were also honored to welcome **International Director Robert “Ski” Marcinkowski and his wife, Janis**, who traveled all the way from Alaska. They walked the entire parade route with us while visiting our district to speak at the District Governor’s Ball—a special treat for our club and community alike.



holiday celebration for the entire community. What a great effort and another shining example of Lions in action!

A heartfelt thank you to the many Claymont Lions whose hard work made this event possible. From traffic control and posting road and no-parking signs throughout the community, to distributing parade flyers to local businesses along Philadelphia Pike, decorating the float, handing out candy to delighted children, and collecting signs after the parade—every task mattered.

Your teamwork, dedication, and Lions spirit turned this parade into a joyful

## **HUMANITARIAN AWARD**

The Humanitarian Award is presented annually to an individual who has distinguished themselves through unusual service in work-related or volunteer activity within the service area of the Claymont Lions Club. Nominations for the Award are made by Claymont Lions Club members. If you know of an individual who meets the criteria for this Award, please complete the application below and provide the necessary supporting detail. All applications must be received by the February 28, 2026.

Committee members are Kim Robbins (Chair), PCT Dick Gackenbach (Co-Chair), First DG Gail Krebs, Nolan Lewis, Bill Moser, and George Ozer. The application is located at the bottom of the newsletter.

## **DELAWARE LIONS FOUNDATION (DLF) BREAKFAST**

The Delaware Lions Foundation annual breakfast will be held on Saturday, February 21st at 9:15 a.m. at the Modern Maturity Center. Details about the breakfast are located in the flyer at the bottom of this email. We will be registering for the breakfast as a club. Please let Lion Amanda know if you plan to attend.

## **UPCOMING DISTRICT EVENTS**

- Melvin Jones Breakfast for LCIF – January 10, 2026
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Cabinet Meeting – Modern Maturity Center – January 29, 2026
- Mid-Winter Conference – Annapolis, MD – January 31, 2026
- Polar Bear Plunge for Special Olympics – February 1, 2026
- Delaware Lions Foundation Breakfast – February 21, 2026





### **CHECK PAYMENTS**

When writing checks for dues, meals, or other club events, please make them **payable to the Claymont Lions Club** unless instructed otherwise.

### **MEDICAL EQUIPMENT**

Lion Kirt requests that anyone in the club who needs to contact him regarding medical equipment to please contact him at 302-477-1271. Please leave a message if there is no answer.

### **MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVES ARE MONEY IN YOUR POCKET!!**

That's correct.... **MONEY** in **YOUR** pocket! The Board has approved an incentive program geared at growing our club's membership while earning rewards for sponsors. Sponsors of new members will receive a \$25 gift card upon induction of their new member during this 2025-2026 Lion year. Then, at the end of the 2025-2026 Lion Year, a \$50 gift card will be offered to the one club member that sponsors the most members (which has to be more than one new member). If there is more than one member who has sponsored the same number of most new members, then both/all of those sponsors will be offered a \$50 gift card. Let the competition begin and our new members roll in!

### **SCOOP NEWSLETTER**

If you have information or a suggestion for the Scoop, please send the information to me by the last day of each month. **PLEASE REFERENCE “SCOOP” in the subject of any email to make sure that information is not overlooked.**

## **EMPTY INK CARTRIDGES BENEFIT CLUB ADMINISTRATIVE FUND**

PCS Gail & Lion Kirt are collecting empty computer Ink Cartridges. Please save your cartridges and contact them to arrange dropping them off. The cash we receive from recycled cartridges is deposited into the Club's administrative account. This is also being done as a recycling project for the District Activities Contest.



### **CAN TABS**

PCS Gail & Lion Kirt are collecting can tabs for Tender Hearts, Inc. Tender Hearts is a 501c3 organization whose mission is to support medically fragile children in order to help provide them with a better quality of life. Please save can tabs and contact Lions Gail and Kirt for drop off. They will make sure that the tabs are delivered to Tender Hearts.



***NEXT SCOOP DEADLINE:***

***Saturday, January 31, 2026***

***Submit all information to Bulletin Editor at  
TYLISAJ@aol.com.***

***PLEASE REFERENCE “SCOOP” in The subject of  
any mail to make sure that information is not  
overlooked.***



**CLAYMONT LIONS CLUB  
HUMANITARIAN AWARD APPLICATION**

The Humanitarian Award is presented annually to an individual who has distinguished themselves through unusual service in work-related or volunteer activity within the service area of the Claymont Lions Club. Nominations for the Award are made by Claymont Lions Club members. If you know of an individual who meets the criteria for this Award, please complete the application below and provide the necessary supporting detail. All applications must be received by the February 28, 2026. Please remember Lions are not eligible for this award.

Committee members are Kim Robbins (Chair), PCT Dick Gackenbach (Co-Chair), First DG Gail Krebs, Nolan Lewis, Bill Moser, and George Ozer.

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Individual's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

On a separate sheet of paper please identify activities/involvements which support your recommendation of this individual for consideration as the 2026 Humanitarian Award recipient. Please provide sufficient information so your candidate may receive full consideration as the committee evaluates all who are recommended.

Applications and supporting documents must be returned to Kim Robbins, 1517 Rockland Rd., Unit #202, Wilmington, DE 19803 or by email at [kim.robb202@comcast.net](mailto:kim.robb202@comcast.net) on or before February 28, 2026.



## CELEBRATING OVER 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

December, 2025

Dear Lions, and Leos:

The Directors of the Delaware Lions Foundation are proud to announce that the **28th Annual Delaware Lions Foundation Breakfast will be held on Saturday, February 21, 2026, at the Modern Maturity Center located at 1121 Forrest Avenue Dover Delaware 19904. The breakfast will begin at 9:15 am.** We once again celebrate the success of our growing Foundation by honoring Past International Director Ted Reiver and the memory of Past International Directors Ralph N. Helm, James A. McCarty and Ted Reiver. These Lions have provided invaluable service and contributions to the growth of the Delaware Lions Foundation.

You do not have to be a Ralph Helm, Jim McCarty, or Ted Reiver Fellow to enjoy the fellowship and delicious buffet breakfast. This breakfast is open to all who want to attend. Plan to have your Club represented.

If your club would like to present one of the Foundation Fellowships at the breakfast, please notify our Foundation Secretary, PCS B.J. Ryder.

**Clubs are also encouraged to present annual donations at this event.**

**To summarize:**

**28th Annual Delaware Lions Foundation Fellows Breakfast**

**Saturday, February 21, 2026 – 9:15 am**

**Modern Maturity Center, Dover DE 19904**

**Cost: \$25 per person**

**R.S.V.P. DEADLINE is FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

**If you have any questions, call PDG Don at 302-798-3407 or PCS BJ at 302-538-6770**

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Please detach and send this form with payment to:

PDG Don LeCates  
19 Cameo Road  
Claymont, DE 19703

Club Name \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (please attach list if needed)

\_\_\_\_\_ Lions, Leos or Guests attending @ \$25 each \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Delaware Lions Foundation.

Please add in the memo section “DLF Fellows Breakfast”.

“Delaware Lions make a difference... One life at a time”

“WE SERVE”