

The SCOOP

Newsletter of the Claymont, Delaware Lions Club
April 2026



PROVIDING 88 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,

Welcome Spring! After a particularly cold winter, spring has finally arrived. Temperatures have warmed considerably, and the daffodils, hyacinths, and tulips are now in full bloom. It truly is a beautiful time of year.

We were thrilled to welcome Abby Spor, granddaughter of PCT Dick Gackenbach, as our guest speaker at the March 11th dinner meeting. Abby, who received a Claymont Lions Club scholarship approximately ten years ago, shared her experiences of volunteering with the club during Pancake Breakfasts while growing up. She spoke about how these experiences inspired her to serve others. Our 88th Charter Night was celebrated on March 25th at Duffer's. Lion Fran Hershberger and the Vice Presidents did an excellent job planning the event, creating a wonderful atmosphere in the room. Congratulations to all recipients who were recognized that evening—they truly deserved the honors. There are still a few recognitions left to present, which will be awarded at an upcoming dinner meeting.

Thank you to Lion Bill Gerety and the Pre-School Vision Screening Committee for their outstanding work at the Brandywine Childcare Center, located at the Claymont Community Center. The committee screened 62 children and referred 15 for eye exams. Their service will have a positive impact on these children's lives for years to come.

Congratulations to Co-chairs PCT Dick Gackenbach and Lion Nolan Lewis, along with their committee, for organizing a very successful Veterans Resource Fair on March 27th at Trinity Presbyterian Church. The information provided at the fair was undoubtedly helpful to the veterans who attended.

I am looking forward to our next Pancake Breakfast, scheduled for April 18th. Co-Chairs Lions Bob Hershberger and George Ozer consistently do an excellent job organizing the breakfast, and Lion Fran does a great job of overseeing the bake table.

Remember to sign up for White Canes, which will be held from April 30 to May 2. Please contact Lion Frazier VanVelsor to volunteer for a shift.

The Claymont Lions Club continues to excel in serving the community. Members are engaged daily in activities such as picking up food for the Claymont Community Center, delivering hospital equipment, and conducting pre-school vision screenings. Through these efforts, club members consistently make a positive difference in the lives of others.

Thank you for your dedication and service.

KL Carol



HAPPY BIRTHDAY APRILLIONS

Happy Birthday to the following Lions born in April:

4/04 George Ferguson

4/18 Larry Lambert

4/18 Bill McNevech

4/29 Pete Bartolozzi

Those Lions whose birthdays fall in the 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 month, 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.

APRIL & MAY 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 in April and May.

April 8, 2026

Humanitarian Award Night & Club Elections

April 22, 2026

Claymont Fire House - LUCAS Chest Compression System

May 13, 2026

Vo-Tech Scholarship Night

May 27, 2026

College Scholarship Night



APRIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The next Claymont Lions Club Board of Directors meeting will be held on **Wednesday, April 15, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.** at the home of DG Gail and Kirt Krebs, 17 Ridgeland Rd., Claymont.

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.



*L to R: PCT Dick, Abby Spor, and
KL Carol LeCates*

FULL CIRCLE MOMENT: SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT RETURNS TO INSPIRE THE PRIDE

Our March 11, 2026 dinner meeting was filled with pride and inspiration as we welcomed a very special guest speaker—Abby Spor, granddaughter of PCT Dick Gackenbach and a Claymont Lions Club scholarship recipient from nearly a decade ago.

Abby took us on a heartfelt journey back to her childhood, sharing memories of volunteering alongside our members at Pancake Breakfasts. With warmth and gratitude, she spoke about how those early mornings of service and community left a lasting impression on her life.

What began as simple acts of helping out has grown into a deep-rooted commitment to serving others. Abby's story is a powerful reminder that the seeds we plant through mentorship, service, and support truly do come full circle. Her message was not only inspiring but a testament to the lasting impact of the Lions' mission in shaping future leaders.

It was an evening that reminded us all—what we do matters, and the lives we touch today will carry that spirit forward tomorrow.





APRIL PANCAKE BREAKFAST

The club's second **Pancake Day** of the Lion year is scheduled for **Saturday, April 18th** at the **Claymont Fire Hall** on Philadelphia Pike. **Volunteers** are requested to join us at the Fire Hall at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, April 17th to help set-up.

Tickets are \$8 each and were distributed at a recent Dinner Meeting. Tickets for children will be \$3 at the door. If you have not received your tickets, please contact Lion Fran.

Members of the community look forward to our club's Pancake Breakfast. Please plan to attend and cover as many shifts as possible to help make this Pancake Breakfast fundraiser a success.

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.



88 YEARS STRONG: A LEGACY OF SERVICE, A NIGHT OF CELEBRATION!

Our 88th Charter Night was joyfully celebrated on March 25th at Duffer's, bringing together Lions for an evening filled with pride, recognition, and fellowship. The room was alive with energy and camaraderie as we honored the legacy and impact of our club.



A special thank you to Lion Fran Hershberger and our Vice Presidents, whose thoughtful planning and attention to detail created a warm and festive atmosphere that made the evening truly memorable.

We were especially honored to welcome PCC Ralph Schiefferstein as our guest speaker, accompanied by his wife, Sheila. Celebrating over 56 years of marriage and nearly 35 years of dedicated service as a Lion, Ralph brought both wisdom and inspiration to the evening. In his remarks, he reflected on the rich history of the Claymont Lions Club, noting its founding on February 23, 1928, at a meeting held at Claymont High School. As the seventh Lions club established in Delaware and the first in the Brandywine Hundred area, our club has a proud and enduring legacy. Ralph also spoke passionately about the club's extraordinary commitment to serving the Claymont community—a legacy that continues to thrive today.

We extend heartfelt congratulations to all of the award recipients who were recognized that night—each one so deserving of the honor. Your dedication and service continue to make a meaningful difference in our community.

The celebration isn't over just yet! A few additional recognitions remain and will be presented at an upcoming dinner meeting. We look forward to continuing the celebration and honoring even more of our outstanding members.

Here's to 88 years of service—and many more to come!

SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Chevron – 15 Years of Service	Lion Gail Williams
Kusiak Lions Youth Fellowship	Lion Duncan Calder
Ralph N. Helm Fellow	Lion Debbie Maybroda

James A. McCarty Fellow

Lion Billy Cole
Lion Dave Ganfield

Ted Reiver Fellow

Lion Bob Hershberger
Lion Lorraine Wirt

Melvin Jones Fellow

Lion Lisa MB Johnson

Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow

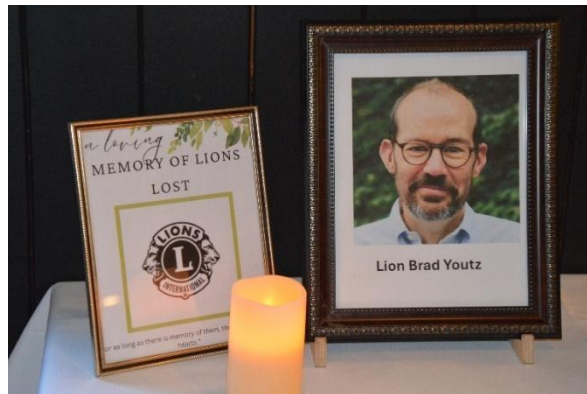
Lion Don LeCates

AltruVision Lions Eye Bank

Lion Shirley M. Ibrahimovic

Lion of the Year goes to.....
Lion Fran Hershberger

Celebrating Lion Brad Youtz
In Loving Lion Memory



Speaker PCC Ralph Shiefferstein



88th Charter Night Celebration Photos

Kusiak Award recipient, Lion Duncan and presenter, Lion Amanda Scarborough



Ralph Helm Fellow, Lion Debbie (middle) with King Lion Carol (L) and Speaker, PCC Ralph (R)

James McCarty Fellow, Lion Billy with King Lion Carol (L) and Speaker, PCC Ralph (R)



88th Charter Night Celebration Photos



James McCarty Fellow, Lion Dave with King Lion Carol (L)



Ted Reiver Fellow, Lion Bob with King Lion Carol (L) and Speaker, PCC Ralph (R)



Ted Reiver Fellow, Lion Lorraine with King Lion Carol (L) and Speaker, PCC Ralph (R)

88th Charter Night Celebration Photos

Melvin Jones Fellow, Lion Lisa and presenter, PCT Lee Bird



Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow, Lion Don LeCates (R), being pinned by presenter, PCT Lee Bird (L)

AltruVision Eye Bank Award recipient Lion Shirley (L) and presenter, Lion Ann Reiver (R)



LION OF THE YEAR!

Lion of the Year, Fran Hershberger (L) and presenter, Lion Bill Gerety (R)



Recognizing Lions clubs leading the way in service



Delaware Lions Sight Night



*Featuring special guest speaker
Ted Fiala
donor family member*

Join us for a powerful story of restored sight and exciting new updates from AltruVision!

Reserve a table for your club or group
Table of 8 – \$200 (best value)
Individual ticket - \$29 per person

Call or email to reserve your seats
☎ 215-563-1679
✉ hwright@altruvision.org

Checks made payable to:
AltruVision – A Lions Eye Bank
401 N 3rd St Ste 305
Philadelphia, PA 19123



Modern Maturity Center
1121 Forrest Ave
Dover, DE 19904

Thursday, April 30, 2026
5:30 PM

"A favorite among our community. This event gets better every year."





BRIGHT FUTURES BEGIN WITH CLEAR VISION: LIONS MAKE AN IMPACT AT BRANDYWINE CHILDCARE CENTER

On March 18th the Claymont Lions were invited to provide a vision screening at the Brandywine Childcare Center located at the Claymont Community Center.

The event was arranged by the Regional Director Ms. Mica Jackson and assistance was provided by

Family Support Coordinator Erin Naylor (pictured to the right) and Keira Rockhart Director (in the middle).

Lions Betty Lou Chiffons, Lorraine Wirt, Lorraine Santow, Drayton and Bill Gerety took part in screening the children of ages one to five years old. It was a smiley fidgety funny time and 62 children were screened. Of the 62, 15 were referred for professional eye exams proving the necessity for this service in the Community.

Thank you to Lion Bill Gerety and the Pre-School Vision Screening Committee for their outstanding work at the Brandywine Childcare Center, located at the Claymont Community Center. The committee screened 62 children and referred 15 for eye exams. Their service will have a positive impact on these children's lives for years to come.

HONORING OUR VETERANS: A GROWING COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR

The Claymont Lions proudly hosted a successful Veterans Resource Fair on March 27th at Trinity Presbyterian Church—an event dedicated to connecting local veterans with valuable services and support.

From benefits information to healthcare support, the fair provided veterans with access to services they may not have otherwise known about. The continued growth of this event reflects its importance within the community and its potential to reach even more veterans in the years ahead. With a goal of serving 100 attendees in the future, the momentum is strong and inspiring.

Special thanks to Suzette Moore, Public Relations Officer with the Veterans Benefits Administration, and Valerie Hardwood, Public Relations Officer for the VA Medical Center, for their efforts in promoting the event and helping expand its reach. Appreciation



is also extended to Wilmington Mission BBQ for generously catering the event and for their continued support moving forward.

A heartfelt congratulations to Co-Chairs PCT Dick Gackenbach and Lion Nolan Lewis, along with their committee, for organizing a successful and impactful event. This year's fair welcomed over 30 veterans—an increase from last year—and featured eight vendors offering valuable resources. Nolan also extends sincere thanks to all Lions and Trinity Church members who helped plan, set up, and execute the event, including Lions Kim, Randy, Glenn, Kirt, Lee, Bill Mosler, Duncan, Dick, and everyone who worked behind the scenes.

This event is more than just a gathering—it's a growing mission to ensure our veterans are informed, supported, and appreciated. The Claymont Lions are proud to be part of something that truly makes a difference.

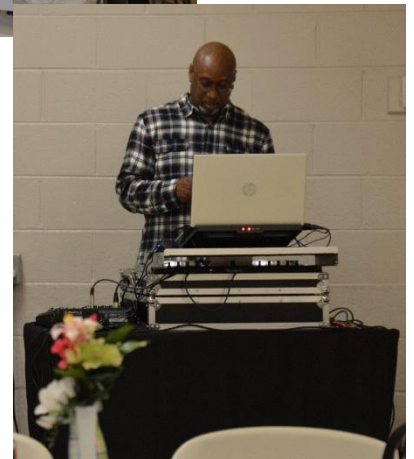
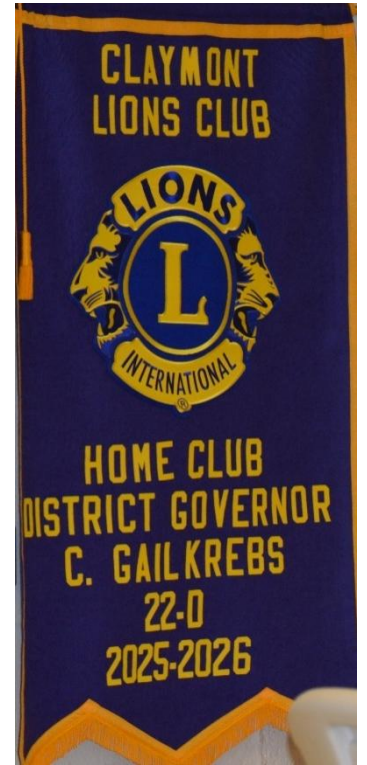


MID-WINTER SOCIAL: A NIGHT OF LIONS SPIRIT!

The 2026 Mid-Winter Social was a wonderful evening of celebration and fellowship, held on March 14 at the Felton Fire Hall. The event honored District Governor Gail Krebs, whose leadership continues to inspire Lions across District 22-D.

Guests enjoyed a delicious meal and great music, creating a relaxed atmosphere filled with conversation and connection.

Thank you to everyone who attended and volunteered to make the evening a success. We look forward to celebrating together again in 2027!



GUIDED BY PURPOSE: AN INSPIRING NIGHT WITH LEADER DOGS FOR THE BLIND

On Thursday, March 19, 2026, an unforgettable evening of inspiration and impact took place at the Modern Maturity Center in Dover, Delaware, as the Leader Dog for the Blind Program brought the community together for a powerful and uplifting event.

The highlight of the evening was a moving presentation by Leader Dog Representative Joey Johnson and his beloved guide dog, Tucker — affectionately nicknamed “Popcorn.” Joey shared his personal journey, including his diagnosis of Retinitis Pigmentosa at age 30 and the life-changing transition from using a white cane to partnering with a leader dog. He spoke candidly about the difficult decision to stop driving following an accident, and how the Leader Dog program restored his independence, dignity, and confidence.

Attendees also learned about the incredible scope of the program, which operates with an annual budget of approximately \$22 million and graduated 105 leader dogs in 2025 — including five specially trained to assist individuals who are both deaf and visually impaired.

With 122 people in attendance, the evening was not only inspiring but impactful. Generous support from those present resulted in \$20,262 raised that night, contributing to an impressive total of \$42,152 donated so far this year.

Joey also shared his work with the Center for Independent Living, where he helps teach pre-employment skills, further demonstrating his commitment to empowering others. The mission of Leader Dogs for the Blind—to empower individuals who are blind or visually impaired with lifelong skills for safe and independent travel—was truly brought to life. Their vision of a world where everyone can travel safely and independently resonated deeply with all in attendance.

It was a night that reminded us all of the power of service, resilience, and the life-changing bond between humans and their guide dogs.



*Sitting L to R: KL Carol LeCates, Lion Duncan Calder, Lion Joey Johnson and his guide dog Tucker
Standing L to R: Lion Kirt Krebs, DG Gail Krebs, Lion Bob Schlosberg, Lion Billy Cole, PCC Don LeCates, Lion Lisa MB Johnson, and Lion Tom McDonough*

FOURTH CABINET MEETING – RESCHEDULED

District Governor, Gail Krebs, has scheduled her fourth and final cabinet meeting to be held on Sunday, April 26, 2026 at the Greenwood Fire Hall, 12611 Fire Hall Avenue, Greenwood, DE. The gathering will begin at 12:00 Noon with the meeting to begin at 1:00 p.m.

There is **NO COST and the meal will be COVERED DISH.**

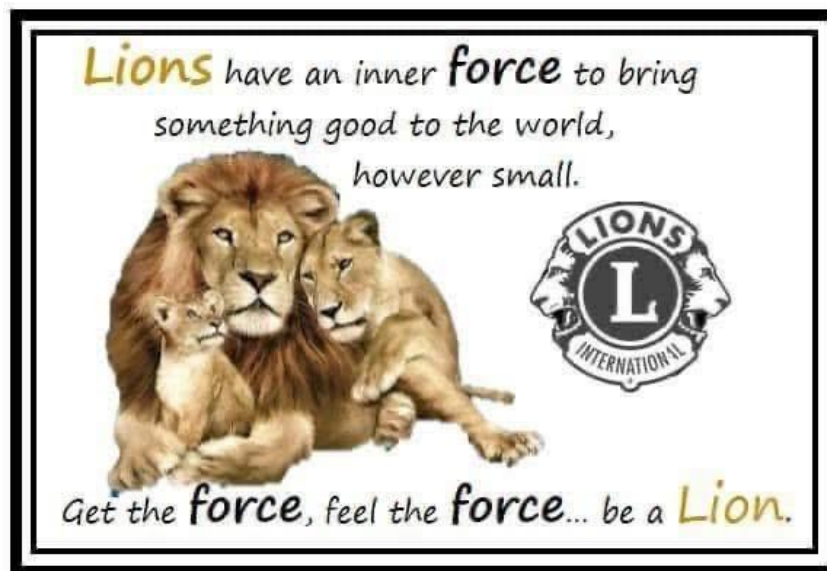
Please RSVP no later than April 17th to CT Gina Daniels at ctgdaniels@gmail.com. Please note in the email if you are bringing a side dish, salad or dessert.

All club members and their guests are invited to attend cabinet meetings.

Please see additional details later in this newsletter.

UPCOMING DISTRICT EVENTS

- Fourth Cabinet Meeting - Greenwood Fire Hall - April 26, 2026
- AltruVision Dinner – Modern Maturity Center – April 30, 2026
- Emerging Lions Leadership Institute (ELLI) – Camp Merrick – May 1-3, 2026
- 22-D Convention & Elections May 14-17, 2026
- DLF Board Meeting – Grotto’s Dover - May 26, 2026
- Officer Training (DE Forum) – Delaware State – June 6, 2026
- Special Olympics Summer Game – June 12-13, 2026
- Opening Eyes – June 12-13, 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 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:

Thursday, April 30, 2026

Submit all information to Bulletin Editor at

TYLISAJ@aol.com

PLEASE REFERENCE "SCOOP" in the subject of any email to make sure that information is not overlooked.





The International Association of Lions Clubs
DISTRICT 22-D - 2025-2026
C. GAIL KREBS
DISTRICT GOVERNOR
“Together We Will Grow and Serve”



**TO: All 22D Cabinet Members
All 22D Past District Governors
All Club Presidents and Secretaries
All Lions of 22D**

RE: 4th Cabinet Meeting April 26, 2026

Dear Lions,

You along with your spouse/Partner in service are invited to attend the 4th Cabinet Meeting at the Greenwood Fire Hall, 126111 Fire Hall Avenue, Greenwood, DE 19950. The meeting will be on Sunday, April 26, 2026. We will start gathering at 12:00pm and will call the meeting to order at 1:00pm. There is no cost and the dress is casual. Please bring your favorite covered dish to serve at least 12 people. Chicken, drinks and paper supplies will be furnished.

PLEASE INDICATE ON THE SIGN-UP SHEET IF YOU ARE BRINGING A SIDE DISH, SALAD OR DESSERT.

All District Chairpersons should plan on attending the Cabinet Meeting.

All Committee Chairs are requested to submit your reports by email in **Word Format by April 17, 2026**. Please let us know if you want to give an oral report so we can put you on the agenda. All reports received will be included in the minutes of the meeting. All oral reports are limited to 3 minutes. Please email your reports to pcsgailkrebs@gmail.com **AND** cshcf1943@outlook.com.

Please send RSVP using the attached form and send to CT Gina Daniels by **April 17th**. You may also email your RSVP ctgdaniels@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, April 26th for fellowship and reporting.

Yours in Lionism,

CS Helen Friend
Cabinet Secretary

SPRING IS HERE!!



*ENJOY THIS SEASON OF NEW
BEGINNINGS*

