**LCIF NEWS**

**Introduction**

LCIF can be compared to the emergency services - it never knows when the next emergency will arise. As I write this Newsletter only yesterday a very serious earthquake struck central Italy. This morning there are reports of 250 persons killed, large numbers of persons injured and a huge amount of property damage. Yesterday LCIF made a major catastrophe grant of US$100,000 (£76,000) to the Lions Clubs in the area to enable them to provide some initial responses. There will no doubt be more given in due course. I have not been made aware of a special appeal for the Italy earthquake but you will appreciate that these grants are paid for from the LCIF Disaster Fund if there is no special appeal.

Only a couple of weeks’ ago a dangerous flash flood swept across Louisiana, USA. Many of the impacted areas were previous impacted by Hurricane Katrina, although to a lesser extent. The Lions in the area are collaborating to maximise local resources and again emergency disaster grants will be provided when requested by the local Clubs.

I do hope your Club will support the LCIF Disaster Fund. Donations should be sent to the District Treasurer marked ‘LCIF Disaster Fund’.

**Donations versus Grants**

The final numbers for donations are not yet available but it is expected that Lions worldwide will have donated over US$39 million) (approximately £29.5 million). During the year 2015-16 more than US$44 million (approximately £33.5 million) was awarded in grants.

**Campaign SightFirst**

Many of you will recall the two campaigns in the past for fundraising for sight work. Since its inception in 1990 LCIF’s SightFirst programme has played a key role in reducing blindness, especially blindness due to cataract. The programme has supported more than 7.84 million sight-restoring cataract surgeries around the world, has upgraded eye care facilities and trained eye care personnel.

SightFirst is highlighted in a new documentary by the Seva Foundation entitled ‘Open your eyes – a journey from darkness to sight’ featuring a couple who receive the gift of sight from the Lions Lacoul Eye Hospital in Tansen, Palpa, Nepal. The following link will take you to the clip.

<https://youtu.be/BY97iebYBEg>

**Melvin Jones Fellowships**

There are more enquiries being made to me regarding Melvin Jones Fellowships. This is very encouraging. Please contact me if you would like to know what credits your Club has earned towards Melvin Jones Fellowship or need assistance with the online application form. It is quite possible one or two or more could be obtained at no further cost to your Club. If your Club does not have sufficient credits then and additional amount can be paid to make up the credits to US$1,000. Please have a word with me if your Club wishes to make up the credits and I will talk through the methodology.

Has your Club considered awarding a Melvin Jones Fellowship to someone in your town or village other than a Lion who has carried out humanitarian work or supported your Club in a major way?

**Presentations on LCIF**

I make no apologies for repeating my comments from the last newsletter. LCIF still remains a ‘mystery’ to many members despite its amazing record of funding for disasters, sight, youth and humanitarian needs since 1968. I would be pleased to visit any Club, or preferably Zone, to give a presentation on our own Foundation. (The word ‘Foundation’ is simply another word for ‘Charity’).

PDG Lion Patrick Hamblin, District 105D LCIF Coordinator (patrick.hamblin@btinternet.com)