

CELEBRATE SERVICE IN MINNEAPOLIS

by Al Brandel, President, The International Association of Lions Clubs

Lions are social people. We like to be part of groups. We become Lions to do service in fellowship with others. It's just more satisfying to do good deeds with others. We also soon realize that we can get a lot more accomplished by being a part of an established group such as the Lions than trying to go off on our own to serve others.

So I'm asking you to consider attending this year's international convention in July in Minneapolis. Join your fellow Lions. It's a lot of fun meeting Lions from around the world. You learn how to improve your club through the many seminars. You go home with a new energy and excitement about being a Lion.

But first and foremost, let's meet in Minneapolis to celebrate our service. We devote so much time and energy to service. Our convention is the perfect occasion to celebrate what we are all about. Every Lion at the convention will fully appreciate what it means to be a Lion and what our service accomplishes. We need to take a week to celebrate who we are and what we do.

Make no mistake about it: Minneapolis will be an exciting celebration. The great Beach Boys and the '60s hit-makers Jay and the Americans will entertain us. Former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell will give the keynote. The Rev. Chris Riley, who has helped thousands of troubled youths, will receive our 2009 Humanitarian Award. This will be a party you don't want to miss.

If you aren't able to join us in Minneapolis, then join your fellow Lions in another way. Attend a district convention. Make time for your club's projects and meetings. The more you put into it, the more you receive back. Becoming more and more involved with Lions has a way of changing a person for the better. I know it's been that way with me. Being a Lion has helped me grow as a person and find my role in life. I'm not the same person I was before I was a Lion. Lions helped me open up to the needs and concerns of others.

So be the best Lion you can be. Participate fully and, if at all possible, join your fellow Lions in Minneapolis this summer. It will be the experience of a lifetime. And it will improve your life as a Lion

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