



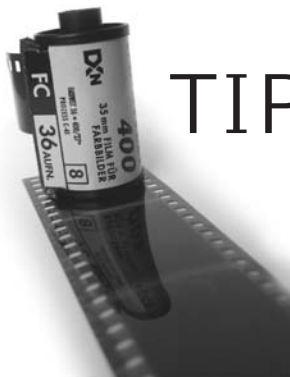
LION Magazine Announces Photo Contest

Ready, aim, shoot. LION Magazine is holding a photo contest. We want images of Lions' hands-on service projects or fundraisers. First prize is a first-rate Sony digital camera. Prizes for 10 runners-up are attractive Lions polo shirts.

Even if you don't win, your photo could end up in the magazine, giving your club the recognition it deserves. Entering the contest also is a way to improve your club's photography skills. Learn to take better photos, and your club's photos could be published in LION Magazine or your local newspaper or at least brighten up your club newsletter or Web site. You may not win the contest (or maybe you will!) but absorbing the photography tips below can mark a turning point in your club's publicity efforts.

Rules

- Photos must be of a Lions service project or fundraiser that takes place between May 1, 2009, and May 31, 2010. This includes events held in partnership with Lions such as Special Olympics eye screenings or joint projects with other organizations. (LION Magazine may choose to print submitted photos before May 31, 2010. Prior publication will have no effect on contest decisions.)
- Photos must be taken by a Lion or Leo.
- More than one photo may be submitted. Different photos may be submitted at different times.
- LION Magazine staff will judge the entries. Their decisions are final.
- The first-prize winner will receive a Sony Cyber Shot DSC H50 (or comparable camera), hailed by reviewers as one of the best digital cameras. The 10 runner-up winners will receive a Lions polo shirt.
- Submissions must include the photographer's name, address, phone number and club name. An e-mail address is requested. The date of the photographed event must be provided as well as a brief description of the event.
- Mail the color prints or disk with images to LION Magazine, 300 W. 22nd St., Oak Brook, IL, 60523-8842, United States. (Do not write on the front or back of a photo.) Digital images also can be uploaded to <http://portal.lionsclubs.org/publicrelations> (click on Proceed to Upload, click on Upload Files, click on Browse, go to your file with the photo and click on it, click open and click on Upload). A message will appear: "file upload completed successfully." If you e-mail the image, send an e-mail to jay.copp@lionsclubs.org to let the LION know the name of the photo, the photographer's name, address, phone number, club name, date of the photographed event and a brief description of the event.
- Digital images must have a resolution of 300 dpi or higher.
- Mailed entries must be postmarked by June 10, 2010. Digital entries must be uploaded by June 10, 2010. All entries must be identified as "photo contest entry."
- All participating photographers grant LION Magazine permission to use their images in the LION, on its Web site or in other materials or publications of Lions Clubs International.
- Entries cannot be acknowledged or returned.
- See the complete list of rules at www.lionsclubs.org.



TIPS FOR A WINNING PHOTO

Get Close

Move close to your subject. The number one shortcoming with photos comes from failure to observe this rule. Distance equates to disaster. No image is more powerful than the human face, so in photographing people closer is better.



Get close to the subject, as a Lion in Iron River, Wisconsin, did.



The distance of these Lions from the photographer renders the photo uninteresting. (Also, the photographer should have stood in front of them and captured their faces.)



These paraders are whooping and hollering and having a good time but it's hard to appreciate their joy because their faces are hard to see.

Show Action

Editors dread the “grip and grin” in which a person receives an award or a handshake. Plan ahead and photograph the person who received the award in action, performing the feat that earned the honor. Lions are known for their service, so show them in action.

The Lions is caught on camera doing service—a great shot.
Photo by Myojin



This blood donation project in India could have yielded a riveting photo—if the photographer had focused his lens much more narrowly, say, on the red blood flowing from the arm through a medical tube.



The dreaded—and all too familiar—“grip and grin.” Far from making the photo better, the busy background (the mural) is distracting.

Tell a Story

A picture is worth a thousand words, right? That's because a good photo tells a story. Someone is doing something and the beholder of the photo can immediately discern what that is.



You don't need a caption to tell you these impoverished children in Africa are happy to receive the gift of a soccer ball.

Focus

Many photos are too busy. They're cluttered. Every photo needs a "hero"—the focus of the image. Too many people in a photo can be distracting. A photo needs to convey a single idea. One or two people in a photo works best in most instances.



Besides the virtue of zooming in, this image artfully captures a single, precise action.

Photo by Jesús Jaime Mota



This photo shows many people and there is a lot going on. But it works because it contains a central image or a "hero."

The six people in the center of the photo are all engaged in their own activity. Better to pick one person and narrow the focus on him.



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TECHNICAL TIPS

1. Get the light right

Early morning or late afternoon are the best times to make sure the sun doesn't darken faces or become too glaring. Otherwise, make sure the sun is not beaming down on your subject's back so his face is not shadowed. Looking into the sun will cause squinting, so keep the sun at an angle.

2. Hold the camera steady

Brace the camera against your forehead and press the shutter gently.

3. Compose your subject

Forget what the ads say—don't just point and shoot. Take a look at the background and foreground in the viewfinder. What do you see and what do you really want to focus on?

Props

Good photos often include interesting or unusual items such as distinctive clothing, a hat, a tool, a machine or background or landscape. These objects are part of the story. Including them in the photo helps tell the story or tells something significant about the person.



The conspicuous testing glasses grabs the readers' interest.



The pump, complete with flowing water, is a nice "prop."

Any unusual item, whether its distinctiveness is because of size, shape, color or whatnot, enhances visual appeal.



Go Outside



Photos in poorly lit rooms and meeting halls with bland walls and ceilings rarely are appealing. City, small-town and natural backdrops are used far less often for photos and hence automatically are more engaging.

This young victim of an earthquake in China tugs at the heart and the landscape contributes to its power. (The photo also tells a story.)

4. Take lots of photos

In the digital age, there is no excuse for being miserly in shooting pictures. Fire away, even when one shot seems the same as the last (a slight change in facial expression or a sudden movement can ruin or make a picture), and delete the lesser images.

5. Understand how your camera works

This may seem obvious but too many amateur photographers never rise above the ranks because they fail to understand their basic camera features. *Read the camera's manual* and become familiar with its settings. Know how to use the fast shutter for action shots, how and when to use the flash and how to activate the night mode (if there is one).

6. Use a good camera

Shoot with a decent digital camera with at least 5 megapixels, preferably higher. Don't send in cell phone or camcorder images and don't compress the photos before sending them to us.

Lions Identity

We don't necessarily need a Lion in a photo. Lions are all about service, and it's perfectly OK to submit a photo of a beneficiary of Lions' service such as a smiling child. The caption and the accompanying story can explain the connection of Lions. Maybe the perfect photo shows a Lion in action with a beneficiary. But it's sometimes hard to capture a compelling action image of such an instance or these photos fall short because of technical imperfections such as a face being obscured. So "work" the crowd and wander through the event to find a slice of life or a moment in time that can be immortalized on film.



Photos don't need an obvious Lions identity. This girl with disabilities enjoys an outing sponsored by the Lions-supported Penrickton Center for Blind Children in Taylor, Michigan.

Lions in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, harvested wheat to aid the hungry, and the story appropriately included a wonderful photo of a row of combines stretched across the horizon. But the photographer also captured these two youths in the field of wheat. Neither photo showed a Lion but both helped convey the specialness of the project.



Strategize

Holding a pancake breakfast? Haven't you seen plenty of photos of Lions flipping pancakes? We have and we prefer something different. Find a cute child and pile his plate high with pancakes. Tell him to dig in and zoom close. You might get an instant classic. The point is that you have to plan beforehand. Come up with four or five good ideas on what will constitute a good photo. Don't leave it to chance.



How to portray the head of a guide dog foundation?
This was an apt choice. Photographers need to plan ahead.



It's possible these Japanese Lions spontaneously took the hands of the children in Cambodia on their visit to a project. But it's just as likely the photographer suggested they showed the warmth they felt in their hearts. Don't hesitate to "set photos up" by asking subjects to interact.

Don't Play Favorites

Clubs understandably want to submit photos of the club president, a longtime member or even the one Lion who did most of the work on a project. This results in photos with too many Lions. Or clubs select photos to submit to LION Magazine that are inferior to others taken at an event. Select the best photo and find another way to honor members that deserve the recognition.

This is connected to props, strategizing and telling a story. You may think obviously staged photos are bad, but magazines use them all the time—with stunning effect. When *Sports Illustrated* did a story on the prevalence of players of small stature in college basketball they shot the players holding outrageously large basketballs. Less involved but still very much staged, when the sports magazine did a story on a woman in Georgia who started a soccer team for needy immigrant children, the lead photo was not of the children running around a soccer field. That shows action but it's also indistinct. Instead the magazine showed the woman leaning out of the window of the team's brightly colored bus (a "prop") with the more than 20 players in their luminous yellow and green uniforms (another prop) sitting and standing in front of the bus or poking their heads from the windows. Not a masterpiece but very effective. How does staging translate to a pancake breakfast? Why not get three Lions in the same white oversized chef hats flipping the pancakes in the air in unison and in perfect (or as perfect as you can get) symmetry? Use your imagination. Take reality and dress it up for the camera. Don't just hope you can get a good shot. Make one happen. ■

Stage a Photo



Lions in Florida enjoy a clubhouse on a beach, as this photo attests.



This Alaskan Lion agreed to don his outdoorsman gear to emphasize the rugged setting of his clubhouse.



This photo accompanied a story on how busy Lions balance family with service. A professional shot it, but amateurs can take to heart the need to conceptualize a photo beforehand.