



# ***BEST PRACTICES FOR INVITING NEW MEMBERS***

*Ideas to Help You Put the  
Pieces Together on Recruitment!*

# ***BEST PRACTICES FOR INVITING NEW MEMBERS***

Ideas to Help You Put the Pieces Together on Recruitment!

Lions Clubs worldwide were asked to shine a light on their best and brightest invitation ideas by entering the Best Recruitment Practices contest. Whether it was a new and innovative idea or a tried and true traditional technique, the Extension and Membership Division wanted to learn about the best field-tested member invitation methods used by Lions clubs to increase their membership.

More than 250 clubs responded to the challenge, sharing their most brilliant ideas for inviting new members. Prizes were awarded for the most outstanding ideas in each of the seven constitutional areas:

- 1 – First Place Prize: A Distinguished International Flag Set
- 10 – Second Place Prizes: A 3'X 5' Lions Clubs International Flag
- 39 – Third Place Prizes: A Deluxe "We Serve" Banner

District governors of the winning club presidents were also recognized with a duplicate prize.

Members of the International Officers Growth Initiative selected the winning entries. When evaluating the entries, they looked for ideas that yielded positive results and were well developed and implemented.

This booklet contains the first prize award-winning invitation ideas from each constitutional area, as well as some bright ideas from the second and third place submissions. Try these ideas in your club, or use them to spark a membership invitation idea brainstorming session.

# ***FIRST PLACE WINNERS PIECED IT ALL TOGETHER***



## ***CONSTITUTIONAL AREA 1***

**Club Name:** Wadsworth Lions Club

**Submitted By:** Charles Potter, Club President

**District:** 13-O

**Location:** Ohio, USA

**Number of Club Members:** 82

**Invitation Idea:** Club Competition

Club members were divided into eight teams. During four six-week segments two teams competed against each other, earning points for bringing prospective members to meetings (1 point for each guest) and submitting membership applications to the club's board of directors (5 points each application). Teams also received bonus points for two or more members inducted (5 points) and two points for each new member inducted above two. Each team was given five reduced-price luncheon tickets to be used for guests. Winning team members of each segment were given small gifts from a local merchant, and the overall winning team members were given gold lion paperweights, as were sponsors of new members during the campaign. When the new members were inducted, the sponsor's team stood with the new member during their induction, further emphasizing the team spirit of the competition. Seventeen new members were inducted into the club during the six-month contest period, showing that teamwork and some friendly competition can not only yield new members, but also is a fun way to unite all club members in a common activity.

**Reason Why Selected:** Involved all the club members. Holding a competition is a unique way to focus on inviting new members and motivating club members.

## ***CONSTITUTIONAL AREA 2***

**Club Name:** St Luc Lions Club

**Submitted By:** Roch Cote, Past Council Chairperson

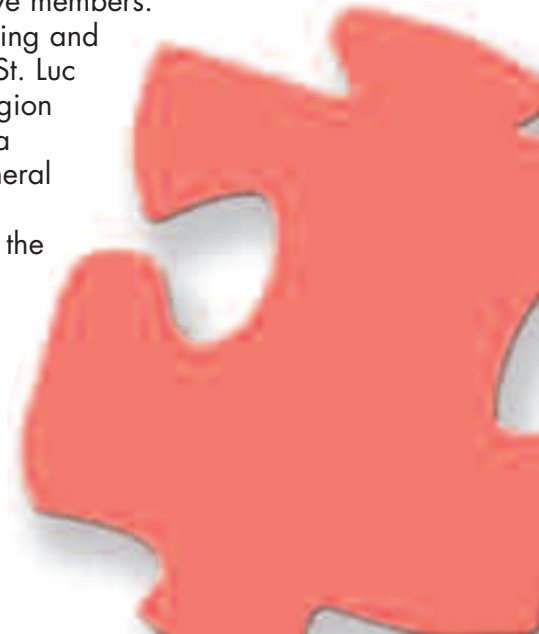
**District:** U-1

**Location:** Quebec, Canada

**Number of Club Members:** 32

**Invitation Idea:** Recruitment Night

Members of the St. Luc Lions Club hold Recruiting Nights to interest prospective members. The key to successfully implementing this traditional technique is careful planning and attention to detail. Roch Cote, Past Council Chairperson, and member of the St. Luc Lions Club and Vice District Governor Jacqueline Ortuso of the St-Edouard Region Lions Club have created a turnkey "Information Night Kit" to help clubs hold a successful Recruiting Night. The packet includes an invitation letter for the general public, an invitation letter for specific guests, public relations materials for promoting the event to the local media, a CD-Rom that can be customized by the club, an agenda for the event and a copy of the International Program video. The program has been very successful and proves that traditional recruiting methods, when well executed, are powerful membership tools.



**Reason Why Selected:** This is a good example of a popular recruiting method that has been efficiently planned and implemented. The idea involved Lions from other clubs.

### ***CONSTITUTIONAL AREA 3***

**Club Name:** Rio de Janeiro Maracana Lions Club

**Submitted By:** Adelina Paraizo Borges, Club President

**District:** LC-1

**Location:** Brazil

**Number of Club Members:** 23

**Invitation Idea:** Target Women for Membership

Inviting more women members is a priority for many clubs. When members of the Rio de Janeiro Lions Club wanted to charter a new Lions club for women, they invited 70 well-known members of the community to an afternoon get together entitled "Afternoon in Praise of Women's Worth and Merit." After the event, the 63 attendees were given questionnaires regarding volunteerism and their interest in Lions clubs. Thirty-seven attendees indicated they'd be interested in participating in an organization dedicated to service. This twist on a recruiting/information night targeted a particular population and shows that defining a specific audience is a good way to generate prospective members for your club.

**Reason Why Selected:** The questionnaire is a good way of having attendees indicate they were interested in membership.

### ***CONSTITUTIONAL AREA 4***

**Club Name:** Pecs-Normandia Lions Club

**Submitted By:** Erzsebet Veghelyi, Club President

**District:** 119

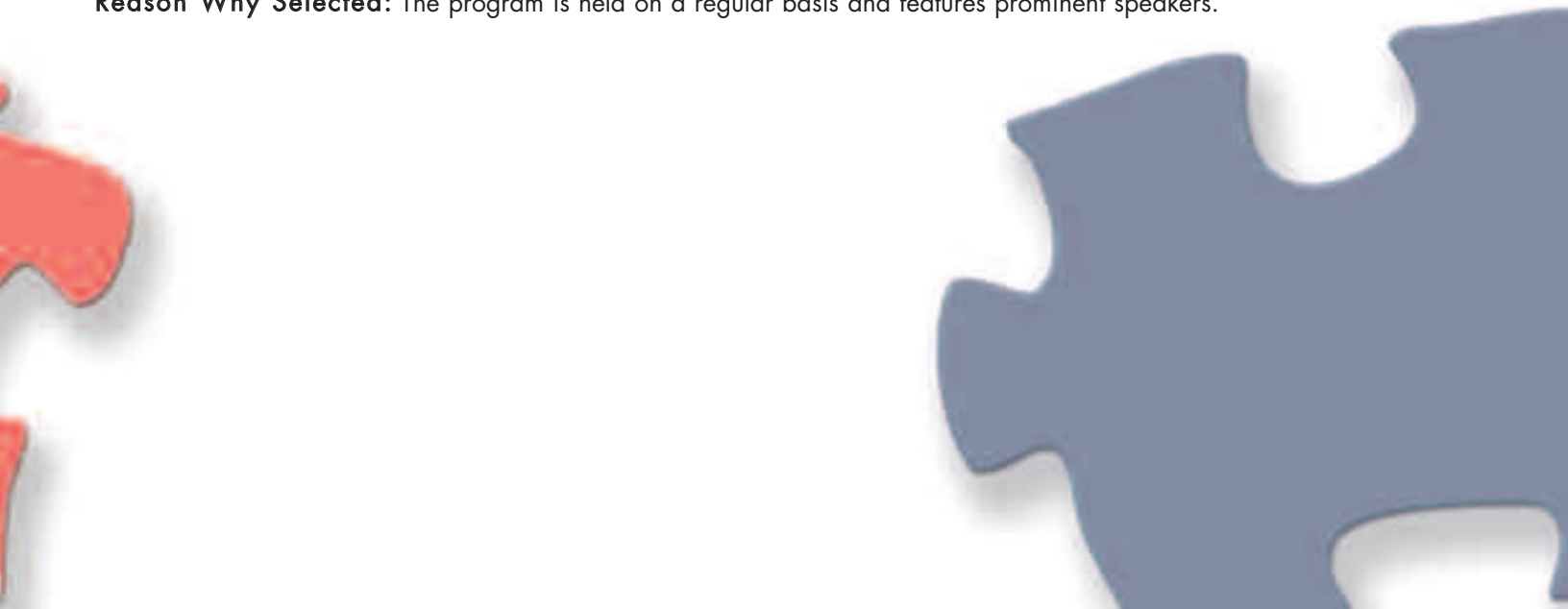
**Location:** Hungary

**Number of Club Members:** 26

**Invitation Idea:** Speaker Series

Every other month, the Pecs-Normandia Lions Club holds a presentation featuring a timely topic and well-known speaker. Club members are encouraged to invite guests for the evening, and after the event participants engage in an idea exchange. Information about Lions clubs is presented at each of these bi-monthly events. Those who are interested in joining the club obtain two reference letters and participate in the club's activities for one year, after which both the prospective member and the club decide whether they want to continue the relationship. By holding regularly scheduled programs featuring well-know speakers, the club has established an excellent method for continually bringing new members into the club.

**Reason Why Selected:** The program is held on a regular basis and features prominent speakers.





## ***CONSTITUTIONAL AREA 5***

**Club Name:** Omagari Lions Club

**Submitted By:** Yoo Takeda, Club President

**District:** 332-F

**Location:** Japan

**Number of Club Members:** 116

**Invitation Idea:** Create a New Member Committee

The Omagari Lions Club utilizes a New Member Committee to educate and guide new members. The committee conducts orientation activities, introduces new members to the club and helps them become involved in activities. Forming a committee to properly introduce and involve new members has ensured that the hard work identifying and inviting new members is not wasted.

**Reason Why Selected:** This idea implements regular, consistent follow up to help guarantee the participation of new members in club activities.

## ***CONSTITUTION AREA 6***

**Club Name:** Chikhli Lions Club

**Submitted By:** Chandrika D. Modi, Immediate Past Club President

**District:** 323-F2

**Location:** India

**Number of Club Members:** 78

**Invitation Idea:** Honor Community Members

The Chikhli Lions Club has found that by honoring specific groups of community members, they have successfully raised awareness of Lions in their area and boosted membership. Over the course of several months, the club honored local bankers, doctors, teachers, children and women. Twelve new members were inducted as a result of these efforts.

**Reason Why Selected:** Good public relations activity for the club and the new members represented a diverse group of people.

## ***CONSTITUTIONAL AREA 7***

**Club Name:** Toko and District Lions Club

**Submitted By:** Neville Cleland, Club Secretary

**District:** 202-D

**Location:** New Zealand

**Number of Club Members:** 33

**Invitation Idea:** Membership Drive

A well-planned membership invitation effort netted ten new members for the Toko and District Lions Club. A step-by-step timeline was created to identify, contact and follow up with an approved list of prospective members. Before interest letters were mailed, the club conducted public relations activities to increase awareness of the club within the community. Interested prospects were invited to a special club meeting to learn about Lions clubs. Afterwards, the club followed up with informal teas and visits to the potential members by the club's board of directors. A detailed plan, careful execution and diligent follow up were keys to the success of this effort. All ten people that attended the initial informational meeting became club members.

**Reason Why Selected:** The plan is very specific, well planned and carefully executed.

# TIPS FROM BEST PRACTICES AWARD WINNERS

**Recruitment Nights are Successful:** Popular worldwide, recruitment nights are an excellent way to reach a large group of prospective members at one time. A good portion of the ideas submitted to the contest utilized this tactic in some form.

**Recruitment Nights are Flexible:** These events don't have to be at night, or be a traditional sit-down dinner meeting to be successful. Clubs have held teas, potlucks, barbeques, buffets, Friendship Days or Family Fun Days.

**Audio-Visual Presentations Make an Impact:** Whether they are videos, PowerPoint presentations or CD-Roms, many clubs successfully utilize these presentations to explain their club and Lions Clubs International to prospective members.

**Target Marketing is a Good Way to Focus Efforts:** Identifying a specific group for invitation helps focus efforts and resources. There are a large variety of groups to target – women, couples, families, young professionals, community leaders, teachers, doctors, etc.

**Former Leos are Good Prospects:** Having already been introduced to Lions, former Leo club members are excellent prospective members. One club holds a Leo club member reunion to spark membership initiatives.

**Engage the Entire Club in Membership Activities:** Involving the whole club in a membership drive keeps motivation high and helps all club members feel a sense of responsibility toward the health of the club. One of the most popular methods to involve the entire club is to have each member name one potential new member to invite to a meeting or event.

**Public Relations is Very Important:** Keeping a high profile in the community is essential for successful membership efforts. People want to join organizations with positive public images. Clubs with strong public relations programs have found that it reaches over to their membership efforts as well.

**Planning is Critical:** Any membership growth program will benefit by careful planning. Clubs that had a clear-cut plan with step-by-step plans for proceeding found their efforts to be highly successful.

**Give Prospects a First-hand Look at Lion Service:** Inviting prospective members to help with a Lions service activity allows them to personally see the impact of your club and often leads them to want to become a part of your club.

**Never Give Up:** Clubs with successful membership development initiatives consistently look for new members. Not every person asked will say "yes." It is essential to not become discouraged and to keep asking!

## Bright Ideas

Use this section to note interesting ideas you'd like to try and to brainstorm additional strategies for membership development with club members.

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