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Background on 94th Lions Clubs International Convention in Seattle, Washington, USA July 4-8

Lions Clubs International – Lions Clubs International is the world’s largest service club organization, with 1.35 million members in more than 46,000 clubs in 207 countries and geographic areas. In addition to its efforts toward conquering blindness, the organization has made a strong commitment to community service and helping youth throughout the world. To learn more about Lions Clubs International, visit lionsclubs.org.

Lions Clubs International Convention – In early July, 15,000-20,000 Lions club members and their families from more than 100 countries will gather in Seattle for the Lions Clubs International Convention. For five days, Lions will conduct association business, share fellowship and enjoy the sights of this international city. The Lions Clubs International Convention is one of the largest annual conventions of its kind in the world.

Economic Impact of First Convention in Seattle – This is the first time that Lions Clubs International will hold its popular convention in the USA’s Pacific Northwest. It is estimated that the economic impact on Seattle will be approximately US\$46 million. This will include 43,550 nights at area hotels and thousands of restaurant meals and visits to area attractions.

The Lions Clubs International Convention will be the biggest convention in 20 years in Seattle. An estimated 40 percent of attendees will come from outside the United States and Canada. Lions usually do more sightseeing, stay longer and bring more family members than most business conventioners.

Convention Highlights – Among this year’s highlights will be:

- A spectacular Parade of Nations with 10,000 Lions from 100 countries, many in native dress, along with bands and colorful floats. The parade will step off at 10:00 on Tuesday, July 5 and march from the intersection of Fifth Avenue and Denny Avenue to the Washington Convention Center. Leading the Parade will be the Ohio State School for the Blind Marching Band, the only high school band in the nation made up of blind students, that participated in the 2010 Rose Parade.
- Presentation of the young winners of the Lions International Peace Poster Contest and the Power of Peace Essay Contest for blind and visually impaired students on Wednesday, July 6 at Key Arena – Seattle Center.
- A colorful flag ceremony with the flags of Lions nations from around the world on Wednesday, July 6 at Key Arena – Seattle Center.



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- Election of the 2011-2012 Lions Clubs International President Wing-Kun Tam of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), The People's Republic of China, on Friday, July 8 at Key Arena – Seattle Center. Tam will be the first person from China to serve as president of the world's largest service club organization.

Convention Selection – The Lions Clubs International Board of Directors selects convention sites from around the world five years in advance, following an extensive bidding process. During the evaluation, tourist authorities present options for accommodating the convention and the large number of attendees and explain why their cities are attractive destinations.

Lions Clubs International looks for areas with a strong tradition of Lions volunteerism. Local Lions club members demonstrate their commitment by forming a Lions Host Committee. Seattle was selected to host the 2011 convention in 2006.

Lions Headquarters – Lions Clubs International staff members, headquartered in Oak Brook, Illinois, USA handle arrangements for convention events, housing, outside suppliers and exhibitors. More than 100 headquarters staff work at the convention.

Lions Around the World – Lions are men and women who volunteer their time for humanitarian causes. Lions clubs evaluate community needs and choose service projects to meet those needs, including:

- Collecting and recycling used eyeglasses and supporting eye screenings and cataract surgeries.
- Sponsoring programs for young people, including youth groups called Leo clubs, and providing scholarships and recreational opportunities.
- Improving the environment and building or maintaining community parks.
- Supporting diabetes education, providing hearing screenings, assisting the aged.
- Providing relief in time of emergency or disaster such as after the Japan and China earthquakes and the tornadoes in the southern United States.

Lions Clubs in Washington – Lions clubs have a very strong presence in the Pacific Northwest with nearly 500 clubs and 14,000 Lions in Washington and parts of British Columbia and Idaho. Local Lions are involved in hands-on service in a variety of areas including protecting the environment, improving health, assisting youth and establishing many other community services.

Host Committee – Lions volunteers from the Seattle area have spent several years preparing for the convention. They are responsible for hospitality, including staffing welcome centers,



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arranging welcoming banners, securing local marching bands for the parade and serving as sergeants-at-arms for major events.



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Upcoming Lions Clubs International Conventions

- Busan, Korea: 2012
- Hamburg, Germany: 2013
- Toronto, Canada: 2014
- Honolulu, USA: 2015
- Fukuoka, Japan: 2016
- Chicago, USA: 2017