

WEST VIRGINIA LIONS YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM

The Youth Exchange program was authorized by Lions Clubs International in 1961 “to create and foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world.” The objectives of the program are as follows:

- (a) To bring young people into contact with youth and adults of other countries;
- (b) Share family and community life of another culture;
- (c) Promote international understanding and goodwill throughout the world of Lionism

These objectives apply equally to the participating youth, the sponsoring and host Lions clubs, and the families involved.

West Virginia Lions specifically recognized and adopted the youth exchange program in 1984 with the adoption of an amendment to the MD 29 Constitution and By-Laws, which established the West Virginia Lions Youth Exchange Committee and the method of selecting the Committee and its Chair (See Sections 4 of Article III of the By-Laws). The committee formulates its own policies and procedures.

The Committee focuses its efforts in four (4) broad areas:

1. To promote a better understanding of and greater interest in the Youth Exchange Program;
2. To encourage Lions and Lions Clubs to become either a host or sponsoring Lions Club;
3. To serve as advisors to hosts and sponsors on correct procedures;
4. To coordinate the Youth Exchange Program activities throughout West Virginia.

The Committee has compiled two (2) publications to assist Lions Clubs and host families in West Virginia. One is a comprehensive Youth Exchange Program Handbook, which explains, in detail, the necessary procedures to be a host or sponsor as well as the responsibilities involved. The second publication offers guidelines to the host family. Both publications are available from any member of the Committee.

One of the major functions of the Committee is to attract voluntary contributions to underwrite the statewide program from individual Lions, from Lions Clubs, and from non-Lions. Some of the costs associated with the program include printing and distribution of the Handbook and other publications, a newsletter, and other promotional material. One of the major costs associated with the program is underwriting activities for visiting youth to join together in activities, which include visits to both our State and the Nation’s Capitals and to promote exchanges of our state youth with the youth of foreign countries.

Officers and Responsibilities

Chair: Acts as Chair of all regular and special meetings of the Committee; reports to and is accountable to the Council of Governors; handles all foreign correspondence and communications; initiates all exchanges; serves as an ad hoc member of all committees; and initiates all transportation arrangements for exchanges.

Vice Chair: Assists the Chair in the performance of his/her duties; conducts regular and special meetings in the absence of the Chair; and provides assistance to all other Committee members and district youth exchange chairs.

Treasurer: Responsible for all receipts and expenditures of the committee by line item accounting; must be bonded; provides a treasurer's report (line-item method including budget to actual comparison) at each meeting of the Committee and at the State Convention;

Secretary: Records and distributes minutes of all meetings to the Council of Governors, Committee members, the MD 29 Secretary/Treasurer, and other Lions designated by the Chair; distributes correspondence to the Committee members; sends thank you letters/cards to contributors; records and reports contributions; and maintains all committee records to ensure continuity and integrity of the program.

District Youth Exchange Chair: They initiate state and local youth exchange programs; they plan for arrivals and departures of students by clubs and host families; they promote and encourage local support for meetings, community involvement and local exchanges of students with other host families and clubs; they distribute and process applications for West Virginia and foreign students; they distribute and process applications for host families (screening and approving host families to insure adequate sleeping quarters, orientation programs, etc.)

Meetings

The first meeting of the Committee shall be held as soon after September 1st, as practicable. The date, time and location will be determined by the Committee at the State convention.

The Committee shall also meet at the State convention, the time and place to be determined by the Chair in consultation with the State Convention Committee.

All other meetings of the Committee shall be held at the will and pleasure of the Chair unless specifically determined at a prior meeting of the entire Committee. Special meetings may be called by a majority of the members of the committee. Sample agendas are attached on the pages immediately following this section.

Budgets

The fiscal year for the West Virginia Lions Youth Exchange Committee shall be October 1st, to September 30th, of the following year. A budget shall be approved at the first meeting of the Committee.

Reports

The Chair shall make an annual report of the Committee's activities, along with a financial report, to the State convention to be made a part of the Official Convention Proceedings. Minutes of all meetings are routinely distributed to the Council of Governors, to the members of the Committee, and to the MD 29 Secretary-Treasurer.

The Chair or his/her representative shall also report the annual budget for the committee to the Council of Governors at the second "Regular" meeting, usually held at the District 29-N Conference held at Pipestem State Park.

Model Agenda For the Convention Meeting West Virginia Lions Youth Exchange Committee

Purpose: To finalize plans for the summer activities.

Time and Place: Determined by the Chair in consultation with the State Convention Committee Chair.

Preparations

Chair: Attends the January meeting of the Council of Governors (the Third "Regular" meeting) held for the main purpose of planning the State Convention and establishes a time and location for the September meeting; advises the Elections Committee of any ballot requirements needed to elect members to the Committee.

Secretary: Will send out notices of the meeting to the Committee members.

AGENDA

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance
Invocation
Minutes of previous meeting
Treasurer's Report
Committee reports
Old Business
New Business
Set date and location of the September meeting
Open discussion/suggestions
Adjournment

Follow-up

Secretary: Prepares and distributes minutes to all of the Committee members, the MD-29 Secretary-Treasurer, the Council of Governors, and newly elected District Governors and Committee members.

Model Agenda For the First Meeting West Virginia Lions Youth Exchange Committee

Purpose: To elect officers for the new year; to make committee assignment; prepare and approve an annual budget; and plan for the year's activities.

Time and Place: Held as soon after September 1st, as practicable. The location and time are determined at the State Convention.

Preparations

Chair: Will confirm the location of the meeting and make all the arrangements.

Secretary: Will send out notices to the Committee members.

AGENDA

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance
Invocation
Minutes of the previous meeting
Outgoing Treasurer's Report
Final reports of committees
Election of Officers
Authorize depository for funds
Authorize bonding for Treasurer
Adopt policy and procedures
Consider and approve annual budget
Appoint committees
Approve expenses
Open discussion/suggestions
Adjournment

Follow-up

Secretary: Prepares and distributes minutes to all members of the Committee, the MD 29 Secretary/treasurer, and the Council of Governors.