

2002-2003

Officers and Directors

FAIRMONT LIONS CLUB

- President.....George Janice**
- First Vice President.....Milton E. Durbin**
- Second Vice President.....Aubrey W. Linger**
- Secretary.....Robert R. Moffett**
- Treasurer.....Dr. James E. Coleman**
- Tail Twister.....H. Gerald Warren, PDG**
- Lion Tamer.....Thomas J. Koon**
- Director - 1 year.....Edsel G. Michael**
- Director - 1 year.....Gene Martin**
- Director - 2 years.....Robert R. Moffett**
- Director - 2 years.....Edwin Garlow**
- Membership Director.....Clyde S. Judy**
- Immediate Past President.....H. Gerald Warren, PDG**

80TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| GERALD WARREN, PDG, Chairman | WAYNE DODD |
| ROBERT R. MOFFETT | GEORGE JANICE |
| JAMES E. COLEMAN | MARTHA WARREN |

The committee gratefully acknowledges the contribution of the following groups in the planning for this anniversary celebration:

- Marion County Convention and Visitors Bureau**
- Kime Floral**
- Times-West Virginian**
- Door Prize Contributors**

1923

2003

80th Anniversary



FAIRMONT LIONS CLUB

Fairmont, West Virginia

Saturday, April 5, 2003

Westchester Village

Fairmont, West Virginia

LOOKING BACK TO 1923

It was the beginning of 1923 and the United States of America only recently had come out of a "war to end all wars." Warren G. Harding was President and Calvin Coolidge was his Vice President.

The World War that had raged in Europe only a few years earlier had forced the country from a period of relative isolationism into a growing leadership role the nation perhaps was not quite ready to assume.

In Egypt, the inner tomb of Tutankhomen had been opened just two months before, and reports still were enthralling the world with stories of undreamed splendor still untouched after 3400 years.

The winds of change were everywhere. Vladimir Ulianov, or Nikolai Lenin as he was known to his Bolshevik compatriots who assisted him in seizing control of Czarist Russia, was solidifying his powers and building a new political and geographic nation — the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In India, still firmly under British colonial rule, Mohandas K. Gandhi sat in prison, arrested on charges of sedition.

Amid labor unrest, West Virginia, still less than 60 years old, was becoming an increasingly important state to an industrially-developing nation, with its vast oil, gas, and coal reserves. A West Virginian, John W. Davis, was being considered as a viable candidate for President on the Democrat ticket for the following year.

Fairmont, in the heart of West Virginia's growing bituminous coal industry, was a growing community with over 18000 people, and Marion County had a population of 55,000. Downtown Fairmont, with a modern streetcar system that brought residents of nearby communities to the business district, was bustling, and several new commercial buildings had recently been constructed or were under construction. The Fairmont State Normal School had only a few years earlier moved to its new location on Locust Avenue and was seeking permission to grant a degree in education.

It was in this atmosphere that the Fairmont Lions Club was born with the granting of a charter by the International Association of Lions Clubs on April 20, 1923, becoming West Virginia's sixth Lions Club and the first club in northcentral West Virginia. Lionism was on the

move throughout the United States and Canada, with clubs in 42 states and four provinces.

During the past eighty years of existence, the Fairmont Lions Club has faithfully served the people of Fairmont and Marion County, with particular emphasis on those less fortunate individuals and those with sight and hearing impairments.

From the earlier organizational efforts in March 1923 and the official organization on March 20, 1923, the over 900 men and (later, also women) who have been members of the Fairmont Lions Club have put forth a maximum effort to render true service to their community.

The Fairmont Lions Club has purchased over 3,800 pairs of eyeglasses for school children, as well as over 1,000 pairs for adults. In their school screening programs and their amblyopia and glaucoma clinics, they have been able to check for eye diseases and consequently prevent possible blindness for over 12,000 adults and 4,000 children.

The Fairmont Lions Club began in 1935 a program that has continued to this day and has become an annual Christmas tradition—a Christmas Party for underprivileged children. For the past 67 years, this program has been held with the Union Mission, and some 5,000 children have received gifts of clothing, candy, fruit, and toys from Santa Claus and the Fairmont Lions through the Union Mission Children's Christmas Party. In recent years, several other groups have joined the Lions and the Union Mission to enable them to furnish even more items to the underprivileged children who attend.

Lions in 1936 conceived the idea of a "blackout warden unit" that later was to become the Civil Defense Police and today the Marion County Auxiliary Police. Lions were also instrumental in the creation of the Mid-City Parking Lot, a unique parking facility for the downtown, and in establishing city parks and playgrounds. During World War II, Lions led the entire county in the sale of "war bonds."

Starting in 1951, Lions took to the streets to sell brooms and mops manufactured by the Industrious Blind Enterprises at Stonewood in order to assist that worthwhile organization while raising funds for the club's many civic and charitable projects. After the closing of the facility at the end of the twentieth century, the club chose to continue the sale of brooms and mops from other sources to aid in the club's many civic and charitable projects. Through the years, light bulbs and later fruit cakes have been added as sales items to furnish funds for the club's civic and charitable activities.

In addition, the club has furnished four District Governors as well as numerous Zone chairmen and Deputy District Governors or Regional chairmen. A total of over 20 other Lions clubs have been formed through efforts of the Fairmont club. These clubs in turn have formed as many as 50 other clubs in our current district as well as neighboring districts.

Always supportive of the International Association, the club has had representatives at all State and most international conventions. An example of the club's support was probably best shown in 1940 when 18 couples from the Fairmont club attended the International Convention in Havana, Cuba.

To write a complete history of the service of the Fairmont Lions Club would take a minimum of eighty volumes — one for each year of the club's existence. Suffice to say that the Fairmont Lions Club has contributed over \$750,000 to community service activities and that members of the club collectively have contributed well over 1,200,000 man-hours in service to their community through Lionism. And, when you consider those 35-cent meals of 1923 compared with the \$10.00 meal of today, that is a lot of today's dollars.

No one can predict the future and what the world will be like when our club reaches 100 years. But we can today say "thank you" to those farsighted 32 men who joined together on April 23, 1923, to begin what was to be an 80-year journey for the Fairmont Lions Club. It has been a great ride! Thanks!

PROGRAM

RECEPTION.....6:30 P.M.

Call to Order and Welcome.....7:00 P.M.

George Janice, President

Singing of One Verse of America.....James E. Coleman

Pledge of Allegiance.....Led by C. Wayne Dodd

Invocation..... Milton Durbin

DINNER

Introduction of Honored Guests.....George Janice

Introduction of Past Presidents.....George Janice

Introduction of Speaker.....George Janice

Address.....Robert Browning, Jr.
Past International Director

Response.....George Janice

Remarks by District Governor.....Paul Amrhein

Drawing for Door Prizes

Closing Remarks and Announcements

Benediction.....Milton Durbin

