

Woodville Lions Celebrate 75th Birthday

by Michael G. Maness, Maness3@att.net
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Woodville Lions celebrated its monumental 75th birthday Thursday, Jan. 12, at their monthly 2nd Thursday evening meeting.

Chartered in 1947 and still going strong, they are one of the few in the state, even the nation, that owns their own building. Past Lions President and District Deputy Ken Jobe keynoted with nostalgic memories and key moments with some of the older hands chipping in tidbits.

Jobe, also J.P. for Pct 3, was recently made aware of a Tyler County Courthouse cleaning spree that discovered boxes of old club documents, real treasures, like the original 1947 application and original minutes from the first years. Attendance hand recorded on old ledger sheets and minutes recorded by manual typewriters.

Ronnie Pryor recalled becoming treasurer decades ago when the club was \$6,000 in the hole.

As seen in the photo, the old are mixed with new younger blood, men and women of esteem in the community.

Jobe recalled how the founder of Lions International, Melvin Jones of Chicago, never even held the office of international president. However, he was a secretary, and the Woodville club's 1947 charter, which has a proud place in the club house, is signed by Melvin Jones.

The highest honor in the Lionism is a Melvin Jones Fellowship, which the club purchases for select members, and Woodville has four, including recently deceased Tommy Weaver, a local accountant and retired WISD financial officer, who did the club's taxes each year at no cost.

Jobe recalled the many fundraisers the club sponsored that have raised hundreds of thousands over the decades. In the ancient past, they sold brooms and light bulbs, the old incandescents, and a few boxes are still in storage.

Among the old hands still active is local insurance legend, Steve Evans, a 40-plus year member, and who ramrodded the golf tournaments and Tyler County Rodeos.

For many years, they sponsored softball tourneys.

For a couple decades, they hired a couple of ladies who fixed the noon Thursday lunches and were quite famous for their fried chicken. Currently, they contract with WISD for lunches.

Jobe and the club was especially proud of its community help. Last year, they gave about \$10,000 in scholarships for local students. They regularly pay for the exam and glasses for needy students. And from time to time, at the discretion of the board, they are known to just help others.

Lions International helped clubs with marketing, and for decades "LIONS" stood for "Liberty Intelligence Our Nation's Safety." That was shortened from 1940's when "LIONISM" stood for "Loyalty Integrity Oneness Nobleness Initiative Success Merit."



Woodville Lions Club 75th Anniversary

A real honor, Lion Secretary Connie Gibson had special pins for all members marking the 75th year of the Woodville Lions Club. Members wear the pins on their signature yellow and blue vests, accumulating them as the years go by.

They often have a program from local talent or governmental interest, and the club's "Lions' Den" is located just couple of miles east of town on 190. They meet every Thursday at noon, with a meal, and guests are welcome, excepting the 2nd Thursday evenings at 6:30.

You can see a photo of the 1947 Charter, complete with bullet hole, and other historic markers at PreciousHeart.net/lions.



Thursdays @ Noon, except 2nd Thursday 6:30 pm
Hwy 190 East of Courthouse, on Left, about 1.5 miles

International Association OF Lions Clubs CHARTER

To All to Whom These Presents Shall Come:
GREETING

Rnow Ye that the International Association of Lions Clubs has granted, and by these presents does grant to the Members, whose names are hereunto affixed, and to all regularly elected members and their successors, this Charter, fully constituting them a Local Club under the name and title of
THE LIONS CLUB

of **Woodville**

Located at Woodville, Texas with all the rights and privileges given to members of the International Association of Lions Clubs, according to the rules and regulations of the constitution and by laws of the International Association now in force as hereinafter enacted. This Charter shall be in full force and effect from the day of the date hereof, and for such time as the Members of this Local Club shall conform to the laws and rules of the International Association. Otherwise this Charter shall be revoked.

In Witness Whereof, the International Association of Lions Clubs has authorized its President and Secretary to affix their signatures, and caused the seal of the Association to be hereunto affixed this Eighth day of January in the year of our Lord 1948

Sam Smith PRESIDENT *William J. ...* SECRETARY



Charter Members

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Joe Daniel</i> | <i>W. B. Best</i> | <i>W. Anderson</i> | <i>L. J. Daniel</i> |
| <i>W. J. Parsons</i> | <i>Ally. Bolshun</i> | <i>John Diggie</i> | <i>Paul White</i> |
| <i>Edwin Anthony</i> | <i>Ernest Lower</i> | <i>Gene Sadler</i> | <i>Ed Hedges</i> |
| <i>D. L. Day</i> | <i>E. E. Smith</i> | <i>J. B. Bonham</i> | <i>W. Boothe</i> |
| <i>E. N. Long</i> | <i>M. C. Bailey</i> | <i>W. Allen Bunkle</i> | <i>Ernest Daniels</i> |
| <i>Chuck Samps</i> | <i>Ozro Mills</i> | <i>Wintford Birdwell</i> | <i>Don Cannon Jr.</i> |
| <i>George J. Jansal</i> | <i>E. M. Keagin</i> | <i>W. Ned. Barrett</i> | <i>John H. ...</i> |
| <i>Bill Polay</i> | <i>John ...</i> | <i>Harvey Phillips</i> | <i>Pat Henscarling</i> |
| <i>Lyde Smith Jr.</i> | <i>Ed ...</i> | <i>Ernest Martin</i> | <i>W. M. Baumgardner</i> |
| <i>A. L. Horton</i> | <i>A. R. ...</i> | <i>Jack Lindsey</i> | <i>W. C. ...</i> |
| | | | <i>W. Christman</i> |

See more at www.PreciousHeart.net/lions