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Lions Clubs International

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The Association of Lions Clubs was founded in 1917 in Chicago, Illinois. Three years later,in 1920, with the chartering of the Border Cities Lions Club in Windsor, Ontario, the name changed to Lions Clubs International.

Today Lions Clubs International is the largest humanitarian and service organization in the world, with 48,000 clubs in over 200 countries and geographic areas and 1.4+ million members. There are currently about 30,000 Lions in Canada.

In 1925, at a Lions Convention in Cedar Point, Ohio, Helen Keller, who became blind and deaf at 18 months following a fever, challenged the Lions to be Knights of the Blind in the crusade against darkness. Since then, Lions Clubs worldwide have raised hundreds of millions of dollars for research into the prevention of blindness.

In 1967, the Lions Home for Deaf People was founded in Ontario, run entirely by volunteers. Over time, the mandate was broadened to include people with exceptionalities such as blindness and developmental delay.

In 1996 CLERC (Canadian Lions Eyeglass Recycling Centre) in Calgary, Alberta opened. With Lions Clubs throughout Canada collecting and shipping eyeglasses and components to them for repair, refurbishing, etc. CLERC has now provided over 6 million pairs of eyeglasses to individuals worldwide who would otherwise not have been able to afford them. In 2011 CLERC extended its' mandate to include repair, refurbishment, and recalibration of hearing aids as well.

The Prince Edward Lions Club (formerly Wellington District Lions Club) has been collecting and shipping used eyeglasses to CLERC for several years. We have also been heavily involved in conducting vision and hearing screenings at local schools.

In 2022 we started to collect used hearing aids and accessories and ship them to CLERC. We have worked with hearing aid providers in our area who collect them in special collection boxes and call us when they are full so they can be collected and replaced.

In July 2023, The Canadian Hearing Services (formerly the Canadian Hearing Society) contacted us. We were asked if they could inform their clients to send used hearing aids to us. Obviously, we agreed, and since then, we have received packages fairly regularly from across the Province of

Ontario.

We sort the hearing aids and accessories, box them up, and ship them out to CLERC. Since getting involved with this project, we have sorted and shipped approximately 1,000 sets of hearing aids and accessories and will be ready to make another shipment soon.