



# The Garden Ridge LIONS' DEN



The Newsletter of the Lions Club of Garden Ridge, Texas  
*A Club to Serve the Needs of our Community.*

Volume 3, Issue 1

[www.gardenridgelions.org](http://www.gardenridgelions.org)

January, 2023

## OUR NEXT MEETING

### THE LIONS CLUB OF GARDEN RIDGE

will meet on **Wednesday, January 11, at 7:00 p.m.**  
at the **Garden Ridge Community Center,**  
9400 Municipal Pkwy, Garden Ridge, TX

Setup at 6:30.

Questions? Call or email our President,  
Steve Gallets at 254-366-9018  
or at [galleste@sbcglobal.net](mailto:galleste@sbcglobal.net)



### Our Guest Speakers

Our guest speakers for this meeting will be

**Melissa Mahula,**

a Board of Directors member and  
Ticket Committee Volunteer and  
Team Captain  
with the San Antonio Livestock  
Show and Rodeo,

and **Belva Kimble,**

an Ambassador Committeeman  
and Principal Rodeo Clown  
with the San Antonio Livestock  
Show and Rodeo.



For more information about them, see pages 2 and 3.

## Melissa Mahula

Greetings! I am Melissa Kaye Mahula: a San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo Ticket Committee Volunteer, Life Member, and Director Emeritus.

My past and present roles include:

1994-2006: Calf Scramble Committee Volunteer and Team Lead

2003-2006: Calf Scramble - Wild Game Dinner Sub-Chair

1999-Current: Life Member

2006-Current: Board of Directors Member

2006-Current: Auction Committee Volunteer and Poultry Sub-Chair Assistant

2017-Current: Director Emeritus

2020-Current: Rodeo Ticket Committee Volunteer and Team Captain

My auction duties include soliciting and raising funds for the San Antonio Junior Livestock Auction. As Poultry Sub-Chair Assistant, I help with running the Poultry Auction and organizing our team of volunteers.

Additionally, I support and raise funds for the San Antonio Yellow Roses (a buying group for steers) and Chicas (a buying group for goats), and much more. I'm also an Auction Buyer and help support 4H and FFA kids personally.

My Rodeo Ticket Committee Duties include selling tickets to the rodeo, star experience, carnival, fairgrounds, and parking. As Team Captain, I am responsible for recruiting and managing a team of volunteers and communicating committee news throughout the season. More specifically, a TC is responsible for team planning, direction, setting team goals, motivation, discipline, staffing team hierarchy (with Chairman's approval), coordinating team members at selling events (or service events), developing new sales opportunities, taking advantage of existing sales opportunities, training rookies, etc. I am a Season Ticket Holder and contributing to the education of our future generations.

On a personal note, I am a small town country girl from Luling, Texas, where I was a member of the 4-H Club and raised lambs, rabbits, steers, and other livestock. During junior high and high school, I was a cheerleader and was a well-rounded athlete by playing volleyball, basketball, track, and golf. Upon graduation, I attended Schreiner College in Kerrville, from 1987-1989 on a volleyball scholarship. Since 1989, my home has been San Antonio and a few of its surrounding areas. From 1991-1995, I rode for the U.S. Marshal's Posse and Drill Team, which included presenting in Laramie WY for the Marshal Museum Induction. I also rode in the Cheyenne Frontier Days, and the San Antonio Rodeo! I am the devoted and proud mom of two boys, Devon and Bradly. My boys were involved with the FFA and raised pigs and chickens. I live with my boyfriend, Robby (who also volunteers for the SA Rodeo's Auction Committee and the Bustin' in the Barn and his two children, Tyler and Kaitlyn. I am a Member of the SABOR and Texas Realtors, and the Alamo Area Corvette Club. My hobbies include fun at the beach, lake, boating, fishing, hunting, rodeo and concerts, dancing, cooking, movies, family and friends, and volunteering.

My career has encompassed the following industries: insurance, real estate, property management, recruiting, hotel, retail, and several home businesses. Currently, I'm a realtor who works for the Presidio Group, LLC – a real estate development company which focuses on commercial real estate properties.

*(Melissa's biography continued on next page)*

*Melissa Mahula (continued)*

Why Do I Volunteer for the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo? Because I share the Rodeo's commitment to contribute to our leaders of tomorrow – our Texas youth, in the areas of education and agriculture. I used to be one of those kids, and it's important to give back and pay it forward and make sure our future is in good hands!

Visitors to the Rodeo and Livestock Show find this annual event as a welcome break from life's routine. And as for the ranchers and farmers who participate in various events and activities - it's a happy blend of business and fellowship – particularly for those who live in an isolated ranch environment.

The 4-H and FFA youth who care year-long for their prized livestock, through extensive care, grooming, and showing – receive the best education possible! Lifelong habits of responsibility are instilled within them, and family bonds are strengthened as well. I invite you to hear it for yourself: when you visit the rodeo grounds, and walk through the numerous livestock barns – take a moment to ask a FFA youth in his/her trademark corduroy blue jacket (an article of faith, honor, and pride) or a 4-H'er in his/her green and white jacket (with the 4 H 's – representing Head, Heart, Hands, and Health, and the green, four-leaf stemmed clover) – to describe their experiences as a Junior Livestock exhibitor!

And if you should happen to be on the rodeo grounds on Auction Day, the youths have already been rewarded by meeting the responsibility of caring for their livestock and bringing it to show status. And now, it's a dollars and cents payoff time! Through it all, there's the dream of hitting the big one: the coveted Grand Champion award!

San Antonio is also an important stop for the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA). Anyone shooting for the big money in the December's National Finals by Top Performers from the United States and Canada will be on hand!

Let's Rodeo, San Antonio! Come join us for 19 days of wholesome, family-oriented fun! There's truly something for everyone – of all interests and age groups!

## **Belva Kimble**

Belva Kimble started volunteering for the San Antonio Rodeo in 2005. In her 17 years as a volunteer, she has served on two San Antonio Livestock Show and Rodeo Committees. Belva first served on the Dairy Classroom Committee as a volunteer, where she insured that the animals were prepped and Show Ready for the milking exhibitions at the SA Rodeo.

In 2010, she became a member of the Ambassador Committee and has played a critical role on the committee as the principal rodeo clown. For the past nine years, Belva has taken a lead role in organizing the clowns for parades, civic events, college fairs, Cowboy Breakfast, Western Heritage, and other SA Rodeo events. She has affectionately earned her name of Mama Clown.

Belva is passionate about the mission of the San Antonio Rodeo to educate the youth of Texas and feels truly blessed to represent the SA Rodeo. In 2020, Belva represented the SA Rodeo at 52 Ambassador Committee events, earning her the prestigious award of Ambassador Committeeman of the Year! On a personal note, Belva spends her off time as a costume jewelry designer (for the past 30 years), raises dairy goats, stars as the lead singer in the BELVA and The Texas Mix band, serves as a member of the San Antonio Steel Guitar Association, serves on the Board of Directors of the Cris Crossing Foundation, is an active member of the Texas Renaissance Court, enjoys dancing, and especially loves spending time with her two granddaughters.

Let's Rodeo San Antonio!



Founded by three Detroit area Lions Clubs members in 1939, Leader Dogs for the Blind provides dog guides to people who are blind or visually impaired to enhance their mobility, independence and quality of life. Each year, over 270 participants attend our 26- day residential training program to be paired with a dog guide. This is a life-changing event that opens the doors to independence, safety and self-worth for many of the participants in the Leader Dog program.



## World Services for the Blind

Lions World Services for the Blind was founded in 1947 by Roy Kumpe to serve people who are blind and visually impaired who needed to learn independent living skills or job training skills that considered the special requirements of their individual visual impairments. The goal of the rehabilitation center then, and today, is to prepare the individual who is blind or visually impaired to function independently in our "sighted" society.



## Lions Clubs International FOUNDATION

The Lions Club International Foundation provides funds for relief from disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and floods. It also provides funds to aid in construction of hospitals, clinics, schools and other needed projects.

### Texas Lions Foundation

Since its founding nearly 37 years ago, our District 2-S3 has contributed \$239,000 to the Foundation. In that same time period, \$782,000 has been distributed to Texas Lions Clubs for Humanitarian Projects and Disaster Relief in Texas. Congratulations – YOU continue to make a difference in Texas! For the current Lions Year that began July 1, 2020, 41 Clubs in the District have already become 100% Clubs supporting the Foundation. If you have not made your 100% Club contribution, there is still ample time to do so. Contributions from the 41 Clubs totaled more than \$3,500 and qualify each Club to receive a recognition banner patch which would have been presented at the Mid-Winter Conference – the plan now is to present the banner patches at the District Convention on May 1, 2021.

### How We Serve

There are 1.35 million Lion members in 45,000 clubs world-wide. We are active in more than 208 countries and geographic areas. We conduct vision and health screenings, build parks, support eye hospitals, award scholarships, assist youth, provide help in time of disaster, and much more.

## A Brief History of Lions International

In June of 1917, the Melvin Jones Business Circle of Chicago contacted several similar organizations and held their first convention in August in Dallas, TX. The first International Lions Club was established in Windsor, Ontario, in 1920. In 1925, Helen Keller challenged the Lions to become the "Knights of the Blind." Lions Club International had its major expansion between 1950-1970. Women were admitted to become Lions in 1987.

## History of the Garden Ridge Lions Club

A community-wide effort to help individuals and families in times of need or disaster has long been a characteristic of the rural Southwest. This willingness to assist neighbors in times of crisis seemed inherent to the early residents of the Garden Ridge community. The rapid development of the area during the early 1970's brought the realization that some type of formal organization was needed to grow with the community while also meeting their increased charitable and civic needs. This realization "planted the seed" and resulted in the founding of the Garden Ridge Lions Club in early 1972. Formal presentation of the Charter was made on April 25, 1973, at a banquet held at the Randolph Air Force Base Non-Commissioned Officers' Club.

## Regional, State, and International Charities Supported Texas Lions Camp

The Texas Lions Camp is a 500-acre camp located in Kerrville, Texas, for physically handicapped, Down Syndrome, and insulin-dependent diabetic children. The camp was founded April 4, 1949, and had 40 excited kids for the first camp held on June 8, 1953. The first summer the camp served 236 children and now averages about 1300 per summer. The camping sessions offer the kids swimming, horseback riding, fishing, archery, and nature studies. All camping and services are provided at no cost to the children or their families. We spend three Saturdays every year, approximately 300 work hours, getting the Texas Lions Camp painted and cleaned-up for that year's campers.

## How We Fund Our Programs

Primarily, we donate our time and talent to fund raising and local humanitarian projects. Our primary fund raising project is the Annual Food Fest, Raffle, and Auction held every year on the first Saturday in October at the Garden Ridge Community Center. Come out and support us!

The Garden Ridge Lions Club meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at the Garden Ridge Community and Event Center, 7400 Municipal Pkwy, Garden Ridge.

*Garden Ridge Lions Charities, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) IRS tax exempt organization.*

## **The Purposes of the Garden Ridge Lions Club**

- To create and foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world.
- To promote the principles of good government and good citizenship.
- To take an active interest in the civic, cultural, social, and moral welfare of the community.
- To unite the members in the bonds of friendship, good fellowship, and mutual understanding.
- To provide a forum for open discussion of all matters of public interest; provided, however, that partisan politics and sectarian religion shall not be debated by club members.
- To encourage service-minded people to serve their community without personal financial reward, and to encourage efficiency and promote high ethical standards in commerce, industry, professions, public works, and private endeavors.

## **Local Humanitarian Programs of the Garden Ridge Lions Club**

- Eyeglass Recycle – visit Garden Ridge library eyeglass recycle drop box
- Youth Scholarships – Local High School awardees receive a scholarship toward their college or vocational school education
- Boys State – Hands on experience in state political system
- Girls State – Hands on experience in state political system
- LEOs – Leo Clubs established to promote high school experience in Lions
- Project Graduation - Adult-supervised and alcohol-free activities are offered as part of a postgraduation party
- Lone Star Books – purchase of children books for our City Library
- Disaster Relief – as needed for local, state, national, and international disasters
- Thanksgiving Food Baskets – provide holiday food for local needy families
- Operation Santa Claus – provide holiday food and children gifts to local needy families
- Hearing Screening – annual hearing testing of grade school students in Comal and New Braunfels ISDs
- Bat Cave and FM 2252 Road Clean Up – provide quarterly trash cleanup of selected local roads
- Blood Donations - In conjunction with the City of Garden Ridge, coordinates quarterly blood drives
- Community Service - We support and participate in programs and service projects in our community

## What does it mean to be a Lion?

What does it mean to be a Lion? The question itself should be very simple and easy to answer. But anyone who is part of the Lions Club will tell you many different things about being a Lion. And for each person, it means something different.

- ◆ " It can mean being a part of something to make your community better, helping the environment, cleaning parks, and roadside clean up.
- ◆ " It can mean creating Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for those in need, and wrapping presents for the children.
- ◆ " It can mean cooking in the kitchen preparing healthy meals.
- ◆ " It can mean serving the hungry and other hunger relief efforts.
- ◆ " It can mean collecting bottle caps and making donations to cure childhood cancer.
- ◆ " It can mean collecting eyeglasses and helping children get new glasses to succeed in school.
- ◆ " It can mean going into schools and doing hearing testing.
- ◆ " It can mean helping in diabetic programs, education, and testing.
- ◆ " It can mean reading scholarships applications and awarding \$ for kids to go to school.
- ◆ " It can mean building ramps, fixing train cars or wheelchairs.
- ◆ " It can mean being able to touch people's lives in a different way then you thought possible.

The motto of the Lions club is "We Serve," and if you have a passion for serving your community, then you are in good company. Being a Garden Ridge Lions Club member is something to be proud of.



## Lions Collect Used Eyeglasses

The members of the Garden Ridge Lions Club have accumulated, over the past several months, about 8000 pair of used eyeglasses. The club sorted and packed them for delivery to the Texas Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center (TLERC) in Midland, Texas. The TLERC program is in need of used eyeglasses; there are over 1.5 billion, that's billion with a "b," individuals in developing nations that need and can't afford the simplest eye care. We as Lions can do our part in filling this hole by collecting used eyeglasses for recycling. The center will process and distribute the used eyeglasses to needy individuals throughout the world. Once received at TLERC, glasses go through a "First Sort." Since people will not see clearly from severely scratched lenses, these must be sorted out. TLERC will also throw out very worn or broken frames as well. The rest of the first sort consists of separating glasses: prescription from non-prescription, clear from tinted lenses, baby/small child glasses from adult, and "fancy" frames, as well as those with precious metal in them from normal frames.

Finally, the glasses are separated by right eye prescription into single vision or bifocal, near or far-sighted, and then quarter diopters (a diopter is a measurement of the lens strength). Each of these sub-divisions is then placed into special boxes holding about 50 glasses of that prescription. A completed set of all the combinations ready to ship to a mission or clinic around the world would contain about 7600 pairs of glasses. In the end we might have to sort through 50,000 pair of glasses just to come up with one complete set of boxes to ship, because some prescriptions are harder to find than others. So please keep on collecting!

Community residents may deposit unneeded eyeglasses in the Garden Ridge Lions eyeglass collection box located in the Garden Ridge Library. The eyeglasses from our collection box provide improved vision not only for many people but also for our favorite teddy bear.

