

Women as Lions

By PDG Isabel Cheong

The history of women in Lions goes way back to 1917, when Lions International was founded. Subsequently in 1925, Helen Keller was honoured as the “First Lady of Lionism”. In 1987, the Lioness programme began: and LCI was the first service club organisation to admit women as members.

The many women’s initiative that followed included promoting women’s membership development, which later introduced the women’s and family membership development and participation chairperson position. From 2011, chairpersons also called specialists work under the GMT District Coordinator.

District 308-A1 has certainly embraced women into its membership, with women members accounting for more than 34% a – a comparable statistic with countries worldwide. It has been said that only 20% of LCI members are women! That being so, there is thus tremendous potential for Lions growth through the increasing participation of women, and family members.

Lest I be accused of gender bias, studies have shown that women are more motivated than men to help others. They score higher on measures of caring and empathy. Across cultures, women are more likely to believe that service to others is important, and to support the provision of basic human needs and help to mitigate income inequalities.

Skills developed by women as volunteers, can be applied in all aspects of their lives. By participating in Lions and non-profit activities and volunteering with family members, there is increasing community awareness, which in turn will increase their family bond.

Past International President Gudrun Yngvadottir, the very first woman president of our organisation, believes that, quote “the more we see women joining in and doing interesting important things, the more we will see other women doing the same. And this is how we build an even stronger future for Lions.” unquote.

As the MD Council Committee member for Family and Women’s Specialist, appointed by DG Lesa Gan, I look forward to working with all clubs in the District and Multiple District to invite families and women members to join our organisation. Through Lions, resources which include pursuing leadership development are available, as well as hands-on service projects that we hope will attract new family and women members.

So, with more caring women and family members serving and working together for the good of the community and mankind, a stronger and more vibrant organisation we will be able to have, and to make a lasting impact in a needy world.