

In 1972 the Okefenokee Lions Club, under the direction and leadership of Dr. C. M. Blanton, District Governor, 18-B, saw a need to provide recreation for children with visual handicaps in the state of Georgia. Realizing that most of the 12,500 blind people in the state had no place to turn to for planned, safe outdoor recreation, they decided to hold a one-week summer camp for local blind children at Laura S. Walker State Park, near Waycross, Georgia.

Lion Floyd Thomas, of the Waycross Lions Club, suggested we try to secure 61 acres of land, adjoining the State Park.

On November 27, 1974, a delegation of Georgia Lions met with Governor Jimmy Carter and presented him the plat of the land and the idea of a camp for the visually handicapped in the state of Georgia.

In late June the Department of Natural Resources approved the transfer of the 61.3 acre tract to the Georgia Lions by use agreement. On September 12, 1975, the "Georgia Lions Camp for the Blind" was chartered as a non-profit organization.

Today, over 500 youth and young adults have attended the Camp completely free of charge. The Camps program places emphasis in the campers' abilities, and not their disability. Activities include Swimming, Canoeing, Arts and Crafts, Nature Study, Horseback Riding, Field Events, and much, much more.

Campers ranging from age 6 - senior adult enjoy a one or two week session of exciting camping experiences. The carefully planned program stresses essential qualities such as personal motivation, self-confidence, leadership and self-reliance in a fun-filled outdoor atmosphere.



WALTER P. SEALY, JR
President
Georgia Lions Camp
for The Blind, Inc.
Pelham



LONNIE V. ROBERTS
President
Georgia Lions Camp
for The Blind, Inc.
Hazlehurst



J. STAN BAZEMORE
President
Georgia Lions Camp
for The Blind, Inc.
Lyons



HANK BARKS
President
Georgia Lions Camp
For the Blind, Inc.
Warner Robins Noon Lions Club

1990-1999 CAMP HISTORY

1990

Elected Walter Sealy to serve as Camp President.
Regular Board Meetings were held in Dublin, GA.
Lightning struck the water pump costing \$1,151 to repair.
Lions sold 996 boxes of Christmas Cards designed by the campers, leaving 1000 boxes to sell.
150 pine trees were planted by Boy Scouts on the Camp grounds.
Working on ACA Accreditation.
Trust Fund balance was \$48,381.
155 campers attended Camp during the summer with 47 new campers.

1991

Awarded the contract to Sherman Vickers to construct the new Arts & Crafts Building for \$40,855.
\$24,000 was received from a LCIF Grant.
Proceeds from the Paul Azinger Golf Tournament totaled \$23,179.59.
168 campers attended Camp with 44 first timers. The oldest Camper was 89.
Celebrated the 15th Anniversary Celebration of the Camp with 450 in attendance.
The meal was cooked and served outside on the grounds.
Agreed to celebrate future anniversaries in 5-year increments.
Adopted a Building Block Program to raise funds for a Grounds Manager's house.
Adopted Project Re-leaf to plant & maintain trees at \$20/per tree.
Received \$4,400 from Delta Airlines Employees fund to make a Camp Video.
Muscular Dystrophy Association used the Camp for 25 campers in wheelchairs.
Renovated the kitchen with new range hood with fire system, partitioned walls, new tile floor, and new roof.
Adopted Personnel & Procedures Policy created by Lion Jim Lapham.
Trust Fund balance was \$70,000.

1992

Elected Lonnie Roberts to serve as Camp President.
Century Club currently has 135 members.
Lion Terry Schubert & his construction crew from Milledgeville voluntarily constructed the Grounds Manager's house.
Began meetings with Harrison/ Hempe/ Davis Consultants to formulate a Long Range Plan.
Actress/Singer Bobbie Eakes donated to the Camp her \$3,800 winnings from her TV appearance on Daytime Family Feud. She is Macy on "The Bold & the Beautiful."
135 Campers attended the Camp.
Regular Board Meetings were moved to the Holiday Inn in Perry, GA.

1993

Purchased 6 radios for communications with funds raised by the 1992-93 Council of Governors.
Contracted with ARA Campus Dining to provide meals for the summer.
Century Club had 177 members.
Sold tickets on a 1980 UGA Championship football.
Proceeds from a Beeper ball Game held in Savannah between campers and radio broadcasters were \$2,800.
2 coaches from U.S. Association of Blind Athletes helped with instructions for campers in preparation for the 1995 Para-Olympics.
Sold pecans from the Camp pecan trees for \$1.00 per pound.
"Indian Summer" was the camping theme for the season and campers learned about our Native Americans.
Sold boxes of Christmas Cards designed by the campers.
154 Campers attended the summer sessions.

1994

Elected Stan Bazemore to serve as Camp President.
Accepted the Long Range Plan submitted by Harrison/Hempe/Davis as our plan.
Installed a new water tank.
Purchased a 1994 Chevrolet S-10 for the Camp use.
Held the 1st "Lions Day at Food Lion" fundraiser with the Food Lion grocery stores.
45 volunteers from 13 clubs participated in the Spring Work Weekend.
Disbanded the Coordinating Committee.
Board Members assisted a UGA student with a survey for his thesis, part of the "Kellogg Project in Effective Governance."
Instituted the Personnel, Building & Grounds, & Facility Utilization Committees.
Began an annual "Lions Day at the Camp".
Instituted the Don Anderson Award – highest per capita increase statewide.
Campers enjoyed archery, golf, an archeological dig led by a professor from Valdosta, bird watching led by a man from the GA Nature Reserve in Darien, a study of the solar system with a map in Braille led by a geologist with NASA.
Profit we received from the Paul Azinger Golf Tournament was \$4,908.53.

1995

Received a 1995 Toyota Van donated by Pro Golfer Paul Azinger that he won in the "Skins" Golf Tournament in Arizona.
Received \$25,000 from the Jones Company as seed money for a new Activities Building.
Established the Dr. C.M. Blanton Fellow Award for those who contribute \$300 in honor or memory of an individual who has done outstanding work for the Camp.
Received \$3,000 from Actress Shea Harrison of the Bold & Beautiful Soap Opera from her appearance on the Family Feud.
Distributed a brochure "Easing Your Tax Burden" about planned giving to the Camp.
Hired our 1st full time Building & Grounds Manager.
145 Campers attended Camp in the summer.

1996

Received a \$75,000 matching grant from LCIF for the new Activities Building.
Instituted the building block program for the new Activities Building.
Held the 1st "Send a Kid to Camp" fundraiser realizing \$14,117.57.
Initiated the 2nd Generation Century Club.
District A contributed 100 3-piece sets of twin sheets & 200 bath towels/washcloths & a check for \$1,000 as a District project.
Increased Camper Registration Fee to \$15.00.
147 campers attend Camp.
Took 16 campers to observe the Para-Olympic Games Track & Field in Atlanta.
Young Adult session attended the Olympic Torch Ceremony in Waycross where each camper was able to hold the torch.
Merged the Facility Utilization Committee with the Building & Grounds Committee.
Celebrated the 20th Anniversary celebration during Lions Day at the Camp. It was the first time to use the new Flash Foods Activities Building.

1997

Added restrooms and a storage room to the Lioness Dining Hall for about \$12,000.
Trust Fund Balance reached \$200,000.
161 Campers attended Camp with 42 there for the first time.
"Lions Camp Safari" was the Theme for the summer and for Lions Day.
Installed a new septic tank and drain field for the bathhouse.

1998

Hank Barks was elected to serve as Camp President.
Shannon Nettles became the new Camp Executive Director.
Held the 1st Joint Meeting of the Camp and the Lighthouse.
Paved the Camp Main Entrance area.
New beds & mattresses and Dining Hall Chairs were donated to the Camp.
"Home for the Holidays at Ga. Lions Camp" was the theme for the summer.
Had 2 International Staff from Germany and the Netherlands for the camping season.
149 Campers attended with 26 for the first time.
Trust Fund balance reached \$300,000.

1999

Had a Camp Display at the International Lions Convention in San Diego.
Installed a lift, resurfaced and repaired the pool at a cost of \$25,000 which was donated.
Hosted the Conference of Lions Camps with 74 in attendance from 14 Camps around the USA.
A new Maintenance Building was constructed.
A new floating dock was installed on our part of Laura Walker Lake.
The summer staff included a Performing Arts Instructor from Australia.
Purchased a Lion costume to use as a Camp mascot, who was later named Rufus.
Held an Easter Egg Hunt on the Camp for local citizens.
Received a donated ceramic kiln and molds. The kiln was set up and vented in the Azinger Arts & Crafts building.
Added a cooking pavilion onto the end of the bathhouse with a large picnic table and large barbeque grill
181 campers attended camp with 57 for the first time.
Repainted and decorated the Lioness Dining Hall.
"Harmony around the World" was the summer theme.
Hired counselors from Germany, India, Australia, & West Africa. They cooked foods from their country to serve for lunch at Lions Day.
Established a Camp Trading Post in the bathhouse.
Removed the old Arts & Crafts boxcar and 2 other boxcars from the property that had previously served as storage space.
Replaced the carpet and vinyl in the Director's and the Building & Grounds Manager's houses.
Installed a 300 foot deep well with float valve at the Catfish Pond.
Began discussions for a new Office/Health Center.
Installed parking fences and property fencing.
Housed 40+ evacuees from Hurricane Floyd.