

# The Alberni Valley Lions Club



## Our History Since 1955

(compiled and edited by PDG Lion Ron Metcalfe)

## Alberni Valley Lions Club History

### The Alberni Valley Lions Club: How It Began

The Alberni Valley Lions Club was organized on July 13, 1955 with the presentation of its charter on September 24, 1955 by District Governor, Bob Wheeler. Present at the charter meeting were representatives from Nanaimo (sponsor), Ladysmith, Esquimalt, Victoria, Langford, West Vancouver, and Vancouver in BC, plus Port Angeles and Forks in Washington State. The club met on Mondays at 7:00 pm at the King Edward Hotel on Argyle Street. Charter members of the club included:

- Wolfe H. Balke
- Jack Barnwell
- Victor Belknap
- Kenneth G. Brownlee
- Peter C. Campbell
- David T. Cormie
- Gordon F. Hill
- Roy Jacques
- Robert V. Laidlaw
- Alan MacFarland
- William F. Marshall
- James Rezac
- Arnold Tufts
- Howard Weingand
- Earnest Crego
- Tony Green

and its first executive was:

- Roy Jacques (President)
- Earnest Crego
- Peter C. Campbell
- Wolfe H. Balke
- Howard Weingand
- William F. Marshall
- Gordon F. Hill

At the time of its charter, the Alberni Valley Lions Club was one of eight clubs in District 19 A, Zone 4. On July 1, 1966, Zone 19 A split and formed a new District (19 H) which included clubs from the Fraser Valley, North Whatcom County, Vancouver Island and the Olympic Peninsula. Within that district, the Alberni Valley Lions Club was in Zone 4 along with clubs from Campbell River, Comox Valley, Duncan, Gold River, Ladysmith, Nanaimo and Salt Spring Island.

On July 1, 1970, the rapid growth of Lions in the Pacific Northwest demanded that another district be added to Multiple District 19. The Alberni Valley Lions Club was now in Zone 4, District 19 I which also included clubs from Ladysmith, Nanaimo, Youbou, Duncan, Parksville and Ucluelet. During the 1979-1980 Lions Year, District 19 I was restructured to include 8 zones. Zone 19 I-7 included clubs from Alberni Valley, Parksville, Ucluelet, Nanoose Bay and Tofino. The Alberni Valley Lions Club remains in Zone 7, District 19 I, but other clubs in that zone now include the Gabriola Lions Club, the Nanaimo Lions Club, the Nanaimo Hub City Lions Club, the Nanoose Bay Lions Club, the Parksville Lions Club, the Protection Island Lions Club, the Nanaimo Harbor Lites Lioness Club and the Parksville Lioness Club.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The foregoing information is extracted from *District 19 I Our History from 12 April 1941* (Updated from 2003 by PDG Steve Morey).

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### ALBERNI VALLEY LIONS CLUB PRESIDENTS (1955 – 2017)<sup>2</sup>:

1955 – 1956	ROY JACQUES	1988 – 1989	ARTHUR HALSALL
1956 – 1957	GORDON F. HILL	1989 – 1990	FRED JARVIS
1957 – 1958	ERNEST CREGO	1990 – 1991	FRED JARVIS
1958 – 1959	WOLFE H. BALKE	1991 – 1992	PAUL DORE
1959 – 1960	JAMES REZAC	1992 – 1993	ALLAN GOODALL
1960 – 1961	EARL BOWEN	1993 – 1994	FRANK STETS
1961 – 1962	WILLIAM F. MARSHALL	1994 – 1995	RONALD MUSTARD
1962 – 1963	BUCK HUNDAL	1995 – 1996	DENIS HOULE
1963 – 1964	A. DOUGLAS WILLING	1996 – 1997	TITUS VAN WIEREN
1964 – 1965	A. DOUGLAS WILLING	1997 – 1998	RUSSELL McLAUGHLIN
1965 – 1966	RAY GOUDET	1998 – 1999	ARTHUR HALSALL
1966 – 1967	MARVIN LOCKWOOD	1999 – 2000	ALLAN GOODALL
1967 – 1968	JIM LAWRENCE	2000 – 2001	PAUL DORE
1968 – 1969	JOHN A. McLEOD	2001 – 2002	GEORGE SMITH
1969 – 1970	WILLIAM J. PATENAUDE	2002 – 2003	FRED JARVIS
1970 – 1971	ROBERT McMULLEN	2003 – 2004	RYAN DVORAK
1971 – 1972	WINSTON JOSEPH	2004 – 2005	TOM HALL
1972 – 1973	BOIE O. MYHRE	2005 – 2006	JOE DVORAK
1973 – 1974	GERRY W. STEELE	2006 – 2007	ROBERT DALTON
1974 – 1975	EVERT VANZOEREN	2007 – 2008	PAUL DORE
1975 – 1976	DENIS HOULE	2008 – 2009	GRANT GIBSON
1976 – 1977	RON KERNEY	2009 – 2010	GARY PRICE
1977 – 1978	ROBERT T. EYFORD	2010 – 2011	RUSSELL McLAUGHLIN
1978 – 1979	JOHN GRODS / KEN HOLLINSHEAD	2011 – 2012	RONALD JORGENSON
1979 – 1980	GERRIT DE WAAL	2012 – 2013	ARTHUR HALSALL
1980 – 1981	KEITH SMITH	2013 – 2014	ROBERT DALTON
1981 – 1982	ROBERT HAYNES	2014 – 2015	GARY PRICE
1982 – 1983	ROBERT HAYNES	2015 – 2016	TOM HALL
1983 – 1984	DAVID MURRAY	2016 – 2017	DIANNA DALTON
1984 – 1985	JOSEF DVORAK	2017 – 2018	DIANNA DALTON
1985 – 1986	MARVIN LOCKWOOD	2018 – 2019	DON CLARK
1986 – 1987	TOM HALL	2019 – 2020	
1987 – 1988	JOHN BENNIE	2020 – 2021	

<sup>2</sup> Based on club records submitted by Secretary PZC Lion Don Hudson.

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### District Service and Activities

The following Alberni Valley Lions have served as Zone Chair in District 19<sup>3</sup>:

Doug Willing: Zone H-4 Chair (1967 – 1968)  
John McLeod: Zone 1-4 Chair (1970 – 1971)  
Bob McMillan: Zone 1-4 Chair (1972 – 1973)  
Trevor Kelly: Zone 1-4 Chair (1976 – 1977)  
Bob Haynes: Zone 1-7 Chair (1986 – 1987)  
Don Hudson: Zone 1-7 Chair (2002 – 2003)  
Rob Dalton: Zone 1-7 Chair (2011 – 2012)

While no one from the Alberni Valley Lions Club has served as District Governor in District 19 I or its predecessors, as of 2015, membership included two past district governors from outside the district: PDG Rob Dalton (District 19 A [2001-2002]) and PDG Ron Metcalfe (District 5 SKS [2013-2014]).

Three Spring Conferences were hosted by the Alberni Valley Lions Club<sup>4</sup>:

- April 14 to 16, 1978 with Past International President Walter C. Fisher as guest speaker.
- March 15 to 17, 1985 with International Director George Wong as guest speaker.
- April 24 to 26, 2009 with International Director Wayne Davis as guest speaker.

### Local Activities

Until recently, the club met at 6:00 pm on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at the Hospitality Inn on Redford Street in Port Alberni. Directors' Meetings were held on the first Tuesday of each month at the residence of one of the executive members. On March 8, 2016, the club decided to schedule a business meeting on the second Tuesday of each month and schedule a social meeting on the fourth Tuesday of each month. During July and August only one meeting is held each month and significant others are invited. Although business is conducted, the main emphasis is fellowship.

The number of members varies, but the Lions Club usually maintains a membership in the low twenties<sup>5</sup>. As of 2015, the age of Lions members ranged from the late thirties to the early eighties and included both men and women. Many of the club members have served either continuously or repeatedly in executive positions and have become both competent and imaginative in their service to the club and the community.

Since its charter, the Alberni Valley Lions Club has responded to a variety of community needs with particular emphasis on youth, medical issues and seniors' activities. Past projects have included a 10-year Leo Club sponsorship, a 5-year Annual Caribbean Jamboree that featured West Indian music and

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3 Based on data from *District 19 I Our History from 12 April 1941*.

4 Based on data from *District 19 I Our History from 12 April 1941*.

5 Based on MMR and VAD reports supplied by Secretary PZC Lion Don Hudson.

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food, the annual preparation and delivery of Christmas hampers, Project Pride, Mother's Day Carnations, Monster Bingo, the Annual Car Show and the pick up of Christmas trees.<sup>6</sup>

More recently, the Lions have continued their organization and participation in the Annual TV Auction, the Children's Bullhead Derby, the Terry Fox Run, the sale of reflective address signs and the "Your Vision Is Our Vision" Supermarket Dash. The Lions Club has also donated to school lunches, band trips, bursaries and scholarships for the local school district and college, the Seniors' Breakfast, the Seniors' Picnic, Starlight Movie Night, Shawnigan Lake Camp, Dog Guides (Lions Foundation of Canada) and a variety of other worthwhile causes<sup>7</sup>. The Alberni Valley Lions Club has become well-known in the community and enjoys its support for both its fundraising events and community activities.

### Roger Creek Park

The Alberni Valley Lions have provided both financing and labour for the construction of structures within this park. The Lions name is prominently displayed on both the Children's Spray Park and the bridge over Roger Creek.



*Lions Sign at Children's Spray Park*



*The Lions Spray Park*

The Lions Spray Park was completed in late May 1999 and the official opening was on June 19, 1999. Construction was carried out by city workers and coordinated by Parks and Recreation Director Scott Kenny. The Alberni Valley Lions Club donated over \$31,000 to the project<sup>8</sup>.

When the original Roger Creek Bridge washed out in the early 1980's, the Lions Club rebuilt the bridge and dedicated it to Charter Alberni Valley Lion James Rezac. In September 2006, the bridge was dismantled by the City of Port Alberni as cracks were found in the stringers supporting the bridge walkway. A replacement Roger Creek Bridge was completed in October 2006 by Parks and Recreation with a contribution of \$8000 from the Alberni Valley Lions Club. Upon completion, the bridge was

<sup>6</sup> Historical information contributed by Life Director Lion Winston Joseph.

<sup>7</sup> Extracted from reports by Treasurer Lion Russ McLaughlin.

<sup>8</sup> Information provided by Lions Russ McLaughlin, PZC Don Hudson and Tom Hall.

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rededicated to Charter Lion James Rezac and the sign recognizing that dedication was re-erected<sup>9</sup>.



*Jim Rezac dedication sign*



*Roger Creek Bridge*

The park is used for a variety of events and is currently the site of the Seniors' Picnic. Previously, the Seniors' picnic was held at Little Qualicum Falls and at McLean's Mill with a steam train ride in both directions. The picnic was eventually moved to the current location to allow easier access for wheelchair-bound seniors.

Some of the meal is catered from an outside source and the Lions Club is responsible for cooking hamburgers, hot dogs and chicken as well as helping to serve the meals. The set-up and take down of chairs, tables and tents is also the responsibility of the club. During the event, a band provides entertainment and opportunities are provided for informal visits among Lions, seniors and support workers. The seniors are residents of local care homes and are transported to the park by Handi-Dart bus. Attendance at both the Seniors' Breakfast and Seniors' Picnic has been strong.



*Seniors' Picnic*

### Annual TV Auction

Although the Alberni Valley Lions Club derives income from a number of sources, perhaps the most significant and enduring of these enterprises is the Annual TV Auction. The TV Auction began in 1972 and is usually held on the last Saturday of November.

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<sup>9</sup> Extracted from the article *Roger Creek bridge soon to be completed* by AV Times reporter Niomi Pearson [October 14, 2006] and supplied in a scrapbook prepared by Lions PDG Rob Dalton and Denis Houle.

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*Taking bids at the TV Auction*

Each member of the club is responsible for canvassing local businesses who contribute one or more articles to be sold at a live auction broadcast on a local cable channel. In recent years, the auction was held at the Glenwood Centre, but in 2015, it was moved to the Port Alberni Youth Centre. Shaw installed cable at the new location and arranged for the auction to be streamed to portable devices using the Alberni Lions TV Auction Website.

### Vision Screening

This project, started in 2015, was led by the Alberni Valley Lions Club, but has involved Lions Clubs from other parts of Vancouver Island and Lions International. Vision analysis will be carried out by Welch-Allyn's Spot™ Vision Screener which already has been used in the United States and was recently approved by Health Canada for use in this country. The scanner provides mass vision screenings in seconds for children and adults and requires no physical contact. It is lightweight, portable and is as easy to use as a camera. Conditions such as near-sightedness, far-sightedness, blurred vision, unequal refractive power, unequal pupil size and eye misalignment may be detected by this device, then if necessary, referrals can be made to eye care professionals for further diagnosis and treatment. Initially, permission will be sought for screening in nearby school districts in addition to religious, private and first nations schools. Eventually, we may consider use in personal care and retirement homes.

Lions PDG Rob Dalton and Ron Jorgenson have visited Lions Clubs in other parts of Vancouver Island to demonstrate the Spot™ Screener and encourage the clubs to participate in the acquisition of at least five Spot™ screening units which will be distributed according to population and demand. A cadre of Lions members will be trained in the use of the screener<sup>10</sup>.



*PDG Rob Dalton does a presentation on the Welch-Allyn Spot™ Vision Screener at the Comox Valley Lions Den*

The Alberni Valley Lions Club celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> Charter Anniversary on December 8, 2015 and maintains a variety of projects, both long-standing and new. The club anticipates continuation of its success far into the future<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> [Further information on the Spot™ Vision Screener.](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Additional historical information and photographs.](#)