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## We Serve: More Than a Motto

July 20, 2020 / Doreen Martel  
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**We Serve**

The Lions Club motto is “We Serve”. For more than 100 years, this has been the motto of the Association. This year, we faced unprecedented challenges in Holliston, first with the threat of EEE in the fall and ending the year with COVID-19. And yet, through it all, the men and women of the Holliston Lions Club have continued their commitment to service.

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One of the metrics Lions Clubs International uses to determine how well a club is functioning is the number of volunteer hours a Club contributes and how many people are served as the result of those hours. This does not usually include fundraising hours which in our case during the 2019-2020 Lions year turned out to be a good thing! During the year, we performed nearly 1,400 hours of community service. This resulted in our providing services to more than 15,000 people across more than 70 service projects.

## Everything in Perspective

You can remain in awe of the number of hours and projects completed between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. However, it is vitally important to put this into perspective and understand that between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019, we provided services to more than 5,500 people and completed 47 service activities. This means that despite facing new challenges during this year, we were able to continue providing service to those who were in the most need.

## Flexibility During Pandemic Lockdown



One of the primary challenges we faced during the pandemic lock down was how to continue providing service to the community. Towards this end, we needed to determine where we could do the most good, offer

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services, and still ensure the safety of our Club members as well as the public we were intent on serving. The Holliston Lions Club members are innovative and they are flexible. We never missed a beat. For those who do not remember, the initial state of emergency in Massachusetts was declared on March 10. Holliston Lions Big Raffle was originally scheduled for March 12. After some discussion, we determined this fundraising event would be postponed until the fall. This was problematic because it is one of our biggest fundraising events of the year. Nonetheless, we did this out of an abundance of caution and when March 15 rolled around and we were in lock down, we stepped up and took some unusual steps to provide service to the community.

## Partners Matter in Times of Crisis

Holliston Lions Club members stepped up in some unusual ways during the pandemic and lock down. Lions teamed up with sewing groups to make masks for first responders, they offered to help deliver meals to those in need, and working with the school department became involved in the Farm to Families program to distribute produce. Lions also donated money to help make a difference to those who were facing the prospect of being hospitalized during this crisis. Thanks to the residents of Holliston, we had funds available to provide tablets to the COVID-19 ward at Milford Regional Hospital. This wasn't done in a bubble, we worked closely with the Medway, Milford, and Mendon Lions Clubs to make this happen. Together, we really did make a difference. We then went further, we provided tablets to another facility for use with their mental health patients who were not only having a hard time communicating with family members, but who were limited in their interactions with much needed services. Fortunately, we were able to help, again thanks to the support of our community.

## Our Donations Speak For Themselves

Of course community service is a major part of what we do but making sure we have the funds necessary to help is also a big factor. Thanks to the generosity of the residents of Holliston we were able to make a difference in the lives of others, even when we were facing challenging times. The Holliston Lions Club awarded 15 students in Holliston \$500 scholarships. We were able to donate more than \$500 to Lions Clubs International Foundation to ensure they could continue to award emergency grants during this time to assist communities across Massachusetts. We purchased thousands of diapers, to donate to Chelsea who was facing an unprecedented crisis due to the pandemic. We also donated \$1,500 to the Holliston Tax Relief Fund. None of this would have been possible without your support.

## Moving Forward Navigating Unfamiliar Territory

Right now, we do not know what impact the pandemic will have on our ability to raise funds. The Holliston Lions Club has made alternative plans to continue with the \$10,000 Big Raffle (<https://hollistonmalions.org/>) which will now be held as a virtual event since we are concerned about the health and well-being of both our members and those who generously purchased tickets. We have cancelled our Carnival for the 2020 – 2021 Lions year and we are working on alternative plans for the Halloween event – between the pandemic and EEE threat in Massachusetts we know we need to come up with a more creative way to raise funds for our important work and we will strive to make sure we take on every challenge that is thrown in our path. The one thing you can be certain of, with Lion Matt Putvinski taking on the role of Holliston Lions President for the 2020 – 2021 Lions year, we will continue to serve our community with pride.

## Thank You Seems Insufficient

The words thank you seem like they lack substance in cases like this. However, there that is all we can do! Thank you to the residents and businesses of Holliston MA for helping us continue making a difference. Without your ongoing financial support, there is no way for us to provide the services we do. If you are one of the many residents of the town who enjoys providing service to others, please consider joining the Holliston Lions (<https://hollistonmalions.org/why-join>) and helping us continue to make a difference by living up to our motto "We Serve".

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**Doreen Martel**

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