



LEO CLUBS

Leadership – Experience - Opportunity

Some people today are concerned about the youth in our culture, who seem to lack the range and depth of values that make us comfortable. Many of them seem addicted to their devices and may not be understood or properly appreciated by older generations. But perhaps it is us who don't "get it"!

One of the key components of Lions Service Clubs are Leo Clubs, whose objectives are to provide the youth of the world with an opportunity for personal development and contribution to their communities. Individually and collectively, these Leos are encouraged to be responsible members of the local, national and international community. A worthy objective, would you not agree? The challenge to the Signal Mountain Lions Club a decade ago was to find a fertile field and plant some seeds.



The Signal Mountain Club started this process over a decade ago, and now sponsors not one, but two Leo Clubs. The first one is at Signal Mountain High School and the other is at McCallie School. High school students today are expected to participate in activities that go beyond course work or athletics, and Leo Clubs are excellent ways to fulfill these expectations. At each

school The Leos get involved with a range of service activities that are certainly far beyond my recollection of High School in “the good old days”.

The Signal Mountain Leos were chartered under the auspices of the Signal Mountain Lions Club in 2009 and the McCallie Club chartered in 2014. Each club is an independent organization; each with a sponsor from the Lions club and a faculty advisor to support them. They continue to move forward each year, even as members graduate and new members enter the clubs. Both clubs are reflections of youthful service far beyond the demands of traditional High school activities.

Each Leo commits a minimum of 20 hours of service activity per year, and The Signal Mountain Leo Club supports the Iron Man races in Chattanooga every year. They handle the bicycles and sort materials for participants as the competition progresses. For several years, they have been making blankets for the Erlanger Children’s hospital and the Ronald McDonald House. They also support the parent Lions club with a bake sale at the Labor Day and 4th of July Bar-B-Q’s and perform numerous small projects in the community. In addition, they operate a recycling program at the school, and they sponsor a blood drive at the HS twice a year. The SM Leos are the largest student activity at the school (over 195 Leo’s), and its student leadership is both energetic and creative.

The McCallie Leo club was started more recently, and almost immediately took a mission trip to Nicaragua, where they distributed several thousand pairs of Lions glasses as part of their mission. A team of McCallie Leos supports an annual trail restoration Day at the McCoy farm on Signal Mountain, and they are providing the labor to maintain the new and improved Low Vision/ Signal Center on Bailey Avenue. They have started a book collection and redistribution program to support the East Ridge school system and also have supported several parent club activities, especially the Bar-B-Q’s.

Each year, the Leo club leadership teams attends a Signal Mountain Lion’s Club meeting in February and give us an update on their activities. The energy that we experience in these kids is more than impressive, it is inspirational! Of course, young people have a lot of energy, but listening to them talk about the programs they have developed and implemented is a humbling experience.

If these are the leaders of our future, we will be in better hands than some who lead us now. It is obvious to see their pride in what they do, and easy to reinforce their achievements with our encouragement. They are wonderful young people! The next time you meet a Leo, thank them for their service.