

## Charter Anniversary Night

(The following is paraphrased from an outdated Lions pamphlet on Charter Night, which I have updated to the present.)

The club's birthday is an important event in its history and should be observed with appropriate celebration and ceremony. For Charter Night, a regular meeting schedule can be followed, or the event can be held on the true anniversary of the chartering of the club.

Clubs should strive for 100% attendance that night. Lions spouses and guests should be invited, as should local dignitaries and District officers. A better than usual meal should be served, and special entertainment should be scheduled. A reception prior to the start of meeting and meal would be nice. Publicity for the event should also be planned.

On this special evening, certain people should be honored. Charter members and their spouses and guests should be seated prominently together. They should be the very special focus for the evening. Past presidents should also be recognized on Charter Night. This is also a time when a club may choose to present a Melvin Jones fellowship to one of the club's Lions. Similarly a club could honor those Lions who have sponsored new members in the past year. Special plaques, certificates, or other gifts provide a very nice remembrance of the evening for the honored individuals.

After the dinner and before the honorees are recognized, a history of the club, its accomplishments over the years, and how it may have changed should be shared with the audience. Charter members and other long-time Lions in the club should be able to provide the background detail for this portion of the program. (By the way, if a club maintains scrapbooks, this would be a good event to bring them out to share with everyone.)

Then proceed to honor the living charter members and others with appropriate ceremony. For example, the honorees should be asked to stand and be escorted by various club officers to the appropriate place of honor before the podium. The honorees should face the audience. Then the emcee (generally the club's president as the presiding officer) should give a brief summary of the honoree's contributions to the club, the number of years he or she has been a Lion, and offices the person has held over the years. At the end of the speech, the emcee may call each person forward to receive a gift, plaque, or certificate. At the ceremony's conclusion, the emcee says a few brief words of congratulations to all of the honorees and leads the audience in applause.

The remainder of the celebration continues. Be careful to keep the evening balanced though so that the program does not become too long.

