

## **IP Albert F. Brandel's September E-Letter**

Dear Club Officers,

Earlier this month I was privileged to be present at an inspiring event: the International Paralympic Games in Beijing. I saw men and women who had lost limbs swim at world record speeds, blind athletes perform amazing feats of strength and runners who rely on artificial legs run faster than all but those who set Olympic records at some of the same venues just a few weeks earlier.

I came away feeling that there are no obstacles that cannot be overcome and especially, that we Lions have the potential to perform even greater miracles of service than we have ever imagined.

Both the Paralympics and the Olympic Games also reminded me of the importance of teamwork. At the Olympics, the Chinese men's and women's gymnastic teams could not have won their gold medals if their specialists in floor exercise and balance beam, parallel bars and still rings did not perform up to their personal best.

Every Lions Club and indeed all of Lions Clubs International work in much the same way. Each of us has unique gifts that we bring to our mission of service and we owe it to ourselves, our fellow Lions and our communities to use them to the best of our ability. When we do and when we work together toward a common goal, there is almost nothing we cannot accomplish.

But just as American swimmer Michael Phelps came away from the games as the most honored athlete, we Lions reserve our highest recognition for those who have mastered several disciplines. That's what the Club President Excellence award is all about. To qualify, club presidents must be "all-around champions" and excel in areas including service, administration, leadership, membership growth and contributions to LCIF. (The full list of qualifications can be viewed at <http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/content/pdfs/da1.pdf>).

Not everyone can win an Olympic medal, but an Excellence Award is within reach of every Lions Club president. You owe it to your community, your club and most of all, yourself to strive for this achievement. You should also know that your efforts reflect not only on your club and yourself, but also on fellow Lion leaders in your district. Excellence Awards for Zone, Region and District officers are contingent upon having at least 50 percent of the clubs under their leadership achieve Excellence Awards. I urge you to do everything in your power to help further the culture of excellence at all levels of our association.

Another way to help foster excellence is through the new International Hero Awards which will be presented at the 2009 International Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA. These awards are designed to recognize the everyday heroes among us. These are

Lions who excel, often without fanfare, at meeting the needs of our closest neighbors and neighbors around the globe. They are individuals who have embraced their potential to have a direct and positive impact on our world. They deserve to be celebrated and we have a responsibility to ensure that they no longer go unrecognized. Please be on the lookout for the everyday heroes in our midst and consider nominating those you know for an International Hero Award. The nomination form can be found at <http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/content/pdfs/pr40.pdf>.

Finally, I ask each and every one of you to embrace your own power to affect your community and the world community. Your leadership year is an extraordinary opportunity to make things happen. Exercise your leadership by making ambitious plans and sharing them with the members of your club. Do not hesitate to propose new initiatives for service. Ensure that our traditional service priorities receive the attention that they deserve. Spread the word about Lions through [effective communication](#) with your community. These steps are not mere self-aggrandizement. They are key components in attracting new members who will increase our ability to live our Lions motto – We Serve.

As always, I thank you for all you do for Lions and for your community.

Sincerely,

Albert F. Brandel, President

The International Association of Lions Clubs

### **LCI Web site Links**

<http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/content/pdfs/da1.pdf>

<http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/content/pdfs/pr40.pdf>

[http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/content/news\\_news\\_sample.shtml](http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/content/news_news_sample.shtml)