

This interaction between the Lion and person coming for glasses is facilitated by the use



of local interpreters. At any given time during the week, we need up to 12 English speaking interpreters.

The final indication that we've matched the prescription to the person is a smile once those glasses have been properly

adjusted. If additional repairs or adjustments are needed before

sending the person on his/her way back into the community, Lions are well prepared to meet these needs and make many repairs 'on the fly'.



### ***Friendships Across the Borders***

Lions who volunteer for the missions often develop lifelong friendships that transcend any

language barriers. The use of social media allows U.S. Lions and their counterparts in Mexico, including those who may not even be Lions, to maintain contact through photos and other posts.



*A typical mission impromptu event such as this corn roast in the countryside unites Lions living thousands of miles apart to form bonds that will last forever.*



To schedule a program for your group or organization, contact us at:  
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(574) 322-1660

***www.LionsEyeglassMissions.com***



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***Lions Eyeglass Missions***



PÉNJAMO, MORELIA, SALAMANCA, VALLE DE SANTIAGO, CELAYA, SAN LUIS DE LA PAZ

**District 25-G**

## **Eyeglass Recycling Program**



IRAPUATO, SAN LUIS POTOSÍ, ABASOLO, HUANÍMARO, PUERTO VALLARTA



## History

Throughout the years, there have been Lions-sponsored eyeglass missions in District 25-G. To support this effort Lions have actively collected, processed and shipped thousands of used eyeglasses to cities and villages in Mexico a few hundred miles west of Mexico City.

Initially the district's operations were located in a double-wide trailer, provided at no charge by LaPaz Lions Ralph and Fern Costello. Over time this operation outgrew this facility's limited size and the location no longer was central to the Lions who were active in the program's leadership. The district's base of operations was relocated to the Fairview Grange in Dunlap in 2015. Contributions from the Sharon Bontrager Memorial Fund provided the resources to purchase storage and other vital components of this eyeglass processing center. Lion Sharon was an active participant in the district's eyeglass recycling program, including many years as a member of the Mexico eyeglass mission teams.

## Eyeglass Collection

The process begins with hundreds of collection boxes placed throughout the district's communities. Lions collect used eyeglasses that begin a journey to recycle and prepare them for a new life when Lions travel to Mexico to give them to many locals who depend on our efforts to improve their lives.

Once the glasses have been collected and sorted to eliminate any that are damaged or otherwise



unusable, special 'Wash-A-Thons' are held where 30+ Lions come together and will wash up to 2500 pair of glasses on a Saturday morning. Lions from many of the district's clubs participate in this 3-hour session, followed by a lunch.

## Eyeglass Processing

Once the glasses have been cleaned, they are 'read' by a lensometer, that reads the prescription in



each lens. The lensometers are connected to a laptop and printer that prints a label that identifies several important measurements of each pair.

The glasses are then sorted into a wide range of classifications, including mens, womens, children, near-sighted, far-sighted, single vision, and bi-focals. There are over 70 different possible classifications, each with other measurements that classify each pair of glasses. After several sortings, glasses are boxed (50 per box) by prescription and labeled for final shipping to Mexico.



By the time the glasses have gone through all these steps in the recycling process, it is likely that some of them have gone through as many 20-25 different individual's hands!

## Mission Planning

The district annually depends on several partnerships with individuals and businesses in the north-central area to help provide funds for supplies and shipping of the glasses to the U.S. city where the glasses will ultimately cross the border into Mexico. The team coordinates each year's mission with a Lions club in the city where the mission will be held.

Numerous details must be coordinated with the 'host club', including the dates for the mission, selection of the mission venue, hotel and meal



accommodations, travel and other details that will ultimately determine whether the mission will be successful.

Once the preliminary details are completed, a team must be assembled that best matches the talents of the participants with the needs of the mission itself. When the mission team arrives, the participants will prepare the site for the week-long event.

## Working at the Mission

Work flow must be planned that will allow efficient movement of people in and out of the facility. The five-day long project usually will bring about 800 people daily coming to get an eye exam and glasses. Often the local Lions will also provide additional health screenings, such as hypertension, diabetes, and other often neglected health issues.

Once a person enters the mission, a Lion 'reads' that individual's prescription at one of the district's autorefractors. Another Lion will use this information to search and find a pair of glasses that matches this as closely as possible.