



Gift for Living Convention Report April/May 2026

PID Lion Phil Nathan MBE



Lions Clubs International



MD105 British Isles

Our Patron, HRH The Duchess of Edinburgh fully supports the Gift for Living project and encourages the family of Lions to continue to fund this very worthwhile programme of saving vulnerable mothers and their babies.

Trustees

- **Phil Nathan MBE** - *Grant Administrator - Chairman*
- **Linda Picton** - *Treasurer and Correspondent Trustee*
- **PDG John Bush** - *Secretary*
- **PID Geoff Leeder**
- **PCC Philip Goodier**
- Charity Reg. No: 1070418



Grateful thanks to **PDG Tony Clarkson** for the upkeep of our website, Tony has now stepped down. We are grateful to **Robert Spragg** who through his company is now hosting the website. A big thank you to **Lion Brigitte Green** for managing the donated currency and it's conversion, along with the collection of used postage stamps these are growing into great fundraisers.

THE LEGACY OF GFL

Back in 1996 there was a headline in the local press that said '40 crazy Englishmen with big hearts' set out in a convoy of lorries with 100,000 boxes of small essentials collected and packed by Lions, partners and friends set of to help the stricken people of war torn Croatia. I was the District Governor at that time and what I witnessed inspired me to do more and from there Lions clubs International - A Gift for Living was born.

Here are some of the projects undertaken by GFL - your charity has undertaken since its inception:

East & West Mostar Project

- Life saving training implemented called Advance Paediatric Life Support.
- This training given to support lifesaving methods of caring for seriously ill babies.
- Large numbers of doctors and nurses attending.
- Lions Intensive Care Unit established at Kosevo Hospital Sarajevo in partnership with LCIF.

Sarajevo Paediatric Hospital

- Establishment of Paediatric Intensive care unit (PICU) and neonatal intensive care unit. (NICU), including long term training for doctors and nurses in hospital paediatrics, obstetrics and neonatology.
- Oncology Department Sarajevo - establishment of children's oncology department for the treatment of cancer in children in Sarajevo hospital.
- Sarajevo Maternity Hospital (a tertiary neonatal department).
- Children's hospital services in the city of Bihac Children's paediatric ward are improved. A mobile clinic and child care literature was provided for the remote enclave of Gorazde.
- A children's unit was set up in Gorazde Hospital.
- Supported the Sarajevo Blind School to protect children from landmines.
- Provided new medical equipment for the Banja Luka Children's Hospital - establishment of PICU and NICU.
- Sarajevo Casualty Department - ongoing work to build and equip a resuscitation box and training centre.
- A powerful and important legacy that was left with the doctors after the war was the implementation of APLS (Advanced Paediatric Life Support) and later MOET (Management of Obstetrics Emergencies and Trauma) these have been recognised worldwide as imperatives for sick babies.



Convention Report 2026 Gift for Living - PID Lion Phil Nathan MBE

1. An overview of the three projects currently included in Gift for Living

PROJECT 1 – The Vladimir Nazor Centre

A school in Sarajevo for some 300 children with a range of challenging intellectual disabilities was an early focus and work is now completed to refurbish and repair the kitchen that had been condemned as being unfit for purpose.

We have provided a complete dental unit with a dentist employed by the local authority – again our thanks to PDG Lion Jarvis MacDonald and also DentaId UK. Around 500 children from two special needs schools now receive regular dental care - an extraordinary advancement in their wellbeing.



PROJECT 2 – Work to support the Orphanage in Jinja, Uganda

I have seen first hand, and been emotionally touched by the needs of the children in an Orphanage in Jinja, Uganda. The orphanage had, potentially, only a short life left because of the complexities of Ugandan rules and regulations. If it closed, the Children would have ended up on the street – I did not rate the street very highly. It was my hope that A Gift for Living could step in to support these children and to encourage the global lions community to sponsor these children. I am pleased to report that is the case and we have saved the orphanage.



PROJECT 3 – Supporting the Lions Club of Sarajevo Centar and the Lions of Bosnia

I received a request for a visit to celebrate 20 years' of support for this area. Whilst there a further project become evident and support from GFL was requested. The project is attempting to establish a system for monitoring the early and late consequences of the treatment of cancer in predominately children and the prevention of new malignant diseases in children and young people who were treated for malignant diseases in childhood.

About 51,955 KM (approx. €26,000 euros) was collected through donations, tickets and an auction. The collected funds will be directed to the initial steps of the implementation of the above-mentioned project, which includes the establishment of co-operation with the University Clinical Centre of Ljubljana, Slovenia and the training of the professional staff of the Clinical Centre of the University of Sarajevo under their supervision.



PROJECT UPDATES - BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA and UGANDA

The Vladimir Nazor Centre- Bosnia & Herzegovina

Work at the Vladimir Nazor Centre, marking a significant milestone in a project that has faced both logistical and managerial challenges over several years. I first visited the Centre in 2023, just prior to Christmas, while in Bosnia & Herzegovina undertaking children's eye-screening and reviewing progress on other ongoing projects.

The Centre supports approximately 300 intellectually challenged primary-aged children, alongside a sister kindergarten serving a further 100 children with similar needs. Previous updates have highlighted the difficulties encountered when working with the Centre's management team, which caused considerable anxiety for all involved. I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to **Lion Edina Husejnovic**, whose commitment and determination to see this project through has been unwavering.

Thanks to the success of the MD105 foreign currency conversion programme, many items on the original equipment and refurbishment shopping list were purchased.

Transformational Impact of IT and Equipment

The installation of whiteboard computers and laptops has made a substantial difference to teaching and learning across the school. **Lion Armin Algic** continues to be an outstanding source of local support. Through one of his contacts - a local business specialising in refurbished technology - Gift for Living has again been able to access high-quality equipment at minimal cost.

The impact of new educational equipment has been profound, particularly for children with severe disabilities who may spend much of their time lying on the floor at home. The new equipment allows them to view images and interact with learning materials in ways that were previously impossible.

Additional equipment has also delivered significant benefits:

- Computerised woodwork machinery has enabled vocational activity
- A wax candle burner now allows children to make candles, which the school sells
- New sanitary ware has dramatically improved hygiene standards.



The Kitchen Project

The new kitchen is fully complete and operational. During my visit in June 2024, I was able to see the finished facility, which officially opened in April 2024. It now provides hot meals for approximately 400 children daily and also functions as a training facility, teaching basic cooking and baking skills that support self-sufficiency.

Importantly:

- The kitchen has achieved HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) accreditation, at a cost of €14,000 euros
- There are no longer issues with rats or rat holes
- The environment is safe, clean, and fit for purpose.

While LCIF supported the rebuilding of the kitchen, construction costs nearly doubled, reflecting global increases in building expenses. This initially posed a major setback; however, due to the importance of the facility for children's health, both national and local government stepped in to take responsibility for the construction costs.





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I would also like to express sincere thanks for a most generous personal donation from a member of a previous council, made specifically to benefit the children of the Vladimir Nazor School. Plaques acknowledging all contributors have been attached to the building now that final works are completed.

Publicity and Health Screening

In 2024, the project received excellent publicity when Lion Edina Husejnovic secured a 15-minute prime-time television interview in Sarajevo, during which she highlighted the kitchen project and broader work undertaken, including efforts during the Covid period.

As a further example of the integrated nature of our work, eye-screening was conducted during my most recent visit. Alarming, 50% of the children were found to have significant vision impairments. This underlines the critical importance of regular health screening in special education settings, where vision problems often go unnoticed due to communication barriers or assumptions about disability-related behaviour.



UGANDA UPDATE - SOFCEO, JINJA

Our partnership with the Shield of Faith Community Empowerment Organisation (SOFCEO) in Jinja continues to strengthen, supported by dedicated Lions Clubs, the MD105 Foundation and international partners. There are currently 40 children aged 4-16 years who are cared for by the Trust and its volunteers and these young adults are educated and taught a trade, until age 18. Amongst the challenges faced by the orphans include poverty, domestic violence, child labour and child abuse. We are pleased to report that the 40 children are now sponsored by Lions members and Lions supporters around the world. I would like to mention **International Director Joanne Ogden** who has recently passed to higher service, who was a keen supporter and sponsor of the orphanage.

Educational Progress

We are delighted to report excellent educational outcomes. Two sponsored children, **Nanyanzi Nimah** and **Nabaweesi Hibah**, successfully completed their Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) examinations in 2025.

Both students:

- Passed under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC)
- Achieved Result 1
- Qualified for progression to Upper Secondary (A Level) or Technical College.

In recognition of their achievements, the SOFCEO Board has resolved to support both students to continue to Senior Five (A Level) in 2026.

All children resumed studies for the new academic year in February 2026. Additionally, every child who sat the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) in 2025 progressed to Secondary School (Senior One), a significant milestone made possible through continued support.

Challenges and Identified Needs

Despite these successes, academic performance has been constrained by limited access to research materials and digital learning tools. With the new curriculum placing greater emphasis on research and innovation, there is an urgent need for:

- At least three computers
- Internet-enabled learning devices for secondary-level students.



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Health, Welfare, and Skills Development

The children's general health remains stable, with only minor seasonal illnesses reported. The Mosquito nets donated by GFL previously have significantly improved malaria prevention.

Thanks to continued financial support:

- Children receive regular daily meals and breakfast (tea or porridge)
- Improved nutrition has positively affected energy levels and academic performance.

Beyond formal education, children participate in skills training, including:

- Craft making
- Gardening
- Tailoring and sewing
- Other productive vocational activities.

Through additional donations, materials have been supplied to enable the manufacture of reusable sanitary hygiene pads for girls at the orphanage. These are produced onsite under supervision as part of sewing skills training. This initiative ensures girls can attend school consistently and continue their education - an essential pathway out of poverty and towards a brighter future.

SOFCEO has conveyed heartfelt thanks to Lions (UK) for our faithful partnership and timely contributions, which continue to deliver sustainable and meaningful impact.

As we continue our work to support the unique needs of these children the vision screening serves as a powerful reminder to educators, healthcare professionals and policy makers about the essential role of holistic care in special education. The sight camera has no boundaries — it's taken us beyond borders. Our vision screening project reached two schools in Serbia, we have also completed vision screening in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The screening of children with disabilities ensures that they are included in the vision screening process. Without this initiative, many of the children we screened might never have been tested. By taking a camera from the UK and using it to screen the children we have been able to make a real difference.

My fervent hope is that these findings act as a catalyst for change prompting schools, communities and healthcare systems to prioritise and improve the quality of vision care provided to children with severe intellectual disabilities. This is not just a question of seeing better; it's about giving these children a better chance to thrive in every aspect of their lives.





PROJECT 3 - SUPPORTING THE LIONS CLUB OF SARAJEVO CENTAR AND THE LIONS OF BOSNIA

Blood Cancer Screening Project

Working alongside Lions Clubs in Sarajevo, we secured a grant to establish a long-term monitoring initiative to assess the effects of cancer treatments on children and young people. A local support organisation has been instrumental in emotionally supporting survivors, marking a powerful moment during a recent commemorative event.

LC Sarajevo Centre and **A Gift for Living** have successfully applied for an LCIF grant, and I am honoured to serve as the project co-ordinator.

We have very recently received an update from Sarajevo -

Dear everyone,

We hope you are all well

We are pleased to present you with the Final Report of our LCIF MAT25195/UND project *“Monitoring the early and late consequences of treatment of children with carcinoma”*.

We are very pleased that we have successfully completed this project of ours, which was assessed as an outstanding achievement by Lions, because for the first time in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina a digital system for monitoring children with carcinoma is being introduced.

Warm greetings from Sarajevo

Dr. Memo Kundurovic

Project Chairperson

Further to above we have given Support for Leos in Serbia

- Provided funds to assist in the purchase of pillows for a project benefitting senior citizens.
- Supported a Leo group in feeding a horse donated to a school for therapeutic riding - furthering access and enrichment for children with disabilities.

Individual Grant: Rehabilitation Support in Serbia

A Gift for Living offered critical financial support to a 9-year-old boy with Cerebral Palsy, enabling him and his mother to travel monthly from Serbia to Poland for specialised rehabilitation.

His progress has been extraordinary: improved speech, mobility, confidence in swimming and even the ability to experience horseback riding. His mother, having given up her professional career to support his therapy full-time, continues to provide daily care at home. This story is a testament to the power of hope and perseverance and is being followed by many supporters on Facebook.





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LET YOUR CHANGE (IN ANY CURRENCY) HELP MAKE THE CHANGE

The request for foreign coins to be collected and donated continues and we now have an outlet to convert foreign and old coins into donations for this appeal. This has proved an excellent example of the synergy between two projects as one of the traders who assist with precious metals in the spectacle collection has volunteered to assist with the coin conversion into valuable donations to help fund this project. We have successfully converted the old coins and money has been banked into the Gift for Living Account to help with the much needed funds.

My sincere thanks go to **Lion Linda Picton** for recently updating the currency flyer and for her valued support of this project. Linda has made the difficult decision to step down from her role as a Trustee in order to focus on home life and we are deeply grateful for the commitment and dedication she has shown throughout her time in the role. The updated flyer will be available at the MD Convention in Newcastle.

Please continue to send or take your coins to our National Headquarters - Birmingham and our team there will oversee the collection and conversion of coinage and notes.

If you are attending MD Convention Newcastle we shall have a collecting box at the supplies stall.

I am extremely grateful to **Lion Brigitte** at Lions Clubs National Headquarters who is overseeing this element of the programme.

Soon the Trustees will be announcing another fundraising idea
more to follow.



LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL MD105 GIFT FOR LIVING

Thanks to the Lions of the British Isles and the support of Lions Clubs International Foundation over the past 25 years, we have been rebuilding the Country formally known as Yugoslavia. There is still much more to do, please let us continue with the work that we have started. We are also actively working with a Child Sponsorship programme for 40 children in an orphanage in Uganda, offering a safe place to live, school fees, food, clothing and basic health care - 'Hope for a Brighter Future'.

Your Gift for Living Project needs your foreign notes and coins...

Have you returned from holiday with unwanted currency, or got old foreign coins and notes hidden away in the back of a drawer?

Only a few of us ever change the money back into sterling. The rest stockpile it at home, in all probability that the cash will be forgotten. If you arrive home with coins and notes you could afford to donate, then please send them to Lions HQ where they will be collated and forwarded to a specialist dealer.

ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TO GIFT FOR LIVING

We can accept any currency, including UK coinage and notes and even defunct pre-euro currencies such as old Spanish pesetas or Greek drachma.

If you have coinage and need to have it collected please speak to the team at Lions National HQ. Call them on **0345 833 9502** or Email: enquiries@lionsclubs.co.uk

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FINAL THANKS and CURRENCY APPEAL

Any donations you may wish to make send to your District Treasurer by cheque, made payable to the District, and endorsed on the back with 'Gift for Living'. For those that might wish to sponsor a child individually please remember AGFL offers the facility of Gift Aid.

Please continue to donate old and foreign currency - coins or notes - and send them to National HQ. These funds remain vital in supporting both the Bosnia and Uganda projects.

Donations are even more critical now with new projects to support it is more vital than ever.

We ask any Clubs and individuals wishing to donate to this project can do so and they can liaise directly with myself or via Lions National HQ in Birmingham.

GIFT FOR LIVING and EASYFUNDRAISING

Please think about selecting A Gift for Living as your Charity of choice when shopping on line. Easyfundraising, when used as a tool for shopping on line will automatically and at no additional cost to you, donate a small percentage to GFL every time you shop.

Thank you

So there we are... we continue, and the question is will your Clubs help your Charity?

A Gift for Living has been your hands on Charity for almost 30 years.

Still much to do, but it's in your hands.

**Together
We Can...**

