

Thank you PDG Richard Surface, now past President Joe Keyes and my fellow Lions.

I would especially like to thank my sponsor George Dentry. Four years ago, George asked me to become a Lion. I wonder if at that time, George thought this night would happen?

How many of you are Veterans? Please raise your hand. How many of you are Patriots? Please raise your hand.

Lions have both a slogan and a motto.

The slogan reflects the organization's formative years in America during and after WWI. The motto declares its common purpose in two short words.

SO HOW DID WE GET HERE?

In the early 1920's the slogan "LIBERTY, INTELLIGENCE, OUR NATIONS SAFETY" – an acronym for the word LIONS – appeared widely on club stationary, billboards and other promotional materials. Who said it first? Perhaps it was a young attorney named Halsted Ritter who rose to speak at the 1919 International Convention in Chicago.

The name Lions stands not only for fraternity, good fellowship, strength of character and purpose, "Ritter declared, "but above all, the combination of L-I-O-N-S heralds to the country the true meaning of citizenship.

The words suited the patriotism that swept the U.S. following WWI, and Lions adopted the acronym as its slogan.

As the Lions movement grew across national borders, cultures, and languages, Lions began looking for other words to describe their mission and work. In 1954, the board announced an International Motto Contest and invited suggestions from all 522,000 worldwide members.

According to the entry form, the motto had to be “enduring, international in character and easily translatable”. Each entry could be no more than five words in length.

To get Lions thinking, the organizers gave out a few five-word examples: “MEN OF ACTION IN ACTION - WORKING WITH OTHERS FOR OTHERS - WORLDWIDE SERVICE TO HUMANITY.

Thankfully, 11 of the 6,000 Lion contestants had better ideas. They each submitted identical entries. But Canadian Lion D.A. Stevenson was declared the winner as his submission had the earliest postmark. His motto contained two simple words: WE SERVE.

SOME PEOPLE LIVE AN ENTIRE LIFETIME WONDERING IF THEY’VE MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD – LIONS DON’T HAVE THAT PROBLEM.

I truly look forward, with you, together, to ensure the Salado Lions club fulfill the motto of “WE SERVE”

THE LIONS CLUB HAS REACHED A MEMBERSHIP RECORD OF 1,445,591

Thank you