

# Hudson River Sampler

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## The RHINEBECK LIONS

The Lions Meet At  
Foster's In Rhinebeck  
Every 3rd Thursday  
At 6:30 PM

# Journey for Sight

## Rhinebeck Lion's Club Annual Fundraising Event

By Ira T Weiss

Living with blindness can make life seem like a long journey. Some people suffer the trauma of losing their sight, while others have never known the joy of a sunset or the smile on a baby's face. The Rhinebeck Lion's Club sees a brighter future for these individuals by providing services and funding for the sight impaired.

Not long after the Rhinebeck Lion's Club was chartered in the early 1980's, the club decided to run an

24 hour continuous relay run. Local runners and runner's clubs were invited to participate, soliciting donations from friends and family according to the total miles or hours they ran, or whatever amount they felt comfortable donating.

"The runners would form teams that would literally keep running for the entire 24 hours. It was a real test of endurance and inspiration," said Carlo Scagnelli, secretary of the Rhinebeck Lion's Club.

couple of years they actually had a nationally known Iron Man, Jim Shapiro, running for the entire 24 hours himself.

Unfortunately, the Journey for Sight program no longer organizes an official running event due to changing local ordinances and insurance liability issues. But on the first weekend in May you can still see Rhinebeck Lion's Club members out on the road collecting much needed donations for their programs. Along Main Street (Route 9)

"Pennies, nickels, dimes, whatever starting pouring in; we knew then we had a great fundraising opportunity that would also help make us visible in the community," said Scagnelli.

Additionally, the club solicits ads from local merchants to be placed in a special section of the Hudson River Sampler each year. These two pieces of the fundraiser make it possible for the Rhinebeck Lion's Club to continue offering help to the sight and hearing

As a thank you, the donor would always donate a \$50 Australian bill to whatever Lion's Club Event he encountered.

On a local level, the Rhinebeck Lion's Club has helped restore sight to a young boy who had a fishing hook get caught in his eye, and a young woman in her thirties have sight-restoring cataract surgery for both her eyes.

main focus of sight preservation and restoration in coordination with Lions Club International's May Is Lions Recycle For Sight Month. Journey for Sight began as a

According to Scagnelli, the community would get involved including local HAM radio operators setting up security checkpoints for the entire 24 hours. For a

and Market Street you'll see members with their road jars asking for your help.

They started coordinating the Journey for Sight event around the Hudson River Valley Antique Auto Association Car Show & Swap Meet in May.

While the running event was in progress one year, a Lion's Club member commented about all the cars traveling through town, grabbed a bucket, and started asking for donations.


impaired in the community.

One year, a passing vehicle dropped what looked to be monopoly money into a road jar. The donation collector ran after the donor and asked, "Are you sure you want to do this?" It was actually a \$50 bill in Australian currency. The donor had lived in rural New Zealand and his brother had sight issues from an early age. Word got around, and an Australian Lion's Club heard of the child's predicament and organized and funded the operations necessary to restore his sight.

in which the Rhinebeck Lion's Club is involved include helping a local resident in the Rhinebeck-Red Hook area rebuild their home. In coordination with National Rebuilding Day, a family who can't afford to renovate their home, usually due to medical reasons, is chosen. New windows, doors, roof, flooring, whatever needs to be done to make the home livable again. They need 40-50 volunteers for that day to help with construction. Materials are provided through the National Rebuilding group with the local sponsors' funds or donated by local companies.

In June, the Rhinebeck Lion's Club makes its annual trek to Spencer, New York to help make renovations and provide maintenance for the Empire State Speech and Hearing Clinic at Lions Camp Badger.

Donations can be made to Rhinebeck Lion's Club, PO Box 124, Rhinebeck, New York 12572 and look for them on the road May 3rd from 7am - 4pm and May 4th 7am - 2pm.



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