



Lofty Dreams Lead to Great Service

Just beyond the modest home I grew up in Australia was the bush, where kangaroos, wallabies and kookaburras roamed amid gum and wattle trees. My father, Jack, was an accountant who took the same train to work and sat in the same seat day after day. I trained to be a wool classer, rotely producing wool. But I dreamt of doing something more influential. So I eventually went into real estate and built up my business.

As a Lion I also dreamt of making a big impact. So when a young Australian woman spoke to our club about an orphanage she worked at in India, my club dove right in. The parents of many of these children had been killed by rebels. We helped get them better housing, and from that point many thrived in school.

For years I had another dream I kept to myself. I saw the remarkable ability of Lions to change lives, and I wanted to fully devote myself to Lions. The dream came true a few years ago when I learned I was to be nominated for international president.

Lions, follow your dreams. They will not lead you astray. Nearly every great accomplishment began as a wildly ambitious dream whether it was landing a man on the moon, running a four-minute mile or webbing together the entire world through computers. Listen to your heart. Don't ever impede a great idea whose time has come. To me, dreams are not visions that arise in sleep but plans that don't let you sleep.

Identify your dream and work to achieve it. It's up to you to decide what your dream is. Plant the seed and let it grow. Find inspiration and guidance from other clubs and from Lions Clubs International. As I like to say, don't tell me to aim for the stars when there are footprints on the moon.

Anne and I look forward to you Following Your Dream in 2013-14. Good luck, godspeed and congratulations—excellence is the inevitable result of pursuing dreams.

Barry J. Palmer

Your Lions Clubs International President