

**TWO BLIND MARCHING UNITS GROUPED WITH  
LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL FLOAT  
IN THE PASADENA TOURNAMENT OF ROSES PARADE**

PASADENA, CA USA, December 14, 2009 -- **Two talented blind marching units** -- the Lions White Cane Blind Precision Drill Team and the Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB) Marching Band -- **are grouped with the Lions Clubs International float** in the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade on January 1, 2010, the announcement made by the international president of Lions Clubs International, Eberhard J. Wirfs of Kelkheim, Germany.

Marching in front of the Lions Clubs International float entry "Decades of Service" (eighth in Rose Parade Order of March) is the **Lions White Cane Blind Precision Drill Team** from Tustin, California.

Award winner in the Tustin Tiller Parade in October, 2009, the White Cane Drill Team consists of nine members, ages 40 to 92, performing with their white canes, which have long signified the plight and caution of the sight impaired.

The **Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB) Marching Band** from Columbus, Ohio, follows the Lions' float as a separate marching band unit (ninth in Parade Order of March).

Through travel expenses provided by a vigorous fundraising campaign by members of Lions clubs of Ohio, the OSSB Marching Band is making its first trip to Pasadena and the Rose Parade. The Ohio State School for the Blind Marching Band consists of 68 total participants -- 13 brass, 11 woodwinds, 13 percussion, 2 banner carriers, and 29 sighted marching assistants. Of note, two famous alumni of OSSB, long before the marching band was formed, are the late great jazz musicians, multi-instrumentalist Rahsaan Roland Kirk and pianist **Art Tatum**.

**"A very unique opportunity is presented,"** commented Wirfs, **"for Lions clubs worldwide to celebrate the New Year and the Pasadena Rose Parade where two blind marching units join and are grouped with the Lions' float entry."**

In addition to marching in the parade, the **OSSB Marching Band will perform during the Rose Parade Bandfest** at 10:50 a.m., on Wednesday, December 30. Coincident with its appearance at the Bandfest, the OSSB Marching Band will be joined by three other band entries from Ohio -- the Ohio State University Marching Band, the Ohio University Marching Band, and the Pickerington Central High School Marching Tigers Band -- and **the four bands together are presenting the "Ohio Grand Finale" with their Ohio state song, "Beautiful Ohio," at about noon on the thirtieth.**

Founded in 1917, and since being challenged by Helen Keller to be the **"Knights of the Blind"** during its international convention in 1925, Lions Clubs International has long adopted its primary mission to provide assistance to the blind and visually impaired and to eliminate preventable blindness. Keller's rising above her disability also resonates with Lions, who help others help themselves and try to give people at a disadvantage the opportunity to prosper.

From "Knights of the Blind," Lions Clubs International has grown to be the **global leader in community and humanitarian service:** To ease pain and suffering and bring healing and hope to people worldwide, to provide immediate assistance following natural disasters and long term disaster

relief for reconstruction efforts -- as in Hurricane Katrina, the tsunamis in South Asia, earthquakes in China, and fires in California and Australia -- to combat disability and promote health, and to serve the youth. In its "**Decades of Service**," Lions Clubs International is the world's largest volunteer service organization, with its worldwide membership currently at 1.3 million men and women in 45,000 Lions clubs in 205 countries, and its members are proud to serve as Lions in an association that highlights the parade theme, "A Cut Above the Rest."

Throughout their "Decades of Service," members of Lions clubs worldwide continue their volunteer work and dedication in their communities through their motto, "**We Serve.**"