

Candy Day mint sales a lifesaver for those with vision, hearing problems

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Each year in October, Godfrey Lions Club members are on street corners selling candy to help those with sight and hearing disabilities.

The club will have two Candy Day selling periods this October. The first will be at the intersection of Humbert Road and Tolle Lane in Godfrey from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. The second will be at the intersection of State Street and Broadway in Alton from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 18.



Lions members will disperse their well-known candy mints to anyone who provides a donation on the street corners. Funds raised go toward exams and eyeglasses for those in the community, young and old, who have sight and hearing issues. The mints are also available at several counters throughout the River Bend for donations.

Lori Smith, publicity coordinator for the Godfrey Lions Club, said many struggle with their vision or hearing and it makes life nearly impossible for them when they don't have sufficient funds to get help.

“For some, it may mean they don’t have the proper vision to pass the driving test or we sometimes get calls from the school nurses and they say a person is failing because he can’t see the chalkboard,” she said. “When we find out about the problem, we call the parents and get the child in to have an eye exam and get glasses. We try to make it as painless as we can for those needing glasses.”

Heidi Todd is the coordinator for the Godfrey Lions Club sight and hearing program.

“People call Heidi and she interviews them and once they are approved Dr. James Leiber in Alton on Henry Street provides them an exam and they pick out eyeglasses.”

Smith said the number of individual members with the Lions Club has dwindled over time and she hopes other people in the community will consider joining the club because of the services they offer.

The Lions Club also helps local hospitals conduct screening for diabetes, which has a significant impact on the vision on the majority of those with the disease.

Smith said it is important to get the word out and let people know what kind of impact the Lions Club has with its eyesight program.

“We want people to know what the sale of mints on Candy Day supports. The people who receive new eyeglasses are very appreciate and grateful. When they drive by us on the street, they realize more about what we do than anyone else.”