



District Governor's Newsletter

District Governor 2012/2013 Rob Brown



READ IT AND WEEP



Each year Leek Lions move Christmas to suit the weather, season or occasion. This year they celebrated Christmas on the last day of March 2012 but could not wait until next December for the next Christmas when they heard of the disappointment of Uttoxeter Soldier, 18 years old Elliot Wilkinson who was being posted to Afghanistan with the Mercian Regiment at the end of September and would miss his home Christmas dinner. Elliot's Mum, Dad and younger brother Ryan arranged a going away Christmas Dinner at home in Uttoxeter for about 20 of Elliot's family on the 8th September. News of this planned evening dinner and family party leaked out to Lion VP Les Critchlow via Elliot's cousin Kath Holland, a regular attendee at the Lions alternative Christmas parties. Secretly Les arranged for Santa to attend the party at about 8pm.

What Kath and the family did not know was that Leek Lions wanted to go one better than just Father Christmas attending, as they do not do Christmas without their Christmas float. As a result LP John Demaid-Jones, VP Les, DO Lynda Demaid-Jones and Santa IPP Lion Ed Goldstraw secretly took their sleigh out of store and towed the float all the way to Uttoxeter much to the amusement of the general public who were waving and tooting car horns on

their journey; they even managed to get a wave from the local police. Under the guise of a family photo the party goers assembled outside the house for a photo call. As they lined up for a photograph Santa came around the corner at 8pm on his sleigh with fairy lights ablaze and carols playing.

The shocked look on all their faces said it all. Elliot could not believe his eyes and commented "I now realise my family is mad" and Kath added "it was truly brilliant – a one off surprise, you even surprised me". Even the neighbours came out of their houses to take photographs of Santa & his Sleigh.

Following the photo call, Santa went into the Wilkinson household to distribute presents provided by Kath to the astonished party goers. Everyone had a brilliant evening and in the words of John Demaid-Jones "This was Lionism at its best, it's not all about raising money, bringing a smile to peoples' faces is equally important".

The Lions wish Private Wilkinson and the Mercian Regiment a safe tour of duty and look forward to seeing him at their next Christmas whenever that is.

Ed's comment: Well done Leek, Real Lionism



RAPPING WITH WAYNE follow up

District Governor Rob outlined the Reading Action Program (RAP) introduced by International President Wayne Madden in the September Newsletter. He emphasised that it does not just apply to children of third world countries, (worldwide 800 million people cannot read). The statistics he quoted from Ofsted reports apply to the UK and are quite staggering in their implications, as literacy is the foundation for education and social development. It is difficult to appreciate that many children have few or no books at home.

How can we as Lions help? Here are some suggestions:

1. Already there are members of Lions clubs going into their local schools to help by listening to children reading. More Lions clubs could approach Primary schools or nurseries to offer this service. It takes time, but is very worthwhile.
2. Offer to go into school at story time to read to children – a vital precursor to learning to read.
3. Children tend to have difficulty in writing reviews of books they have read. A prize could be offered for the best one for a limited period of time – a particular week or fortnight.
4. Another suggestion would be to offer to organise a spelling competition- applicable to all levels. Prizes in the form of books could be awarded.
5. An offer could be made to support a school library with extra books – chosen by the

children – going into the school to present them.

6. A prize for the pupil judged by the teacher to be the most improved over a month or term could be offered. This could be ongoing.
7. Organise a story competition (about lions, furry variety?) judged on handwriting as well as content and display the resulting stories in the local library (usually keen to show children's work).

I am sure that many of you will have further ideas that would be successful too.

Quoting from DG Rob – “one in five children do not achieve expected literacy levels by the end of Primary school – this rises to one in three pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds”. Hence, if your Club does go ahead with an activity, go to a school with a larger proportion of disadvantaged children if possible. Also, there are a growing number of day nurseries and playgroups.

Other points to consider:

- Target just one year group or class depending on the size of the school.
- Decide on an activity with which the club feels confident
- Talk to the Headmaster/mistress. It helps if you already have a relationship with the school.
- Plan on a set period to run the activity.
- Pupils to know the required outcome if applicable

CHEADLE LIONS WORK WITH LOCAL CHURCH

On 20th October Cheadle Lions will be joining with their local Parish Church and hosting a Lions Youth Band concert. Any funds raised will be split with the Church. This is really a very clever idea since the church brings a whole new group of people into the Lions Charitable activity circle, **Partnership always pays off.**



From the DG

A GREAT OCCASION AND A PRIVILEGE TO BE PART OF IT

A club was created!! On September 25th 2012 I was proud to be involved in the inauguration of Hednesford branch club, when 7 members of the community were badged as Lions. They became members of Cannock club, the parent of Hednesford branch. The evening was well attended by over 60 Lions from all parts of the district, who were there to join in the celebration of the launch of the branch, and to congratulate both the Hednesford group on becoming Lions and Cannock club for their remarkable achievement. It is only just over two years ago that Cannock club received their charter and now, with 22 active members, they have started their own branch. The development of the new branch was led by Mark Wyton, Vice President and Membership chair of Cannock club and he was ably supported by President Doug Smith and all other members. It was clearly evident that they followed Int. Pres. Wayne Madden's formula for Excellence; Dedication in their commitment to succeed, Planning all actions in their progress map and working as a Team in implementing their plan.

We welcome all of the Hednesford Lions to the district and wish them well as they start serving their community and building their numbers to eventually become a club in their own right. They are full of enthusiasm and raring, or should it be "roaring", to go.

I am receiving positive reports of new members from several clubs and this, together with our 7 new Lions from Hednesford, reminds me of the importance of effective mentoring of new members. Most of us know how Lions work and are structured; we are used to jargon such as LCI, MD and Zone. But to new members, this is virtually a foreign language; they are likely to have attended three meetings, enjoyed their experience and become members. We must ensure that they are fully absorbed into the club and take part in some activities, perhaps as a member of a committee; they have joined to serve, so need to do this to both feel part of the club and become satisfied with their work. Each one needs a mentor to explain, to inform, to guide and to answer questions. An effective introduction into the club is likely to lead to the development of a contributing and happy Lion; the opposite increases the likelihood of dissatisfaction and possibly a short period of

membership. We must look after and develop our new members.

There was considerable and justifiable concern in the district on hearing the news that the MD Youth Football competition was being deferred from this year until further notice. You should be aware that this was due to insufficient finances in the MD Youth Trust and, as a result of this; a committee was established to review all workings of this Trust. The first report from this committee is included in this month's District Mail; it explains how the Trust works and the financial income and outgoings. This will be followed by a questionnaire to all clubs, aimed at all clubs providing their views on the Youth Trust to the committee so that these can be taken into account when the committee reports to the Council of Governors. The COG will then be able to decide on the future of the Youth Trust and associated youth competitions, taking clubs views into account. You can therefore see that YOUR views are important; please make time to complete the questionnaire to represent the views of your club, and return it as requested.



Over the coming months we will see developments on marketing and PR as the newly appointed MD Chair and his team begin to implement various proposals. However do please remember that the most effective publicity for any club is LOCAL publicity. Your Service work for and the support from your community is LOCAL, so you need to be known locally. Local press and radio, Lions websites and Lions being seen "around town" is the best form of publicity. Please also send your event reports and photos to our newsletter editor; let other clubs know what you are doing and spread ideas around the district.

Thank you for all the Service work that you are providing, and please enjoy your Lionism

Rob

Together in a World of Service



EDITOR’S PROFUSE AND ABJECT APOLOGY

Or something like that.

I would like to thank IPCOG chairman Tony Gadsby for guiding me on the straight and narrow. In the September Issue I referred to a not so well known Olympic Fact and said that Bhutan was the 210th member of the Lions Family, this should obviously have been 207th. Mea Culpa, those of you who know me will realise that making a mistake is not in my nature. I put it down to a PC moment, “the PC done it gov!!!”



Caption suggestions welcomed



TAMWORTH LIONS MAKING FRIENDS!

Tamworth Lions shown with a few new friends at the recent Tamworth Heritage Weekend.

Speaking through his handler, the Lion said that he was always happy to make new friends, particularly amongst the Saxons attending the event, and looked forward to meeting lots of people during the day, and having his picture taken with lots of children!

HEDNESFORD BRANCH LAUNCHED

Photographed here is DG Rob surrounded by the “enthusiasm” of new Hednesford Branch Members.





ALSAGER LIONS SAY WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

It was noted in an article in one of the local Papers regarding the history of the towns War Memorial, how it was unveiled in 1920 having been funded by through public subscriptions, although no record as to how this was done, or who owned the land it was built on and basically the local council had no legal obligation to maintain the site.

Possibly as with all these memorials they are an essential part of our lives but they are not "Our problem," especially when it comes to finances. Our memorial is in such a state that apart from a belated general tidy up, the soldier's original bayonet had been stolen and its replacement held on by wire.

To cut a long story, a trust has been formed between the Town Council, the Royal British Legion and the B'hoys of Alsager. The Town Council has budgeted £2,500 and the trust were asking for further funding from individuals or charitable organisations for now and future maintenance.

Alsager Lions unanimously decided to make a £500 donation to the trust.



Photograph of Alsager Lion President Phil Westhead presenting a cheque for £500.00 to Town Councillor Colin Burgess looking on Trust Member Mr Les Bickerton.

AN INVITE FROM GRAHAM DOW

I have been in talks with Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) now for some months in a bid to gain their assistance with the collection of eye glasses countywide, as part of their commitment to safety in the community. They have also set up a partnership with the RNIB to ensure that the blind and partially sighted are included as an integral part of the community in their safety initiatives.

I am happy to report the talks have been successful and the Chief Fire Officer has readily agreed for SFRS to be a part of the glasses collection scheme.

All Fire stations in the county will become collection points. When each station has a substantial amount of glasses they will be forwarded to service HQ, who will inform me, and I will see that they are collected

and sent to Chichester Lions for sorting. I also realise that there may be some clubs who already collect glasses as does my own, however, I am sure you would agree the more the merrier. Also please note, there will be no cost to Lions. You are cordially invited to Fire Service HQ on Thursday 11th October at 12 noon for the official launch of this partnership with SFRS. The Chief Fire Officer will be in attendance for a photo shoot and press release.

Ed's Comment: An absolutely great idea, I am sure this could be copied, borrowed or even stolen for use elsewhere in the District.



News from District

District Governor Travels September & October 2012

Contacts

DG Lion Rob Brown:-

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1st VDG Lion Dave Handley:-

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2nd VDG Lion Carole Hodgkinson :-

carole.hodgkinson@virginmedia.com

Important Note to Clubs

regarding DGT Visits

If any of these dates are not suitable then please contact the Officer due to visit your club as soon as possible.

The list opposite was prepared at the beginning of June 2012 and some clubs may have changed their dates since the initial list was prepared .
(NB Tracking the movements of 3 DGT Officers has proved much more difficult than just the DG. - Editor)

Visit	Club	Visited by
01/10/2012	Malpas	DG Rob Brown
16/10/2012	Cheadle	DG Rob Brown
18/10/2012	Alsager	DG Rob Brown

Calling all Lions!!

Matters are well in hand for the District Convention, to be held in Runcorn on 8th – 10th March, 2013. There is still however one vitally important post in need of filling, in order to ensure the smooth running of this event.....that of Stewards.

Lions from **all** clubs within the District are invited to become a Convention Steward. There is no reward other than the satisfaction of a job well done and knowing that the work that you do contributes to the well being of others. I suspect that all Lions already know and recognise this feeling well!!

To become a Steward or simply to learn more please contact District Officers

Peter McCracken email: peter.mccracken@btinternet.com
or Tel: 01352 700404 or

Teresa Nickson email: t.m.nickson@btinternet.com or Tel:
01352 754434

STEALING TO BE ENCOURAGED IN THE NEW YEAR

There are moves afoot to encourage all clubs to get involved in outright theft in the New Year. It is intended to start a Gallery of Good Ideas in the News Letter where clubs will be actively encouraged to publicise their Club's best Fundraising and Community service Ideas. These ideas may be "STOLEN" and used by anyone. The only alternative to active encouragement of theft would be for the District to set up a NVQ Course in "Wheel Re-invention!!!". All over the District Clubs are guarding their own pet ideas and projects. Come on everyone, Come clean and let your secrets out, **You Know It Makes Sense.**

World Sight Day and Lions Awareness week

Early October gives us two major chances for spreading the Lions Message. Use any activity you are active in to spread the word. Make some A6 leaflets with contact details for your club to give out to prospects. Even if they get scrunched up and put into a pocket, they will still be there for future reference. Use all your local means of publicity, including Social Media, Twitter and Facebook , which are used by the younger age group we want to contact. If you cannot use Social Media ask your Children, Grandchildren or Great-grandchildren for help. They know more about it than you do. The big message is have something for the contacts to take away, everything we do must be treated as a potential recruitment opportunity. Let the best kept secret out.



District Officers page

Environment Matters!

Several recommendations have been made as to the type of environmental projects clubs might undertake within MD105 this year, one of these being the conservation of the bee.

One of the main problems for bees is the dwindling source of suitable food flowers and `mono crop` cultivation which flowers for a limited time, which when flowering is over, leaves the bees without a food source. The increasing use of silage for animal feed also plays a part in the reduction of available flower food sources.

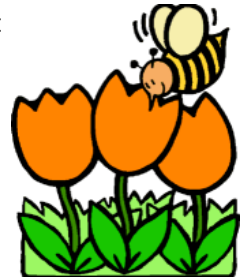
The planting of bee friendly flowers, both wild and cultivated, will significantly assist in this problem. Such a project could involve Club members direct by approaching friendly farmers, schools, and other establishments with gardens, municipal gardens etc to plant these flowers.

Other suspected reasons for the decline in bee populations are the use of certain insecticides and a virus that is suspected of killing both bees and their pupae. Research into solutions for these troubling issues is active and well beyond the scope of Lions.

With this in mind I have a simple and easy suggestion for you, (*taken from my September copy of Gardeners' World*).....why not plant a bee pot for spring?

World).....why not plant a bee pot for spring?

Most queen bumblebees are now hibernating, having built up their fat reserves to survive winter without food. In spring they will have an urgent need for nectar. Early flowering plants help them to replace lost energy thus enabling them to fly off to a new nesting site.



You will need:-

2 x hellebore plants

2 x primrose plants

10 x grape hyacinth bulbs

10 x snake's head fritillary bulbs

10 x crocus corms

30cm flowerpot

Crock for drainage

Happy planting!

I encourage all Lions to *Reduce - Reuse - Recycle* and would be interested to hear of environmental projects being undertaken within the district.

YOUNG AMBASSADOR

REMINDER:

Young Ambassador Application forms need to be submitted by 17th November (earlier if possible). Please let me know if you are intending entering a candidate.

Glenys Sanders – 105BS Youth Team Chair

USED HEARING AIDS

Having had some queries ref the recycling of used hearing aids, may I reiterate the message that, although they go FAO Lion Vic Truluck, Hastings Lions Club, they can be sent to Chichester Lions Club in the same package as spectacles using the Parcelforce Contract number R233259.

John Sanders – 105BS Health Team Chair.

DISTRICT WALK FOR SIGHT

Final call for the event on Sunday 7th October hosted by Flint Lions Club; if you are attending please contact PDG Geoff Mitchell (or myself) so that the catering can be arranged.

Details, location etc have already been issued by District Secretary Dave Slack.

Proceeds from the day, including a raffle, will go to Lions Sightsavers.

Thanks to Flint Lions Club for hosting the event.

John Sanders – 105BS Health Team Chair.



News from Clubs & District

Visiting Lion

Latest Results

2012-2013

At 18th September



Travelling Lions: a quotation from the Rules:-

For visits to any Region (including Zones) in any one year of the Competition, the award of points shall be limited to three visits in total.

(There are clubs who appear not to be aware of this rule, and they'll probably wonder what happened to their points).

Travelling Lion	
Club	Points
Stoke on Trent	133
Stone	102
Telford	76
Flint	72
Newcastle under Lyme	63
Little Orme	53
Leek	44
Tamworth	40
Beaumaris	36
Cannock	36

PR CORNER

I know all of you are busy organising your Christmas activities please don't forget to put them on your website and check that it is up to date. District M is having a Media Workshop on Sunday 25th November. It will cover aspects of using the internet i.e. Facebook. Heather Laxley will be doing the presentation. Heather has done other workshops for different districts and they have been very popular. If anyone is interested contact me and I will give you the details. How many of us when asked what are Lions Clubs say 'It's a bit like Rotary to explain what we do. ' We must try to gain our own identity, hopefully when the new PR measures are put in place we can improve our profile. Did any of you see the best wishes ads for the Paralympic Athletics? If any of you have copies could you please send them to me? Apparently Oakbrook paid for some billboard ads advertising the 'Plant a Tree' campaign. If any of you have seen them let me know. MD do not know where they have been commissioned. There are some great changes on our District website please take a look. Dave Allen has done a fab job. I called MDHQ the other day and asked if there is anymore news on our partnership with Classic FM. I have been informed that there will be news at the end of this month so I will let you know as soon as I can. Please keep sending articles for NL & Lion Magazine and of course Latest News it has been very quiet of late. Don't forget it is Lions Week & Sight awareness week this month . I know Gnosall Lions get their local school involved with sight awareness and the children really enjoy the role play and learning the problems people face. I am assuming no one else is interested in a Lions Mascot suit which is a shame. BEV

The copy deadline for the next issues of the DG's newsletter 22nd Oct & 22nd Nov

Newsletter Contact is:- bsnewsletter@lions105bs.org.uk