

# PRIDE OF LIONS

District 105A News, Issue 10  
April 2024

## **ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS MONTH**

April is Environmental Awareness Month, If your club has done something for this month, please send in your article to be featured in the next issue. Our contact details can be found at the bottom of page 10.

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**DG LESLEY SPENCE**

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# NOTICE BOARD

## Welcome to the team

Below are the names of the newest additions to our family of Lions as of 1 April.

Congratulations to:

- Theresa Maria Mortimer, Bletchley Milton Keynes Lions Club
- Richard Cameron David Hobbs, Hemel Hempstead Lions Club



*Always to bear in mind my obligations as a citizen to my nation, my state, and my community, and to give them my unswerving loyalty in word, act, and deed. To give them freely of my time, labor and means.*

– One of the Lions Code of Ethics

# Bangwe HIV/AIDS Self Help Initiative (BAHASI)

*By Fairlop Lions Club*

This year, Fairlop Lions were very pleased and proud to extend their international projects to Malawi. Fairlop member Lion Raj Goutam has a long-standing association with Bangwe HIV/AIDS Self Help Initiative (BAHASI). This came about some years back when he saw a post by a friend showing a young boy looking forlorn after losing his beloved football. Having enquired about him and asking a friend to buy him a new football, Raj's interest in BAHASI began.

Bangwe HIV/AIDS Self Help Initiative (BAHASI) is a nonprofit charitable organization situated in Bangwe, a township on the outskirts of Blantyre, Malawi. BAHASI operates a preschool for children under five years old, providing them with two meals daily—breakfast and lunch. Additionally, BAHASI supports orphans and vulnerable children aged 2 to 18 at its hostel, ensuring their upkeep and education. Raj has offered continued support over the years, and with the help of friends' generous donations was able to contribute essential items to BAHASI for their daily needs including food. As the numbers of children increased, there was an essential need to provide separate accommodation for the girls. He was truly privileged to contribute towards the costs of buying essential building materials that allowed the structure to be built. He has returned to Malawi in the last couple of years and during this time he ensured he visited and met both the children and staff. In addition to BAHASI, he also visited the Bloomfield Day Care Centre, located in the tea growing area in the foothills of the magnificent Mulanje Mountain where he grew up and spent childhood days.

Fairlop Lions Club are thrilled to have become a part of this wonderful project. We hope to continue to serve where we can.



Fairlop Lions are also very pleased to share details of another member being awarded the Mayors Community Award. Sonia Lard is our second member to have achieved this great accolade which was awarded at the Awards Ceremony Redbridge in March.

She was awarded the MCA for her voluntary work since 2020 during covid to date, which included supporting foodbanks from Tower Hamlets to Waltham Abbey by providing surplus food and clothing.

She was also instrumental in setting up two community cafés supporting Redbridge residents who suffer from social isolation and loneliness. Setting up a community kitchen, supporting refugees and asylum seekers including those living in temporary hotels in Redbridge who do not have access to a kitchen. The community kitchen provides ingredients and cooking facilities to ensure that healthy meals can be cooked and served to them.

Her ongoing work with community networking was also recognised. This is encouraging and facilitating charities and corporate businesses to work in partnership to help deliver necessary support to families and individuals in need as well as creating volunteering and job opportunities.



## The Lions Bookshop presented a £1000 cheque

*By Hemel Hempstead Lions Club*

The Lions Bookshop were pleased to present a £1000 cheque to Kim Mangelshot, the fundraising engagement manager of Young Lives versus Cancer for North London, Hertfordshire and Essex. A truly worthwhile cause which brought tears to a few eyes when we watched a short video at a recent club meeting.

## Earth Day Celebration: Tree Planting

*By Lion Virendra, Environmental Officer*

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much." — Helen Keller

On this Earth Day, I had the honor of organising and leading a tree planting event, attended and supported by the Mayor of Harrow, Ramji Chauhan. To kick start the event, we planted the first tree together and with the help of a community of more than 50 volunteers from different organisations (including various Lions in our District, Stanmore College, Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Moonpig, Friends of Headstone Manor Park and local residents) we were able to plant a total of 600 trees, setting an example of environmental stewardship for our community and beyond.

Together, we can do great things for our planet. Let's continue to work towards a greener future and make every day Earth Day!

## Swimming Gala celebrating individuals with special needs

The swimming gala was once again another fantastic event. Everything went smoothly and the swimmers enjoyed themselves with wide smiles and a strong desire to win medals. The evening concluded at Cloisters at Letchworth, where refreshments and drinks were served.



## Delivering food to Acton Homeless Concern - Emmaus House & Damien Centre

*By Heston Lions Club*

We delivered food to the great team at Acton Homeless Concern - Emmaus House & Damien Centre yesterday as they prepared to feed over 150 people in need. Thanks to their dedication, people who are going through the cost of living crisis and homelessness survive and we're so grateful that Heston Lions Club can support them for the help they give. Keep up the great work team!



# Out and about with DG Lesley

Find out what our DG has been up to recently

April is commonly associated with the arrival of spring and new beginnings. It's known for its unpredictable weather, sometimes making us feel like we have witnessed all four seasons in one day. April is also full of promises of things to come, new growth, warmth, and celebration. It is a time of inspiration and renewal, reminding us to embrace change and appreciate the world's beauty as we see the colour coming back to the gardens, parks and hedgerows. It would be great to see the results of planting the packets of seeds you received at the convention. I wonder who will produce the biggest crop of beans, peas or tomatoes or the most beautiful display of flowers. "Bee Happy" in the Garden.

Our Lions family, too, seems to have reawakened, making the most of the lighter nights and promise of warmer weather. More clubs than ever are meeting face-to-face and plans for the many different events of the Lionistic Year are being shaken off, rewritten, revised and thought out in readiness to grow our legacy and impact in our own communities and beyond. Which is absolutely fantastic. However, if we are to continue to make a difference, and with that Lions head looking to the future, then at least one of those plans must be focused on membership. We have service committees and fundraising committees, but rarely do we have a membership committee or give concerted time to discuss membership. My theory is that we believe the first two to be important; after all, it's why we became Lions in the first place, isn't it? Whereas spending precious time planning for membership growth somehow feels more self-centred and maybe a bit more tricky! So we park the thought, depend on our membership chair or simply cross our fingers and hope. Perhaps now is the time to "Be the Change – you want to see!"

Why do we need more members? We can say "for more service, "and that would be right, but if we look at our individual clubs, it may be because we need people to help in specific areas, such as an activity related to the environment, planting trees, litter picking, clearing a pond, or perhaps helping to run a book shop, a weekly carers café, a food hub, or a seniors film or music night.

Once you know what you need, it is easier to brainstorm ideas and set out a plan, be brave - add goals and a timeline, list the tasks such as;-

- listing groups within your locality, using social media, school newsletters, and local magazines to reach out to individuals or groups who have similar ideas or activities
- leaflet drop local areas, especially new housing areas, and Just Ask!
- Plan where and how you might recruit – e. g Meet the Lions Evening, Invitation to a service or social activity.
- Prepare or order information materials (HQ Birmingham)
- Remember you are not on your own invite or ask for help from the District membership team or members of your Zone.

Lastly, remember that your club has a very proud history within your community, and you have touched many lives with your service. If we, as Lions, take pride in being able to say, “Where there's a need, there is a Lion,” then each and every one of us, both individually and collectively, also shares in the responsibility to make sure our club, our District, our organisation, Lions International, continues to thrive and grow. We are the only District in the UK with positive membership growth at this moment. We have 1279 members. With your help and as part of the Lions 1.5 Challenge, it would be great to maintain those numbers and even better if we could add to that total to reach 1300 by the end of June.

### **So what has the District Governor been doing this month?**

Well, I have to admit I had some time away over Easter, visiting my mum in the North East and my daughters and grandchildren in Birmingham. Since my return, I have been out and about with visits to:

**9 April London Seven Kings Lions Club** – A brilliant evening spent with one of our smaller clubs but as I discovered with a very focused approach in their planning of activities and fundraising. Every member has their particular part to play, which ensures a great deal of success throughout the year.

**11 April Osterley Lions Club** – It was a real pleasure to be part of this meeting, three members had new grandchildren to celebrate, what a treat for us all with cakes and chocolate as well as dinner. The meeting itself went well, the first time members had met face to face for a while and all were keen to support the different appeals and plan for future events such as the LCIF golf day, and a Garden party to raise funds as part of the Brain Tumour Research appeal.



**13 April** – I attended an event that I have wanted to attend for some years: the Zone I Swimming Gala, which is open to people of differing ages and abilities. It was an honour to give out the medals for all the events. I spent an amazing evening with some very determined, excited, and joyous people, brilliant to see the pleasure of all those taking part. Well done to Zone I for the brilliant organization and thanks Pammy, Kav, Rupi for the sandwiches after- much appreciated by all.



**16 April** – I visited Northwood Lions and had the pleasure of inducting a new member Lion Ashwin Vara Northwood Lions. Here's his sponsor Lion Navaz pinning on that all important badge.



**20 April** – I attended a Redbridge and Fairlop Lions Clubs' joint fundraising event. Another very successful evening in support of Lions projects.



**21 April Celebrating Earth Day at Headstone Manor Park, Harrow** – led by our Environmental Officer, Lion Virendra, different Lions Clubs and other agencies got together to support the environment by planting trees and shrubs.



Later the same day joining with my own club Harrow and Pinner to support the annual St George’s Day Festivities and Wheelbarrow race in Pinner.



**25 April** – Attended the final Zone H meeting led by Zone Chair Luke. Lots of great planning going on for future events, sharing of knowledge and discussions about the new Lions Portal – We are all learning and may not yet have all the answers, but we will be holding a Drop-In session on basic use of the Portal on the 9th of May. Watch out for the email link to the session, and remember that everyone has access to the Portal and is welcome to join the session.

**27 April** – I joined the members of London Acton Lions Club, Lion President Harbans, Past District Governor Lion Sarbjit, the Mayor of Ealing, Councilor Hitesh Tailor, other Lions, and guests to celebrate their Charter Evening.



**27 April** – It might have been raining outside, but the sun certainly seemed to be shining inside for the fundraising African Evening, an event jointly organized by Hatch End Centennial and West Drayton Lions Clubs. An amazing array of colours and dances brightened up the day for all.



I hope to visit Zone I and Zone C in the next couple of days and then make my way to the MD Convention being held in Western Super Mare. I hope to see you there.