

Strengthening the Pride Through Education and Communication *"We just have to ask somebody, Somebody with a heart like you!"*

I believe many of you have heard the above quote, as we have shared International President Joe Preston's theme song at each club we have visited so far. It pertains to "Growing Our numbers and Strengthening the Pride"! We will not be able to do either or both until Lions can overcome their FEAR of rejection, when asking someone to join our clubs. Yet, unless we "Ask" and continue to "Ask", we will never know if those around us are interested or even know who we are and what we do in our communities.

Some of you know that I am not shy when it comes to asking someone if they are interested in becoming a Lion. Last spring, when Lion Mary Louise Resch and I were at the State Capital making arrangements for the wrap up for the "Walk for Sight", Lion ML was giving me a tour of the capital and we approached the receptionist for Governor Haley at her desk in the hall, and without hesitating, I asked the receptionist if anyone had ever asked her to become a Lion, which solicited the response: "No, what do Lions do?" and with that we informed her what we do and she responded that at that time, she was not interested, but would keep the information in mind. This past spring, while I was at our local Post Office, I engaged in a conversation with the clerk behind the counter and in June we inducted Lion Tanya into our club. She had never been asked to join our Lions Club and has lived in Abbeville all of her life. Today I was in a coffee shop in Greenwood and asked Carley, the young lady behind the counter if she had ever been asked to join the Lions Club and after the normal conversation about what Lions do, she told me she was "looking for a way to give back to her community" and would be very interested in joining the local Lions Club. I had a similar experience at Pier 1 Imports, when I stopped by to pay on my wife's account and found out the clerk was from Abbeville and she too is interested in joining the Lions Club in Abbeville. While in Puerto Rico for the USA/Canada Forum, I recruited 5 Puerto Ricans to become Lions.

The point to this all is, unless we overcome our "FEAR" of rejection, we will never know if someone is interested in becoming a Lion and more importantly, they will never know what we do as Lions for our communities and the World as a whole. By asking someone to join, we help them know more about being a Lion and open the door to invite them to join. Either way, it is a plus for Lions!

I would like to share with you a poem I acquired several years ago, while working as an Addictions Counselor. It is entitled "Risk" and applies to us all:

RISK

To Laugh is to Risk appearing the fool.

To Weep is to Risk appearing sentimental.

To expose your feelings is to Risk exposing your true self.

To place your ideas, your dreams before a crowd is to

Risk their loss.



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To Love is to Risk not being loved in return.
To Live is to Risk dying.
But Risks must be taken, because the greatest hazard in Life is
To Risk nothing.
The person who Risks nothing, has nothing, and is nothing.
They may avoid suffering and sorrow, but they cannot learn, they
Cannot feel, or change, or grow, love or live.
Chained by their attitudes, they are but slaves unto themselves.
They have forfeited their freedom.
Only the person who RISKS is Truly Free!

I believe that the ideas we were presented with last year in the “Just Ask” theme and this year’s “Ask 1”, are parts of the solution to the decrease in our membership numbers (our District alone has decreased in size by nearly 200 members in the last four years) AND are methods for Us to “show and tell the world what we’re made of”, as is verbalized in IP Preston’s theme song.

So, please, if you are not already “Just Asking” and want to be part of the solution to our increase in membership instead of a part of the decrease, just: “ASK 1”

If we all sponsor 1 new member this year, we will definitely increase the size of our Pride and in increasing the size we will “Strengthen the Pride”!

We hope to see each and every one of you at a future Club visit, the next Cabinet Meeting on October 30th in Winnsboro, or either the District Convention in Columbia, February 27-28 or State Convention in Myrtle Beach, March 26-29.

District Governor
Lion Rick