

Thanks for the Ride

"There comes a time in every rightly-constructed boy's life when he has a raging desire to go somewhere and dig for hidden treasure", Tom Sawyer. Well, the time has come for me to say goodbye and to pass the torch of leadership on to Governor Bob. It has been a great year, one that I will remember the rest of my life.

It started three years ago with the election of my Council. Governors Gary, Jim, and Rick, along with Council Chair Joe, are the best group of Lion leaders that I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with. They were willing to take on challenges and make decisions on difficult issues and to make much needed changes. As they did these, they made sure that it was not done at the expense of the Vice Councils.

The District 32-C Cabinet is the best ever. They have made me look good, better than what I am. CC Matt and PDG Randy worked with me to develop the District Support Team (DST). This concept allows all three "Governors" to have their input in the leadership of the District. This allows a continuity that has not been present in the past. It will assure much greater success for Governors Bob, Bonnie and Cathy during their terms as well as strengthen the clubs of the District. If adopted in the redistricting, it will make the transition for the "new" governors much easier.

The Zone Chairs of the District are among the best in the world. President Joe Preston has an incentive program for Zone Chairs. If the Zone Chairs meet the requirements, they can earn up to three (3) special pins and an International Leadership medal. To date, only a small number of Zone Chairs, world-wide, have earned the pins. Zone Chairs Nils, Bonnie, Joe, Cody and Jean have completed all requirements for the three pin as well as completed all but one requirement for the medals. They are waiting for clubs to submit applications for the Club Excellent Award. Each Zone has at least one club that has earned this award. If I understand LCI correctly, they will have the highest percentage of medals of any District in the International organization.

The clubs have been outstanding this year. It appears that over half of the clubs will have a plus membership at the end of the year. Participation in Leadership training has increased. Most clubs have at least one new project this year. They have embraced the SPOT camera and are working on additional District wide projects.

One indicator of a Governor's success or failure is membership and club growth. This year we lost two clubs. We hope to re-charter at least one of the clubs by Christmas. We gained a new club, Catawba Region, a professional women's club. We will have at least two (2) Branch Clubs for Governor Bob. The District stands a chance of being in the plus



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growth on June 30th. If this happens, it will be the result of many Lions working together for the betterment of the organization.

As you can see, this has been an excellent year for Lionism in District 32-C. The good Lions of the District have done an outstanding job. I thank them for this. Once again they have made me look good.

One last plug for the DST. Most of you are not aware of several personal issues I have had over the past couple of years. The first is my son Josh had kidney cancer and had one of his kidneys removed and we are fighting an ongoing battle with the cancer. Almost losing a child takes a big toll on a person. Secondly, my mother has had health issues for a while and her having only boys, it fell on me to look out for her. On Christmas night she fell and broke her hip and had to go into a nursing home. This resulted in two heartaches. The first was a power dispute that many families have that threatened legal action. Secondly, Momma passed away on May 7th. The third issue was about ten days later; I had a heart attack and had to have cardiac surgery. What about the DST? Well during all of my personal issues, the District continued to operate without skipping a beat. It continued to grow and prosper.

Getting back to Tom Sawyer, who is one of my favorite literary characters, it is time for this old boy to go looking for treasure. Maybe it is a good fishing hole, or a grand baby, or just quality time with The Queen. I say thank you for one fabulous ride as your Governor. One last quote from Winnie the Pooh, "If there ever comes a day when we can't be together, keep me in your heart, I'll stay there forever."

DG Randy