

Please forward any questions you may have on these reports, to the D. Secretary using the link on the Convention webpage. The question will be forwarded to the relevant D. Officer and their reply will appear under the “Answers” button on the webpage.

District Governor Team.

District Governor – Ian Forbes

As I start to write my report, it takes me back to February 2020 when I agreed to become your DG Elect and was in the process of preparing for my year in office with much enthusiasm and commitment to deliver our motto ‘WE SERVE’.

My journey started some three years ago with initially attending training sessions at MDHQ together with my fellow District Governors across the UK where we were able to share ideas as well as building lasting friendships with us all knowing we could look to one another for advice. As District Governor it is vital that I give you the support and encouragement every Club, however small, needs to fulfil their obligations, as well as giving my support to the many activities undertaken to raise funds for the needy in your communities for which we, as Lions, are known for.

Life for each and every one of us changed dramatically for us all when, on March 23rd, Covid19 struck the UK with us having to forego our face-to-face meetings as well as having to cancel or postpone our fund-raising activities with being put into ‘lock down’. Indeed, for Lion David and Judith their year was abruptly cut short with the absence of face-to-face activities.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Susie and my Cabinet team for all their support which has been invaluable. Members of Cabinet have been working tirelessly to ensure we still deliver our motto WE SERVE with us all looking at new ways to reach out to our communities and gaining new members. ZOOM has been a great asset and has ensured Clubs can meet up. It is not for everyone as I know only too well that technology is not always easy and I respect that. ‘Keep in Touch calls’ have also been a real asset so I know that all of you have been cared for in so many ways.

It is with great sadness that Charters and face to face meetings and certain activities have not taken place meaning that I have been unable to visit any of you, something which both Susie and I were looking forward to. However, it has been tremendous to see our Young Ambassador applicant, Leo Harris, address Cabinet and I wish him well in his endeavours. Leo deserves to do well. I was part of the judging team for ROAR which was truly excellent as well as judging the Lions Annual Photographic Competition and Peace Poster Competition, the results for which will be announced at Convention Thank you to all those District Members who have worked so tirelessly to ensure the success of these events with having to be on-line for the first time.

I am sorry that our Annual Convention is not being held at Oatlands Park Weybridge – yes, a superb venue and a venue which would have been new to all of us – yes, my cream dinner

jacket has yet to be worn! Susie and I left Lion David and Judith's Convention last year with the words 'follow that Ian' ringing in our ears – little did we know what we do now!!

Susie is busy raising money for LIBRA, her charity for the year. With being unable to host a Garden Party etc, Susie has got to grips with eBay and has already raised £500 with going through her wardrobe! Work is going on behind the scenes in support of my charity, Brain Tumour Research, with events such as Golf Charity Days being organised but nothing can take place at this time due to Covid restrictions.

It is just a few months before I hand over the reins to my successor, Steve, during which time I will be continuing to attend Club, Zoom Meetings etc as well as supporting you all.

Good luck to all of you as I know there will be many Clubs involved with the vaccine programme which is vital if we are to once again be seen in our communities and supporting those less fortunate than ourselves.

Do remember that each and every one of you is a valued member of our organization. It has indeed been encouraging to hear news of Lions wishing to follow in my footsteps – let's hope I hear from many more.

Lastly, my thanks go to my own Club, East Grinstead, for their invaluable support and friendship which has been first class.

It has been an honour and privilege to serve you all. Keep up the good work and, yes, we will all come back stronger and ready to SERVE when we can once again 'meet again'.

1st Vice District Governor – Steve Coe

Just when we thought it was safe to start meeting again face to face the 2nd (or is it 3rd) wave of the virus hit and we were again in semi lockdown. On this occasion a Lion that I know of has been tested positive and I wish him a full recovery as quickly as possible.

Many clubs went round their local streets as usual last Christmas with Santa onboard playing music very loudly and I also followed my clubs van several times. On the last occasion just before Christmas we held a competition via Facebook. Local residents were requested to vote for the street they would most like us to visit and the response was amazing. It was a logistical nightmare for our organisers to put Lions in different locations at various times but it worked extremely well.

Anyway, on that evening I looked out of our window at 5pm just before leaving the house to see the rain pouring down and I must confess I thought - do I need this?

Then the rain cleared and the van appeared at the first street with **everyone smiling** and looking so happy to see the van my thoughts completely changed. We went to the next estate and when several adults and children came out to thank us and follow the van, and **my smile** began to broaden as well. It also happened at the last estate we visited but with

ever increasing numbers of residents coming out of their houses to thank us for cheering them up.

After we had finished Anne-Marie and I went to get some fish and chips and the rain began to fall again as soon as we got home. Was someone **smiling on us** that evening, I think they probably were.

We raised a glass of bubbly on Christmas Eve to the organisers and participants of our event and the time and effort members of so many other clubs go to every year at Christmas to put **smiles** on everyone's faces in what seems to be a very bleak time for so many at the moment.

We all know that 2021 is going to be full of challenges but I am constantly reminded of the splendid service that Lions perform in our local communities, particularly at difficult times and in difficult circumstances, so I am delighted to be part of such an amazing world-wide organisation.

2nd Vice District Governor – Rizvi Rawoof

As the 1st part of the Lionistic year came to an end with a note of Tier 4 in most parts of the country, we anticipate that the 2nd part to be rosier and we Lions hope to do better together.

Wish each and every one good health and happiness this New Year.

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