

District A1 Youth Exchange Report –August 25, 2013

Governor Bob and Lions of District A1

I think we had another good year with the International Youth. Again, the youth were a great group of young people: 3 boys and 11 girls aged 16-22 - 14 youth from 12 countries and a Canadian camper hosted by 17 host families. Camp was a busy one this year with a lot of travelling between Windsor and Toronto. We were served by 7 Lions Clubs and 1 Lioness Club in District A1 as well as Chippawa Lions in Niagara Falls.

In spite of the age range, they seemed to interact well together. They were cooperative, polite and fun. Some of you experienced their creative talents in their talent show which we revived this year on the Friday evening. The campers were assigned to 4 teams. The first 2 days of travelling, we gave them some Canadiana word puzzles to do on the bus. During their feedback on Friday night, they had some good suggestions, one of which was: Why did you not give us puzzles on the following days. They also suggested more time in camp, and a longer camp. We will be looking at these and other changes for next year, perhaps combining some of the activities and introducing some new ones to reduce the amount of travelling and allow more time in camp.

We will be urging host families to apply to host early again so that we can give the youth an answer earlier. 14-16 youth seems to be a good number but we would like to be able to have a closer gender balance. Hopefully the police clearance policy will encourage families to host again next year.

One of the things that MDA Youth Exchange Chairs will need to look at this year are the dates. Since the International Convention is in Toronto in 2014, we will need to consider whether to post pone the arrival time to allow Lions who may want to attend the Convention to also host. Or if we can find enough host families, it has been suggested that it would be a good experience for the youth to attend the opening parade and perhaps some of the sessions.

In assessing the needs for the camp next year, we would like to replace the foam mattresses and perhaps some of the tents. Our expenses were higher this year because of travelling. I hope we can reduce the travel costs so that we can focus on improved facilities and camp program. However, I would encourage clubs to keep in mind the need for renewing the camp supplies in planning your budget for the Youth Exchange program.

In summary, our goals are the following:

1. Plan for 16 youth with a more balanced gender
2. Encourage early commitments from host families and encourage more Lions to be host families
3. Renew the camp supplies
4. Plan a quality camp program that enables more interaction among the youth.

Our team of Lioness Carrol Vincent, Lion Bob Book, Lion Cheryl Schleihauf and I have had fun and have worked well together. We believe that the Youth Exchange program is an important one that the District can be proud of. I deeply appreciate the support of the district in enabling us to continue to have a Youth Exchange program.

Respectfully submitted, on behalf of the camp team

Lion Curtis Marwood, PZC, YE Chair.