

Strengthening the 201N5 Lions Pride

On Saturday, 6 September, a Skills Sharing Expo of N5 Lions nicknamed *Lions Got Skills* was held at the Castle Hill RSL Club, Sydney.

The Expo was a new initiative that DG Anthony of N5 introduced. Over the past years, he witnessed Lions coming together at District training sessions. Ever so often the topics evolved around key Membership and Leadership issues. An elite group of senior Lions dominated the delivery of the sessions. While Lion Anthony recognises these are important bread and butter issues that Lions need to constantly address, he feels that room should also be made available for the less senior Lions so that they may have a platform to come forward and share with others their skills and knowledge on various topics. If done properly, this could benefit the District at two key levels: leadership - less senior Lions would be encouraged to come out from the wood work and be identified as future leaders; membership - Lions who get involved in the Expo may feel they have ownership of the event, thereby increasing their interest in Lions and a sense of belonging may be instilled in them.



As an innovative attempt, the outcome on 6 September was satisfactory. The sessions ran from 9 am till 6:15 pm. Apart from the two Plenary sessions, one given by International President Joe Preston in the morning and another given by DG Anthony in the afternoon, there were 17 break out sessions. Participants could choose from one of two strands - a skills sharing strand and a health awareness strand. There were 9 presenters for the former strand and 8 for the latter, making a total of 17. Details of the presenters and their topics can be found on the District N5 website -



Strengthening the 201N5 Lions Pride (contd)

www.lionsclubssydney.org.au. Over 100 Lions attended the sessions throughout the day. IP Joe also attended a good number of sessions and felt that the presentations were of excellent quality.

The final session of the Expo was an inaugural District Public Relations Forum. Four District PR Coordinators have been appointed this year under the leadership of Lion Derek Margerison. With the help of Zone Chairpersons, N5 has now assembled a team of PR experts/enthusiasts. To date, there are over 15 on the team and DG Anthony is hoping that the numbers will reach 20 by 2015. The Forum was well attended with many Lions voicing and sharing their views. Those who were there would agree that the PR side of things in N5 is moving along quite nicely - they are determined to help squash the myth - that Lions are the world's best kept secret!

The proceedings continued with a Gala Dinner in the evening organised in honor of the Prestons. It was a fitting finale to the 4-day visit of N5's International guests. Some 200 Lions, Lionesses and Leos attended the Dinner. At the high table were seated the Prestons,



Council Chairman Warren Latham and wife Lion Marilyn, DG Ian Warren (N4) and wife Lions Lady Marilyn, PCC Lou Onley and wife Lions Lady Kaye as well as DG Anthony and Lions Lady Emma.

At the dinner, they celebrated the success of the Inaugural Lions Skills Sharing Expo. They also celebrated the induction of seven new Leos, 14 new Lions and two Charter Presentations - the Lions Club of Sydney Ancho Sudan and the Lions Club of New South Wales Campus, both Clubs were chartered in early August (Sounds like *the 12 Days of Christmas*, doesn't it?) Of course, it was International President Joe who officiated the inductions and Charter Presentations. What a high privilege and distinct honour it is for those who were inducted and those who received their Club Charter



Strengthening the 201N5 Lions Pride (contd)

that evening! Congratulations!

After the inductions, all the new members of the Lions family were invited back to the dance floor again for a "family" picture. Take a look at the picture. Can you spot where IP Joe is? Certainly not at the back! Certainly not standing either!

When the group photos were done, the new members were asked to stay put. All the Lions seated were invited to come forward to shake their hands and welcome them. One doesn't have to be there to imagine the noise and bustle that followed!

IP Joe's theme is "Strengthen the Pride". Many of us are aware that he actually composed the song, wrote the lyrics and recorded the theme song himself. When the commotion was over and the auditorium became silent, IP Joe was invited to sing his theme song. What a treat it was for those who have never heard him singing before! Mid way through the song, he invited Joni to join him. N5 Lions had a double treat!

Their performance brought the house down. DG Anthony felt an urge to reciprocate and sang a well wishing song "May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You" which he learnt in his Pri-



mary School days. According to one senior N5 Cabinet Officer, "he [Anthony] gave a sincere rendition of a song he had learnt in his childhood. The applause was deafening."

The night concluded with exchange of bannerettes and gifts. DG Anthony was given permission to announce Lion Joni's induction into Sydney Chinese Lions as one of the Club's star studded line up of Associate Members. By do-



Strengthening the 201N5 Lions Pride (contd)

ing so, Lion Joni was actually following her husband's footsteps in Busan two years ago when Lion Joe was inducted as an Associate Member of Sydney Chinese.

Lions in N5 are extremely grateful for the opportunity to play hosts to IP Joe and Lion Joni. They feel honored and privileged. The Preston's visit has helped them to reinvigorate

themselves and renew their resolve to Serve the less fortunate. The Prestons have left them with numerous memorable moments. These will be cherished for years to come. N5 Lions wish Lions Joe and Joni well and hope that they will continue to have a productive and pleasant journey ahead leading the global Lions family to *Strengthen the Pride*.

