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40 YEARS OF SERVICE

APRIL 2014

**PRESIDENT'S REMARKS:
ST, JOSEPH DAY & GOLF TOURNAMENT**

There are many traditions marking the feast of St. Joseph which is celebrated on March 19. In Valencia (Spain) bonfires are lit in honour of the Saint. The tradition is said to have been started by carpenters in past centuries, when they cleared their workshops before March 19 and burnt all the litter on the evening of their patron's feast. In many parts of Central Europe, the day is celebrated by farmers as the beginning of Spring. They light candles in honour of St. Joseph, put up little shrines with his picture in their gardens and orchards and have their fields blessed by a priest.

Lions Club Sliema and its members have established another tradition. For the last 30 years every St. Joseph Day, a Stableford Golf Tournament is held at the Royal Malta Golf Club at Marsa. A tournament which attracts several golfers. The winner is rewarded with a small prize by our Club together with the "Alex Mangion Shield" which is kept for a year.

Golfers pay a few euros for every point scored and the money collected is used for Lions projects. At the end of the tournament there is lunch at the Marsa Sports Club. This is a lot more than the small round loaves that are baked in many European countries to honour the "heavenly bread father". But even if lunch is no more than the traditional St. Joseph loaves or *fritelli*, all those present enjoy a day spent together in an open air environment.

The shield given to the tournament winner is in memory of Alex Mangion who was a member of our Club and who also served as Captain of the Royal Malta Golf Club. This activity set up by Alex has reaped thousands of euros for our Club's projects.

Raising funds remains vital for our Club. Thanks to our Fund Raising Chairman Lion John Towell, we are now exploring innovative ideas that should be fun and effective. Members' ideas on how to raise funds are most welcome.

Lion Victor Borg Barthet



MONTHLY TALK : The guest speaker at the March talk was Mr John Bisazza who gave an interesting talk on "**SLIEMA from a village to a town**". Mr Bisazza showed various pictures of how Sliema changed from a village to become one of the most important towns in Malta. He mentioned that recent development completely changed the Sliema skyline making Sliema a town with barely any more space to be developed and how old houses of character had been demolished and replaced by apartment blocks. At the end of his informative talk Mr Bisazza answered questions from those present. The next talk is scheduled for Wednesday April 16 when

Photo: *Lion President presenting club bannerette to Mr John Bisazza.*



BURKINA FASO APPEAL

Our Club's appeal to schools in Malta and Gozo has been a success. Though collection of stationery items donated by students is still going on, several items have already been collected from schools.

I was surprised with the enthusiasm shown by children from St. Monica School in Gzira and St. Monica School in B'Kara, both church schools for girls, where students donated a variety of stationery items. When I went to collect the boxes from these schools, the girls I spoke to told me that they were pleased to donate items to less fortunate people in Burkina Faso. Not only that but two girls I spoke to told me that they had sought information about this African country and they now know more about the children there.

While at the National Stadium at Ta' Qali a few days ago I mentioned what Lions do in Malta to an acquaintance and told him that Lions Club Sliema are currently appealing for stationery to be sent to Burkina Faso. This gentleman asked some questions why these are being collected and I explained that in Burkina Faso some children do not have stationery items and that education is not on a par with that in Malta. He seemed to be interested and I left it at that. Little did I know what was on his mind. About an hour later, he called me to say that he had brought me some copy books. At first I thought he was joking but he said it was not a joke and asked me to go down to the garage. When I went down to my surprise he gave me a gross of copy books. This was indeed a good gesture from this gentleman.

I have been speaking to other people about this project and I hope that other persons would make a donation. Moreover I appeal to Club members to also make a donation so that this initiative taken by our Club President and which Lions John Rusher is actively pursuing would be a great success.

Projects undertaken by Lions Club Sliema have always been successful and I have no doubt that once more our Club members will be generous and make donations.

(Photo on page 4: Students of St. Monica School at Gzira with Zone Chairman Lion Tom F. Restall after presenting the stationery items collected at their school.)

MEDITERRANEAN LIONS CONFERENCE

The 17th Mediterranean Lions Conference was held in Tangiers, Morocco, from 20 to 22 March 2014. Over 250 Lions from the Mediterranean littoral joined at least 200 Moroccan Lions at this conference.

Lions International President Barry Palmer and LCIF Chairman Wayne D. Madden attended together with several International Directors and District Governors.

The opening ceremony was held on Friday March 21. Several guests were invited amongst whom the Minister of the Environment and other dignitaries. Compared with other opening ceremonies this time this event was somewhat low key as the usual parade of flags of participating countries was not made.

The first session of the conference which followed soon after the opening ceremony was devoted to "Renewable Energy". The main speaker on this topic outlined "the decisive stakes in the renewable energy in Mediterranean countries", while other speakers spoke how to generate energy from wind farms, photovoltaic panels, waves and bio-energy.

The second session on the opening day was "Cultural Affluent of National Identity". An interesting topic was "Sports as mean of promotion of cultural diversity and social integration". This topic was quite interesting as was a presentation by an Italian Lion on "The Mediterranean lifestyle". Unfortunately the time allotted to each speaker was just 10 minutes and hence it was impossible to amplify the subject, while there was also little time to ask questions.

The first session on Saturday March 22 was entitled "Thoughts on Problems affecting the Mediterranean". Various interesting topics were mentioned amongst which "Migration and Health" and "Management of Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment."

The final session on Saturday afternoon was devoted to the future of Lionism in the Mediterranean. The International President answered various questions

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regarding the future of Lions Clubs International. IP Barry J. Palmer encouraged all those present to increase the number of Lions in their countries by also inviting more females to join the Clubs. He said he was pleased to see that in Morocco there is a good number of female members. He augured that in the not too distant future there will also be the first Lady International President.

Prior to the International President's concluding remarks, a short video on Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) was shown with the LCIF Chairman Wayne D. Madden appealing to Lions to support LCIF to enable it to continue its good work amongst the people of the world whenever it is called to do so.

Social activities which provided an opportunity to participants to meet were a Welcome Party on Thursday March 20, a Moroccan dinner the following day and a Gala Dinner on Saturday.

Pescara Next: The 2015 Mediterranean Lions Conference is scheduled to be held in Pescara (Italy) from March 19 to 22. The theme of the Conference is "**Elevation of Peace in the Mediterranean**" - The harmonious social-economic development of the countries in the Mediterranean basin as a common factor of stability and peace.

I hope that there will be other compatriots attending this conference as Malta will be hosting the 2016 Conference. At Pescara the Conference Flag will be handed over to Malta.

As a member of the Mediterranean Solidarity Committee, God willing I will attend this Conference, but it would be appropriate if more Maltese Lions attend so that we will encourage our colleagues from the Mediterranean littoral to attend the Conference in Malta. I have been attending these conferences for a good number of years and have been encouraging Lions to come to Malta for the 2016 Conference. We must work hard to make the Conference a success I am confident that we will do that if the four clubs in Malta collaborate with each other to make this Conference a success.

Tom A. Restall Zone Chairman



SPONSERED STABLEFORD GOLF TOURNAMENT. Mrs Mangion presenting the "Alex Mangion Shield" to the winner Mr Chris Stahl under the photo of the late Alex Mangion who had started this annual tournament. At left Mr John Fletcher, RMGC Captain and at right Club Secretary Lion Joe Messina. The sum of 800 euros was donated by golfers. Our Club will match this sum and the total amount will be donated to Ta' Saura Home, Rabat.