



CLUB NEWS



NEXT MEETINGS are scheduled for **THURSDAY JUNE 6 (NOTE CHANGE OF DATE)** and **Wednesday JUNE 19** commencing at 6.30 p.m., at the **VICTORIA HOTEL, Sliema**. The meeting on June 19 will be followed by a talk by a guest speaker. Members can invite guests for the talk which usually starts at 7.30 p.m. After the talk, members and guests can stay on for a meal at the hotel.

FOR YOUR DIARY: AWARDS NIGHT is being held on Saturday June 22 at the Victoria Hotel rooftop restaurant. The date had to be changed since on the proposed date the hotel is booked for another event organised by university students.

Usually on this occasion the Club also holds the Presidential Handover Ceremony, however since Lion President Alex Arena will continue to act as President for the Lionistic Year 2019/2020, this ceremony will not be held. Lion Alex is continuing as President since First Vice President Antonio Varriale requested to be relieved of this office since he will be busy travelling overseas on business. Owing to this situation Lion Margaret Frendo will be First Vice President for the year 2019/2020 while Lion Edward Zammit will be the Second Vice President. Lions Lorna Farrugia and Carmelo Azzopardi will continue to serve as Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer respectively. The complete list of Board members for the next Lionistic Year will be published in the June issue of our newsletter.

EYE GLASSES: The Club is once again collecting discarded eye glasses which will be sent to needy persons in the African continent. This year the Club will be sending these glasses to Ghana. Members are kindly requested to contact family members who may have changed their eye glasses to be given to the Club which will then be sent to Ghana later this year.

WE SERVE



MAY 2019

A VISIT TO OUR TWINNED CLUB BOSCO MARENGO

Earlier this month a group of Club members led by Club President Lion Alex Arena paid a visit to Alessandria, Italy, to attend the Charter Night of our twinned club Bosco Marengo Santa Croce.

Our twinned Club prepared an intensive programme for the four day visit, including a visit to a chocolate factory and a huge vineyard near Alessandria. An interesting visit was made to the Teatro Felici in Genoa, where we were allowed to have a tour of the area where all the sceneries used during performances are stored. This was a special visit as the area is not open to visitors. However due to the good relations of the Bosco Marengo President



Lion President Alex Arena being presented with a silver lion by DG Euro Pensa (right) in the presence of Lion President Mauro Bressan at the Charter Night of LC Bosco Marengo St.a Croce

and one of the directors of the opera house we were able to learn about what goes on during a performance when scenes have to be within minutes.

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CONSIGNMENT TO THE VISUAL IMPAIRED: At the end of training the guide dog will be evaluated and Blind Person will be chosen, respecting the date of the application and the compatibility between the dog and the person, considering some characteristics such as weight, size etc. The Centre will then communicate to the blind person the day he will have to go to the Training Centre. The Centre also has 4 apartments where it hosts, completely free of charge, the Guests and their helper for the entire period necessary. It usually takes about a week to learn how to use the Guide Dog. The blind person gets followed up by the instructor who trained the guide dog, transferring to the blind person all the notions that are necessary to guarantee a guide in complete safety.



LIONS GUIDE DOG SERVICE:

The President of the Service is Lion Giovanni Fossati who is assisted by the Administrative Board made up of 10 members who work as volunteers. Nearly 75 dogs were consigned to the same number of visual impaired all over Italy. The dogs are given on a gratuitous loan and the Organization maintains the ownership so that it can make sure the dogs do their job in the best conditions and at the same time they are treated properly and are following the standards set up by the Organization.

The Limbiate Training Centre is one of the most important organizations in Europe for what concerns the company solutions for the blind people with the help of a guide dog. The Training Centre has still a lot to do, especially increasing the number of dogs that need to be trained in order to reduce the long waiting list.

Italian Lions Clubs raise a lot of money to help the Centre to continue this noble work to help the visual impaired. Every year clubs organise fund raising activities specifically intended for the Centre raising thousands of euros.

LIONS GUIDE DOGS ASSOCIATION

Part 2 of the article which appeared in the May issue



PUPPY WALKER PROGRAMME: The demand is the one of guaranteeing a regular availability of well socialized dogs that will progressively be trained to become Guide Dogs for the Visually Impaired. The first year in a dog's life is essential in terms of character development and physical growth. All the activities must be studied for the enhancing of those traits and habits that are at the base of a successful dog training result.

The Lions Guide Dog Organization selects all the volunteering families before accepting them into the Puppy Walker Programme. Labrador, Golden Retriever and Flat Coated Retriever Puppies are then entrusted to these families to be socialized and educated until they reach the age of 12 months. The School will take care of training these volunteers and will provide them all the equipment needed plus food, maintenance and medical care services. The puppies are entrusted to these families as soon as they complete the weaning.

The families will be visited periodically by a qualified member of the staff who will verify the progress made and will try to solve any possible problems that might show up in between the checks. After about 12 months the dog will have to be returned to the School for the Medial Evaluation. It will start its Training Programme only if considered perfectly healthy after it has completed all check ups. The dogs that won't be considered suitable will be given as pets to a loving family.

TRAINING PROGRAMME: The duration of the Training Programme is, on average, of about 6 months and is based on a non coercive method. Trainers start working on the obstacle course, where the dogs learn the basic commands that are necessary in order to prepare them to face the city traffic, which is divided in "zones" or areas. Training starts with a low level of difficulty to arrive in the end to a higher level, which is called "Intense Traffic and which involves the use of public transportation, pedestrian crossing and all the other situations they will have to successfully deal with, while working as guide dogs, in order to guide safely the visually impaired. >>>p.7

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Despite a rainy morning on Sunday May 19 we paid a visit to the Botanical Gardens "Dina Bellotti" of Alessandria where we were able to see the various exotic plants therein. During the visit Lion President signed an agreement with Lion President Mauro Bressan for an exchange visit by a Maltese student to Alessandria and an Italian student to Malta. This will enable the students to learn more about botany.



The highlight of the visit was the Charter Gala Dinner held in a medieval castle when a large number of Lions attended. During the evening both Club Presidents and the District Governor Lion Euro Pensa made short speeches stating that twinning between clubs made a large contribution towards fulfilling the spirit of

Lionism amongst members of different nations.

Another interesting event was our attendance at the inauguration of Lions Club Bosco Marengo La Frascchetta sponsored by our twinned Club. The members of this new club are mostly motorcycle enthusiasts who decided that besides enjoying their hobby they could also help those in need. The official ceremony was conducted by Lion Euro Pensa.

During lunch after the ceremony a group of deaf and dumb persons were also present each being given a souvenir.

Thanks to the organisers especially Lion Rosalba Marengo the visit to Alessandria was a great success. *Photo top Club members together with our hosts at Charter Night. Below at the vineyard.*



Lion Margaret Frendo reports on:

MONTHLY TALK

Professor Horatio Vella was the Lions Club Sliema May guest speaker. Prof. Vella is a Classical Scholar having graduated from universities in Britain and Greece in Latin and Greek. Besides teaching at the University of Malta, Prof. Vella is the author of several books, published articles, and translations. Two of his better-known translations are the book by Quintinus, *The Early Description of Malta*, and *Tristo ex Melitogaudo*: a lament in Greek verse of the 12th-century exile on Gozo, a book of which he is the co-author.

Prof. Vella is also a very active member in the village of Kirkop, where he has had his residence for the last thirty years. The village of Kirkop has awarded him the prestigious award entitled The Hardest Working Member of the Parish for the tireless voluntary work he performs in helping in the Parish Liturgy, Visiting the sick, and treating and cataloguing the Parish archives.

The Lions talk was about his latest publication "*Zebbug of Gozo; Its people, Inscriptions and History*". As the title suggests, this is a very comprehensive book about the village of Zebbug. Prof. Vella leaves no stone unturned, his detailed publication starts with the geology of the area and takes the reader back to the Neolithic period and then right up to the present. We read about the early churches in the village, and the building and setting up of the Parish Church, with a mention and the translation from Latin or Maltese into English of the plaques found on the outside and inside of the Parish Church. Great attention is given to the pastoral visits to the Parish.



Prof. Vella is also a genealogist, so he also goes into the family tree of all those mentioned in his book. At the end of the talk, we wished Prof. Vella good luck as he is contesting the Local Council Elections in Zebbug.

POSTER COMPETITION PRIZE GIVING

The prize giving ceremony for the 2018/19 Peace Poster Competition with the theme "Kindness matters" was held on May 6 at the Junior School of the Archbishop Seminary at Rabat.



First Vice President Lion Margaret Frendo presented the various prizes which once again were donated to the Club by Agenda.

The winner of the competition was Carl Abela Jaden a student of Saint Augustine College, Pieta.

Students from the Junior School of the Seminary and from St. Augustine College were present for the occasion together with their art teachers who said they will continue to support our Club's initiative.



Lion Margaret Frendo addressed the gathering and encouraged students to participate in the forthcoming Peace Poster Competition, as besides participating in a worldwide event, they would also be promoting peace amongst all mankind.

Present at the event was Lion Louis Sciberras who has been co-ordinator of the event for a number of years and Lion Chris Borg Cardona together with Ms. Gilson from the Education Department who promotes the competition in all Government and private schools in Malta on behalf of our Club.

The 2019/2020 International Competition will be launched in August when once again it is hoped that our Club will organise the local competition.