



## Lions International Youth Exchange District 37-O

### Cabinet Report - November 20, 2011

**Welcome back!!** - On behalf of Lions District 37-O I would like to welcome back Australian Youth Exchange student Grant Freckleton, who first visited Canada in December 2009, on a Christmas Youth Exchange. At that time, Grant did a one-day job shadow at the Canadian Back Institute in Calgary as he was preparing to enter his Honours physiotherapy program at LaTrobe University in Melbourne, Australia. As a result of his Youth Exchange, and that job shadow contact, Grant applied for an International Educational Exchange for his Honours program, and was accepted. He returned to Calgary on November 9th, 2011 and will remain in Canada until January 15, 2012, when he returns for his post-graduate job placement. Grant's placement opportunity is a testimony to the doors that International Youth Exchange opens.

**Two Youth Exchange seasons** - This year, District 37-0 hosted 18 International students. In November and December, we hosted two lads from New Zealand, who enjoyed their first "white Christmas". Our summer program included 16 students who participated in the Waterton Leadership Camp. Participating countries included Japan, Hong Kong, Finland, Italy, Germany, Austria, Spain, Israel, and Poland. Many thanks to the clubs who assisted in hosting these youths and supporting our program.

**Waterton** - Another sixteen local students participated in the Leadership Camp, from Alberta clubs as far north as Millet, and as far south as Cardston. This year's camp, sponsored by the North Hill Lions Club, ran from July 24, to July 29, 2011, with the cost of the camp application at \$375.00, with a \$10 donation for those campers who traveled on the bus. This donation eliminated the Waterton Camp Entrance fee. The Millet Lions Club donated the bus, complete with driver.

**Outbound program** - Our outbound Youth Exchange program was very successful with nine outbound students approved for travel to Turkey, Italy, Finland, Austria, Netherlands, Portugal, and Denmark. Since 2006, with the revival of the Youth Exchange program in District 37-O, we have sponsored **Fifty-two** students from District 37-O to participate in the International program, **separate** from those students who were sponsored to attend the Waterton Leadership Camp. Of those 52 students, **Forty-nine** students have completed an International exchange through our program. Approximately \$100,000 has been raised for the funding of this program during the past six years.

**Hosting** - This summer, due to an outbreak of mumps, and several health & family issues our host families were called upon to contribute more than what would normally be expected for a two week hosting. Some host families took in extra students, some extended their hosting, and other hosted students both before and after camp, in order to accommodate the increased requirement for hosting.

### Understanding Youth Exchange

- **We have three components to the Youth Exchange program:**
  - The Outbound Lions Youth Exchange Program, where clubs choose and sponsor participants to attend other countries and/or International Youth Exchange camps, with hosting by families for a two week period prior to camp. In 2011, District 37-O sponsored nine such students to seven participating countries.
  - The Winter Youth Exchange program where Australia and New Zealand send students to Canada and the United States, to participate in a joint hosting effort during their summer season. Many students have their very first "White Christmas" here.
  - The Waterton Leadership camp directed by Lion Tony Prettegiani (assisted behind the scenes by Lion Fran), and sponsored by the Calgary North Hill Lions Club as a Club project. This camp accepts two international students per country to a maximum of 16 International students, with a corresponding number of local students. This camp is focused on youth leadership, and In prior years, has required hosting for two weeks before camp, then a five day camp experience in Waterton, with a subsequent one or two week hosting period after camp.
  
- **A reminder of how Youth Exchange works:**
  - Outbound students are selected on the basis of sponsorship by their host clubs, OR by referral to a sponsoring Lions Club should they wish to exchange without an affiliate Club.
  - Inbound students are accepted to the Waterton Leadership Camp on the basis of two referrals per country. Our International deadlines are generally set as March 31, of any given year; however, we have accepted local Canadian students as late as July 1, if we have room in our camp.
  - In previous years, hosting has been required before and after camp. It becomes an issue when we do not have sufficient host families to house our in-bound students. Most students come into Canada mid-July, departing mid-August, however, some students have requested extended visits, and we have accommodated. In 2011, we experienced difficulties due to illness, overlapping vacations, and last minute scheduling. As a result, I would like to implement the following changes to our program.
  
- **Changes for 2012:**
  - Students applying for the winter program will be limited to four students - two from Australia and two from New Zealand, in keeping with our summer protocol. Their visitation will be limited to a maximum of three weeks in Canada, followed by a three-week visit to the United States.
  - Students for the summer program will be limited to two weeks family hosting **prior** to camp, with arrival date no earlier than the last weekend of the Calgary Stampede, in order to accommodate Lions members who volunteer for the Lions Lucky Loot. (Having watched fellow Lions struggle with the commitment of hosting and Lucky Loot, and having the same issues of responsibility, I do not believe it is fair to either our Lions members, or the students, to have this dual responsibility)
  - Students will return to their home countries the long weekend after the Waterton Leadership camp. It may be necessary to seek alternate hosting for that timeframe, however, that hosting will be limited to a

- maximum of two to three days over the long weekend in August.
- All students **will be required** to bring written permission from their parents, and incoming International students **must be sixteen years of age or older**.
  - All outbound students will be required to notify their respective coordinators by email, telephone or text, immediately upon their arrival in their host country.
- **We encourage Lions Clubs, whose members are volunteering to host International Students, to put their names forward as volunteers to their respective local Lions Club, in order that they may be considered volunteers under the Lions International Liability Insurance program. Once their names are recorded in the minutes of the local Lions club meeting, they will be covered for insurance liabilities.**

Thank you District Governor Dr. Rose for the opportunity, once again to participate in this worthwhile project.

Lion Debbie MacRae, Director  
Youth Exchange District 37-O

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*Lion Debbie MacRae, District 37-O Cabinet Chairman  
8 Hunters Mews, Okotoks, Alberta, Canada T1S 1M2*

## **Hosting**

1. We require at least one back-up person, familiar with all arrangements who can be called upon should we be indisposed or out of contact.
2. I would like to recommend that we try to avoid any arrangements other than pick-up and drop-off at the CNIB in Calgary at set times.
3. I would like to see all host family names provided with telephone numbers and cellphone numbers, to all other host families in the event of emergency. Our host families do a wonderful job. Despite the perspective that this information may be confidential, I believe that it is in the best interest of each host family to have that information. A commitment to host requires the support of our fellow host families.
4. While we do not wish to convey a requirement for any host family to provide any set activity or excursion, I have had a considerable number of families approach me with questions such as what should we be doing? Where should we be going? What do the students expect? The objective is to introduce our incoming students to Canadian culture and to experience our beautiful country. Host families can only offer what they are able. If they feel that is not enough, they can approach their associate Lions Club or friends and neighbors for assistance. We do not wish to dictate what should be done, or how. It is up to the respective host family. Most often, students appreciate every effort made on their behalf. Sometimes they don't. That is a risk we take with our outbound students as well.
5. Outbound application fees remain at \$375.00 in spite of rising costs. Clubs are reminded they can facilitate Youth Exchange expenditures through Casino funds.
6. Clubs are encouraged to come forward with banners, pins and any promotional materials they may find appropriate for exchange between countries.

I would like to thank the sponsoring clubs, and all the Lions who have assisted in helping us to make Youth Exchange such a wonderful project. I would also like to encourage clubs to appoint a Youth Exchange Chair person for their club, and encourage assistance with the 2012 Youth Exchange season.

**If you or any of your family members, Lions Club members, or neighbours would like to consider hosting an International student for approximately two weeks, commencing mid July, 2012,**

**Please contact:**

**Lion Debbie MacRae**

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**Or**

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