



# Newtown Lions Club

Newtown, CT  
Est. 1949

"We Serve"

## NEWSLETTER

Winter 2021

Gordon Williams, Editor

Bob Schmidt, Production Design

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### UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

- **Wed. Jan. 12—Dinner Meeting at Newtown Country Club**
- **Wed. Jan 19—Board Meeting**

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Strength in Unity and Service

As I reflect on the past year, the words "unity" and "service" keep ringing in my head. I think it's partially because most of our club members bought their Duck Race tickets and Mustang Raffle tickets and dropped by both events' finales. (The December 11 car drawing wasn't held in the best weather, but then again, what's a little frigid rain when we've held the wrap up in the middle of a snowstorm?)

We are a strong club and I think that we should take heart in the fact that given everything that the world has tossed our way the last couple of years, we have continued to serve our community and region in very effective ways.

So many people I run into lament that our lives aren't back to normal — i.e., back to pre-Covid days. Well, the world may never be exactly as it was before. The Newtown Lions, on the

*president's message continued . . .*

other hand, continue to serve as powerfully as we did in pre-pandemic days.

We had our Duck Race and car raffle this year. (While the car raffle had a cold rain to reckon with, the Duck Race had to weather the aftermath of a hurricane and churning river waters — and persevered.) Both events brought in donations almost as high as in pre-pandemic days.

Of course, raising charity funds via the Duck Race and the Mustang Raffle are only two ways we serve Newtown. We have a strong commitment to helping the Red Cross with its blood drives. We help the Salvation Army by ringing their bells around town during Christmas season. We have eye screenings that have helped dozens and dozens of children this year alone get the attention that they need. (One of our members, Jon Christensen, remains heavily involved with the Lions Low Vision Center.) A diabetes screening program is in the works. We raise money and non-perishable items for the local food banks. We collect used glasses and donate caches of new ones (thanks, Lion Joe Young). We help clean up the Orchard Hill Preserve. Lion Walt Schweikert spearheaded a drive that raised funds to build a playground for physically disadvantaged children. We even have a dental cleaning day for Veterans. And we donate time and funds to over 70 charities.

It's no wonder when a District Governor visits us, as DG Lori-Ann Beninson did recently, or we attend regional meetings and state conferences, officials, and members from other clubs marvel over the accomplishments of the Newtown Lions Club.

Moreover, we continue to grow, thanks to aggressive recruiting on the part of Lion Ed Miklaszewski and fellow Lions inviting

*president's message continued from page 1*

friends and family to join us. (Recent prime examples: Lion Kevin Corey recruited Jordan D'Amico and Lion Dave Landau recruited his brother Steve. Welcome aboard, Lions Jordan and Steve!)

A new year is a couple of weeks away. I expect we will be every bit as busy or more so in 2022 as we have been in 2021. We should take heart in that fact.

It's true that the pandemic forced us to make some operational changes. Time has forced us to make others. For instance, next year may see a totally different car raffle (details forthcoming, as we remain forever grateful for Lion Paul Krueger's initial development of the raffle itself). Let's remember that change is a part of life.

That said, not everything has to change. Two constants immediately come to mind: William Shatner is still flying around outer space at 90 years old. (Can you believe Captain Kirk?!) And the Newtown Lions remain committed to unity and service. Our dedication to bettering our community is unwavering. We are Lions and we serve proudly.

Happy Holidays! See you in January!

*Lion Oscar De Los Santos*

## THE MUSTANG RAFFLE ON DECEMBER 18<sup>th</sup>



US Postal Carriers don't have a lock on the line, "neither rain, wind, and snow" stopping service! In the past, the Lions have raffled off Mustangs in the middle of snowstorms. This time, we did it in the midst of a lingering chilly rain.

## The Mustang Drawing



Cold rainy days and convertibles don't mix.



Picking the winning ticket

### Carl from Tom's River, NJ Wins the Mustang!



Hello, is this Carl, from Tom's River? Congratulations, you won the Newtown Lions Mustang raffle. . . No this isn't a prank call. You really did win the Mustang!  
**A big thank you to the Car Committee for all your work in making this a very successful year for the Mustang raffle.**



The Lions show up for Carl Bullock and his wife when they came to pick up the Mustang on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

## 2021 NEWTOWN LIONS AWARDS AT THE HOLIDAY PARTY

The Newtown Lions salute the following members of our club. They have risen above and beyond at exemplifying our motto, "We serve" and earned the following awards:

- Ambassador of Sight: Andrew Iorio
- Loyal Shepherd: Barbara Manville
- Knight of the Blind: Katherine Simpson
- Melvin Jones Fellow: Bill Brett
- Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow: Pete McNulty
- Lion of the Year: Mary Jo Brett
- Lion of the Year: Gary Frey



Dick Kovacs led the presentation of awards ceremony.



Gary Fillion presents Andrew Iorio with the Melvin Jones Fellow Award



Bob Schmidt displays the Loyal Shepherd Award that went to Barbara Manville. She will receive a beautifully engraved glass desk plaque.



Dick, Pete, and Andrew pose for a photo op with President Oscar.



Walt Schweikert is about to present the Melvin Jones progressive award but is distracted by Frank Gardner who appears to be kissing a member of the wait staff. Be careful, Jan is watching.



Pete McNulty presented the Melvin Jones Award to Bill Brett.



After Walt presented Pete McNulty with the Melvin Jones Progressive Award, Pete's wife Jane put the Melvin Jones diamond pin on his lapel.



Wearing his vintage Johnny Carson sport jacket, Oscar speaks to the Lions and their guests at the Holiday Party. The pattern is so loud that Frank and Bob have to look away.

## DOINGS OF THE PRIDE

Wow! Our **Playground Committee** has really been working non-stop. Not only were they able to get \$90,000 pledged by the town but they really did well with their tag sale in late September. The sale itself earned \$1356. The Treasure Hunt which was part of it brought in another \$222.50. And the wonderful Daisy Scouts sold homemade goodies which added another \$355. In all, the day earned \$1931 . Great going team! . . .

Congratulations to all the people who received awards at our Christmas party. They are well deserved. Among them was **Peter McNulty** who is set to retire in January. Asked whether he was worried about filling his retirement he responded with a strong no. Peter has many interests including being a DJ for a jazz program, being a ham operator, helping at St. Rose and doing Lions work. He will be busy for sure!

A number of Lions have had serious medical problems in the last few months. **Lincoln Sanders** is having trouble swallowing so a feeding tube helps the situation. He has lost a lot of weight and his energy level is very low. . **Gordon Mounts** spent time in the hospital with something like a mild stroke, TIA. He has had a number of tests . Resting now at home where his good wife, Betty, is nurturing him. He is also aided by visits from nurses, physical and occupational therapists. . . . **Kevin Corey** has had a prostate issue. On December 15 he will have a biopsy. Unfortunately, the results will not be available until early January. . **Dan O'Grady** is currently in Sloan Kettering in New York City. Diagnosed in July of 2020, it was found that he has lymphoma. He has had several different types of chemo, including one that takes the blood out of the body, purifies it, and then puts it back. This, however, did not work. Currently Sloan Kettering is attempting a new approach. . . .

**Doug Body** had an accident at work with a forklift. The forklift really did a lot of damage to his left ankle and foot. This has kept him out of work for six weeks. However, with some good physical therapy, he is gaining strength and energy. He walked for a time with crutches but is trying to do without them now. Doug was spotted at the Congregational Church Cornerstone shop buying a size 13 triple E shoe Normally size ten and a half, he had to opt for the much larger shoe as his foot is still very swollen . . . **Jerry Cole** is healthy enough himself but has had to spend time in Virginia helping to care for his father who is over ninety years old and quite unwell. Please keep all our good Lions in your prayers. A card or phone call would be welcome.

## The Pride Welcomes Four New Members

One of our four new members is **Jordan D'Amico**. He has the honor of being our youngest member by far, being just nineteen. Jordan lives with his parents and attends a program called Life Changing Transitions. It is held at the Middle School, and he attends every week day. Part of the training is to give people the skills which will help them in obtaining a job. Jordan enjoys walking and bowling and especially riding his bike. He is happy to be a Lion and is a member of the Duck Race Committee and plans to help out any other way he can.



Jordan D'Amico and his sponsor, Kevin Corey

*Continued – The Pride Welcomes Four New Members*



Dave Landau sponsored his brother Steve

**Steve Landau** comes to the Lions with quite a bit of background knowledge due to his older brother, David who has been a Lion a number of years. Steve is a Nutmegger, born and educated in Norwalk.

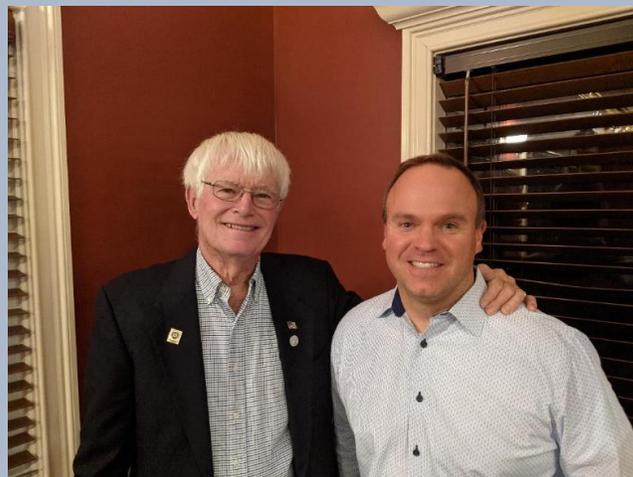
After high school he attended Technical Career Institute in West Haven. He learned a lot about electronics in that school. Career wise, Steve has done many things. One of them was owning a trucking company. Although he transported furniture and other items he came to specialize in motorcycle transport. He had always really liked motorcycles and worked for a time with a Brookfield motorcycle company, so this was a natural transition.

Married to Deanna, he has a seventeen-year-old daughter. Steve's major interests involve the outdoors. An ardent hiker and mountain biker, he could spend days outside if able to. Nature with its great lakes, rivers and mountains are part of his being. Steve has already joined the Duck Race Committee.

**Ross Utter**, a neighbor of Gary Frey and George Arfaras, has lived in Newtown for some time. He went to high school at Christian Heritage in Trumbull and there he met a lovely girl and started dating her. They got married and have a son in his mid-twenties.

After high school, Ross attended Westcon where he majored in biology. A few years later he earned a M.A. in physical therapy. Not content, he sought further knowledge and earned another M.A. in business.

When not working he enjoys the outdoors, walking, hiking, and fishing. His reading time is mostly involved in reading medical journals. Ross is eager to leap into Lions activities and has recently joined the Duck Race Committee.



Ross Utter and his sponsor, Frank Gardner

We are happy to welcome **Matt Ianello**, who was inducted into the club at the November meeting. Matt is the director of the beautiful Newtown Community Center. Becoming a Lion seemed to be his destiny as he was always attending our Duck Race and Pumpkin Races.



Matt Ianello and his sponsor,  
Ed Miklaszewski

**HOLIDAY PARTY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4 . . . .**



**Table 1** at the Holiday Party table from left to right: Gordon Williams, Pete McNulty and his wife Jane, Andrew Iorio and his wife, Paula Hopewell, Kevin Corey, and Lina Williams.



**Table 2** left to right: Paul and Helen Krueger, Walt Schweikert, Gary Fillion, Dave Landau and his wife Jennifer, Peggy Fillion, Peggy Schweikert, and Oscar & Kelly De Los Santos



**Table 3** left to right: Dick Kovacs, Fred Stakel, Jon Christensen, Frank Gardner, George Arfaras, Irene Arfaras, Josie Schmidt, Jan Gardner, Lydia Christensen, Debbie Stakel, and Barbara Wyslick.

**SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING WITH LEOS AND LIONS ON DECEMBER 18<sup>th</sup>**



Bruce Walczak and Will Eagleson



Pete McNulty and Daniella Guerieri



Jordan ringing the bell for the Salvation Army at Walgreens with Barbara Bloom, a Par-educator at Newtown High School.

Bell Ringers continued . . . .



Jan Gardner, Leo member, Katelyn Sullivan, and Peggy Fillion



Bruce Hoag and Matt Arieniello



Josie and Bob Schmidt sung Christmas Carols. I guess Bob doesn't know how to ring a bell.



Anna Shew and Jillian Hoag



Leo Olivia Nikolis and Walt Schweikert



Katherine Simpson and Cole Brown

**Bell Ringers continued . . . . .**



Charlie Curtis, Jake Gonski and Neil Randle



District Governor, Lori Ann, Beninson, presents President Oscar with a Friendship Banner at the November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Mike Dinho installed at the September meeting**



After his swearing in ceremony, Mike Dinho poses for a picture with President Oscar and his sponsor, Gordon Williams

**A Very Successful Tag Sale for the Playground Fund**



Are you buying that rolling pin for yourself, or for Kelly?

**Here Are Some Real Newspapers' Headlines Which May Give You a Chuckle**

1. "Homicide Victims Rarely Talk to the Police"
2. "Barbershop Singers Bring Joy to the School of the Deaf"
3. "Miracle Cure Kills Fifth Patient"
4. "Man Accused of Killing Lawyer Gets New Attorney"
5. "Hospitals Resort to Hiring Doctors"
6. "Parents Keep Kids Home to Protest School Closing"
7. "Statistics show that Teen Pregnancy Drops Off Significantly After Age 25"
8. "Diana Was Still Alive Hours before She Died"



The stuff is only \$2, but the bag will cost you \$10.



That's a lot of stuff! Wait, I want the bike!



I'll take the whole truck load! Thanks.

Tag sale continued . . .



And a bake sale too!

### LIONS & LEOS AROUND THE TOWN



Kevin Corey and his nieces made the Loins scarecrow for the Parks and Recreation Halloween Scarecrow contest at Fairfield Hills.



The Leos made Holiday cards for Newtown seniors

**Continued - Lions and Leos Around the Town . . .**



Katherine Simpson, Mary Jo Brett, and the staff of Diamond Dental who provided free dental work for anyone who was a veteran on Veteran's Day. Dr. V. (second from the right) is a member of our club.

**TAKING DOWN THE SUMMER FLAG & RAISING THE WINTER FLAG**



## ORCHARD HILL CLEAN-UP DAY WITH LEOS AND LIONS

In October a crew of Lions and Leos took on the difficult task of cleaning up Orchard Hill Park. The crew consisted of Gordon Williams, Jordan D'Amico, Dick Kovacs, Bruce Hoag, Frank Gardner, Ken Hostetler, Steve Bennett, Leo club members Jake Gonski, Charlie Curtis, and Leo Advisor, Jill Gonski

