



Lions Clubs International

District 105d Sight Newsletter N° 2

SPECTREK



August 2008.

This is the second of a series of Newsletters to give Members in District 105D a greater understanding of the various areas of activities Lions are involved with in connection with Sight.

SPECTREK

The question is often asked 'what happens to the spectacles and uncut lenses after the SpecTrek Day?' In the past they have been handed over to various organisations for sorting and distribution but for a number of years have been handled by the Chichester Lions Club system. After collection, the spectacles are passed to Midhurst Lions Club who assists Chichester Lions Club to co-ordinate spectacle collections for the whole of the Multiple District.

Chichester Club or Midhurst Club carry out a first sort and remove broken spectacles and the like and then pack for transportation to France. The French Lions now have a fairly large van, which they bring across about three times each year and collect from Chichester Club and also from Midhurst Club. Chichester Club also has a local freight company that takes spectacles over at regular intervals and at no cost.

At Medico France in Le Havre, France all spectacles are washed and cleaned before being sorted/graded by using grading machines; placed in plastic wallets and labelled with the grade.

Lions Clubs from other countries also feed them to Medico France, including France; Germany; Greece; Slovakia; Spain and Switzerland. The majority of the spectacles are

then sent to Lions Clubs and other organisations, mainly in Africa, where they are distributed to those who would not otherwise have access to spectacles. Requests for spectacles are also coming in from other parts of the world, including Eastern Europe. It is understood in Africa it would cost a person about three months' wages if they had to buy a pair of spectacles.

Medico France has three full-time employees and is managed by French Lions, who also carry out all the administration at no cost. Funding is from French Lions Clubs and elsewhere. Lions Clubs International Foundation has made grants for grading machines.

Now that Newquay Club has closed their spectacles operation, Chichester Club is receiving more spectacles. It is estimated that about one million pairs are received each year. These are still collected by ParcelForce and delivered to Chichester free of charge. (In District 105D they are delivered annually by Petersfield Club to Midhurst Club, which assists Chichester Club with the sorting).

Chichester Club receive about 70 boxes per week and as a result, send around 350,000 to 400,000 pairs of spectacles per year to Medico France, after rejecting those that have broken or damaged frames, scratched lenses, etc.

Please continue to collect old spectacles for the annual SpecTrek Day, held in April 2009.

SpecTrek Day in 2009 is to be held on Sunday 26th April 2009 and once again the District is very grateful to the Petersfield Lions Club for organising.

Prepared by District Officer Lion Patrick Hamblin.

Distribution: Club Presidents, Region Chairmen, Zone Chairmen, District Governor, Vice District Governor.