



THE LITTLE CONVENTION THAT COULD

Remember the little engine who could who against insurmountable odds climbed a mountain because it believed it could? This year's District 11 C-1 Convention was much the same.

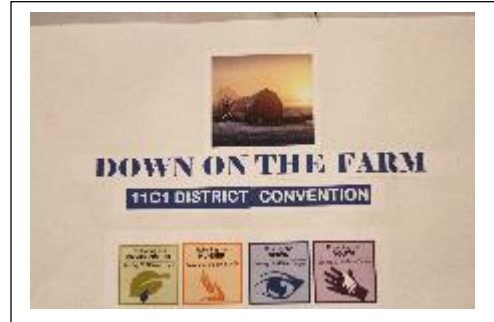
Traditionally, District Conventions are held in a multi-service hotel in a city with marketable attractions hosting an International Director as a motivational speaker and sporting plenty of ceremonial glitz and glam. After registering for the convention, spending two nights at the hotel and eating several meals there, most people can plan on spending \$170 or more.

This year's convention committee wanted to break with that tradition believing they could offer a more affordable, action filled, one-day event, centrally located to encourage attendance. And they did. There were 83 attendants Down on The (Krupp's) Farm in Rockford March 19 versus 50 at last year's combined District event in Traverse City. Most paid the maximum of \$45 to attend for the day which included a lunch featuring homemade soups and sandwich fixings along with a pulled pork picnic dinner.

While the venue and attire was more casual, the two, new morning educational sessions were not. PDG Diane Wehby was her articulate and witty self as she discussed creative and easy projects and fundraisers that all clubs can do regardless of manpower, money or time. She was followed by a panel of lions from around the district on networking, membership growth and leadership development led by PID Gary Anderson. What was unique was their perspective since they were all shapes and sizes from large clubs to small like Rockford's Ron Reibschleger to Sparta's Gary Moody and from young to slightly older with Jake Devine, GVSU Campus Club to Patrick Waterman, Hudsonville Lions.

There was the traditional memorial service, business meeting, awards at lunch as well as a silent and live auction that most conventions feature. But the afternoon boasted casual fun featuring free massages, line dancing and a pie eating contest which raised \$225 for projects in 10 minutes. And to end, lions left laughing after Cheryl Schneider Laugh Fest exercises.

Were there kinks to work out. Of course.





Obviously it was cold mid-March in a barn with heaters. But the cold didn't drive anyone away. Overall, kudos should go to convention chair Dianna Robach & team for thinking outside the box. And to the generosity of the Krupps.



Other highlights included 70 books donated for March is Reading Month gone to a Domestic Violence Shelter in GR.

