

Eliminate Project

Sister Anne-Marie Kirmse



Even after the winter-that-wasn't, Spring in New York is a welcome sight. The return of the birds, the new growth on the trees and the budding flowers are signs of hope and new life. And the yearly celebration of the events of Passover and Easter renewed the spirit of freedom and optimism in our hearts and minds.

This Spring we Kiwanians are living examples of the above themes as we extend the benefits of the EliMiNaTe Project around the world.

On March 21, the first day of Spring, the Chinatown Club pledged themselves to become a \$100K club, the very first such club in our district. What hope this gives to the more than 55,000 mothers and babies who will benefit from the tetanus immunizations and be freed of this dread disease! Chinatown has been a very active and a most generous club as is seen in their donations to KPTC, Kamp Kiwanis, the New York District Foundation, and the Kiwanis International Foundation. Congratulations, Chinatown! Thank you for always be willing to do more than you have done before, and for leading the way for us in so many ways.

The York-Leicester Club has become our district's second Model Club. They

accomplished this in a different way than usual. They have a major gift contribution and reached Model Club status with individual gifts from their members. Congratulations to York-Leicester!

But as wonderful as this news about the Chinatown and York-Leicester Clubs is, it is not the whole story--far from it. All over the district there are fund raising activities for EliMiNaTe. JP Di Troia, Queens West Division coordinator, recently arranged for another chain -- this time Arby's -- to offer a discount to buyers bringing in a special EliMiNaTe flyer. The store then donated a percentage of its profits that day to the project. What a tasty way to raise funds, and just as important, raise awareness of the situation we are trying to remedy.

With Mother's Day approaching, I have heard of clubs selling Mother's Day cards and sponsoring Mother's Day teas. What a wonderful way to honor mothers and at the same time to protect the lives of other mothers and their children. Mother's Day seems a natural time to plan events for EliMiNaTe. If you haven't thought of a Mother's Day fund raiser yet, there's always next year. (You may have detected my love for the Brooklyn Dodgers in that last observation!)

You have all received information about the special Mother's Day Zeller Awards, which feature a special lapel pin and certificate in addition to the Zeller medal. This is a limited time offer and will expire in June.

There are still several divisions that do not have a division coordinator. The Lt. Governors in those divisions have



been contacted by their multi-division coordinators. The role of the division coordinator is to oversee the clubs in that particular division and to act as a liaison between their divisions and multi-division coordinators and me. It is very important that every division have a coordinator. Don't allow your division to be out of sync with our District and KI. None of us likes the feeling of being left out, and your division is no exception. If you would be interested in serving as a division coordinator, please contact me at kirmse@fordham.edu.

I hope to feature some ideas for fund raisers in my next article, so if you have something that has worked for you, please send it to me and I will include it in the article. Let's share the wealth of our experience with each other.

As the auctioneer would say, "Do I hear a second \$100K Club? Do I hear a third Model Club?"

Since the last issue of ESK, I have been invited to speak at several division and club meetings. If you would like to have me visit your club or division, please let me know. I am ready, willing, and eager to spread the word about what we Kiwanians are doing -- and can do -- to rid the world of maternal and neonatal tetanus.

Excelsior!

Pediatric Lyme Disease

DPG John Gridley



The northeast US faces potentially "the worst year yet" for Lyme disease and other tick-borne infections because of the periodic abundance of a little noticed component of the disease's complex ecology: acorns.

Dr. Richard S. Ostfeld of the Carry Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook, New York explained during a recent presentation at the International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases (ICEID) that a heavy crop of acorns in 2010, a phenomenon known as a "mast year" fueled a 2011 popula-

tion bloom in white-footed mice, which stash acorns for winter food and begin breeding earlier in years when they are well fed. That surge intersected with the two-year life cycle of the ticks that transmit Lyme disease, for which mice are the key host, and this summer could produce a bumper crop of infected tick nymphs looking to bite large mammals - including humans.

The health departments in Lyme endemic areas are already crafting messages to the public about the potential health risk.

The prediction relies on the key role that white-footed mice play in perpetuating Lyme disease. That species, appears to be the most competent reservoir for *Borrelia burgdorferi*, the bacterial cause of Lyme. Mice sustain the infection without cost to themselves, are frequently bitten by tick larvae and groom off or otherwise kill the larvae at lesser rates than other small mammals that are bitten - allowing the larvae to drop off naturally and complete their transformation into tick nymphs that

transmit infection in their second year of life. Mice also can survive in much smaller areas than the larger animals, chiefly deer, that are usually blamed for perpetuating Lyme. In a sampling of "forest fragments" sliced up by development in three northeastern states, which include New York State, a parcel as not been found in which mice did not thrive.

Because of the yearlong gaps between bumper crops of acorns, mice and then ticks, the reliable but irregular masting phenomenon could be used as an early warning signal for Lyme exposure risks. Oak trees mast roughly every three to five years, "and when you are in a mast year, you always know it."

Dr. Ostfeld says he and others are working with health departments throughout the state to warn the public in areas where Lyme disease may be an issue.

As always, if you or anyone knows someone that has Lyme disease and needs financial help please give me or any board member a call.