

# North to Anchorage

By

**Coast Zone Chair Dave Roberts**

Having attended MD-4 Leadership Training at Harris Ranch in Coalinga in January 2011, the instructors there strongly encouraged our class to attend the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual USA/Canada Lions Leadership Forum in Anchorage, Alaska, from September 22 - 24. Over 75% of our class did attend the Forum in Anchorage and I was fortunate to attend this outstanding training too.

Four of us from District 4-L6 attended and the other three were: 1<sup>st</sup> VDG Blessie Trott, 2<sup>nd</sup> VDG Napoleon White, and Paradise Valley ZC Josie Rabelas. It was great to be with friends from back home while in Anchorage. Lion Jay Ruiz suggested I share a few words with other Lions in District 4-L6, so here are some of my comments on this great adventure.

My Southwest Airlines flight landed in Anchorage about 2:30 p.m. and the shuttle took us to our hotel. My hotel was seven blocks from the Convention Center and I chose to walk to and from activities each day. The first event was a First Timer session from 4 – 5 p.m. At the end of this session, the 200 attendees were surprised when our new International President, Lion Dr. Wing-Kun Tam, walked in to welcome the first timers. At the end of his remarks, he said he would like to meet Lions, so I walked over near the entrance and he greeted me and presented all First Timers with his Presidential “I Believe” Pin.



*Lion Dave Roberts and LCI President Tam*

Lions President Tam then met our very own 1st Vice District Governor, Lion Blessie Trott!



*LCI President Tam and 1<sup>st</sup> VDG Blessie Trott*

Over the course of three days, attendees at the Forum heard from four motivational speakers during our meals and attendees selected up to seven seminars. I choose such courses as Zone/Region Chairperson: Facilitating Zone Success, Protocol: It's About Respect, Successful Club Dynamics, Why Are Lions Leaving Their Clubs?, Attract And Keep Younger Members Involved In Lionism, and I Believe In Effective Club Meetings. Every seminar I took was excellent and the instructors were just outstanding.



One Educational Seminar I Attended

Our name badges were color-coded and I was with the “green” folks. For every meal, assigned areas by color were moved around the large dining hall, so some meals you were seated up front and some meals on the right side, left side or in the back. You also got to sit with new folks for each meal. Motivational speakers at the Forum included Mary K. Mueller (a domestic abuse survivor), International President Tam, Martin Buser (who participated in 29 and won 4 Iditarods), and Dan Bigley (one of only two men ever blinded by a grizzly bear who lived to tell about it). Each speaker was truly outstanding!

The forum also had a Lions Forum Store and there was an Exhibitors hall. There were also breaks to talk and network and I am pleased to report that MD-4 won the contest for most attendees at the Forum!

So, with so many wonderful memories, what was the highlight for me at the Forum? Well, at one meal, I was seated with former Lions International President, Lion Everett J. “Ebb” Grindstaff and his wife, who are from Ballinger, Texas. Lion Ebb and I really hit it off and talked a few more times during the forum. This week, I received a package in the mail from Past President Grindstaff with his 1982-1983 Presidential Friendship banner autographed “David, What a pleasure to meet such an enthusiastic leader that is serving in so many different capacities of leadership. Very impressed by your enthusiasm for service! Best wishes, Everett “Ebb” Grindstaff”.

Next year, the forum will be held in Tampa, Florida, from September 13 – 15, 2012, and I am already registered. If you want to meet other Lions from around the United States and Canada, and take excellent seminars to improved your knowledge, and hear from top notch motivational speakers, I strongly recommend you attend the [USA/Canada Lions Leadership Forum](#). If you want to talk with me more about the Forum, just give me a call at 858-793-7931. Yours in service, Lion Dave Roberts



IP Wing-Kun Tam and ZC Josie Rabelas