



County Commissioner Chat ...



Celebrate! This must be the buzz word right now for West Mercia. I am writing this during August as we all anticipate what the next fifteen months may bring. I'm 48 years old and as excited as a Brownie!

The Division Commissioners' challenge to all of the Divisions to raise £5 per member has been a huge success. The cheques have been pouring in. We know that there are units who have not raised their quota yet but we also know that EVERYONE will! Times have not been easy for the County but is this not when Guides pull together and help each other? The money raised so far has enabled us to settle our loan from Region, so the remainder will go to those generous units, Districts and Divisions, not to mention individuals, who so generously made interest free payments. Your support has been overwhelming and the County Executive, Marion and I would like to thank all of you. I know that the purchase of the building was a contentious issue but the fact is we have proved that West Mercia can rise to a challenge!

Work continues to spruce up the building. Look out for the newly treated wood outside and our flagpole with our own County flag coming soon. Marion is an excellent project manager - a skill she never knew she had until she became my assistant - and she has just acquired a large grant for our training room. The County and I owe her a real debt.

Talking of challenges, a group of Senior Section are about to embark on a new venture for us - a sailing trip. Let's hope that this is the first of many. Being such a land locked County; sailing may not be the sort of activity which comes to mind (apart from trips on the canal) but yet again, West Mercia is showing that the County is indeed changing and doing something different.

I hope that many of you will have joined us at Dudley Castle for the lighting of the Centenary Beacon. I know that the County will have never seen anything like it before and trust that it will give you a taste of things to come. Next week, we have a meeting to start putting the flesh on to the bones of the Finale!!!

And all this before more girls than I care to mention, from West Mercia, set out on their Centenary Adventures across the globe - Lapland, The Falklands, New York....The list is endless. How lucky they are but also how fortunate we are to have so many girls chosen for these once in a lifetime experiences.

We hope that you like the new range of County Centenary Merchandise which is on sale. This is another first for us and we hope that the range may be expanded and develop after Centenary is over. Make sure that you place your orders for your County mugs, woggles, key rings and calendars before it's too late. More things to celebrate are our first section event, "Lift Off" Centenary camp for Senior Section and the fact that 1200 people are booked in to our Brownie Centenary weekend away. WOW!

With your support, the County is going from strength to strength and I am truly proud to be your County Commissioner. Often, when I attend meetings in other parts of the Country I am asked "West Mercia, where's that?" I believe that could be a thing of the past in next to no time as West Mercia puts itself on the map.

Happy Guiding

Fran



MIDLANDS MEMO - AUTUMN 2009 ...

A VERY HAPPY CENTENARY TO YOU ALL!



I cannot believe it's here at last! After years of planning we are about to enjoy the most exciting thirteen months celebrating 100 glorious years of Guiding! I am sure each and every one of us must feel proud to be part of such a wonderful organisation where volunteers give so much time and effort to enrich the experiences of our young members. Think of the millions of lives Guiding must have touched over the last hundred years! How will you be celebrating? I am looking forward to meeting many of you at your Launch Parties in September or joining you at County, Region or National events throughout the year. Maybe you will be celebrating locally, attending a large camp or holiday or coming to the Region Carnival in Birmingham. Whichever way you and your girls choose to celebrate and experience that 'Mountain Top Moment', I hope you all have a fantastic time. Most counties have now gone live on the new 'GO!' system; an exciting innovation that Girlguiding UK has introduced to help you, the volunteer, ensuring you are kept up to date and have more time to spend with your girls instead of filling in paper forms! If you have not already done so please update your unit details as soon as possible so that we can all benefit and bring Guiding well and truly into its second century!

As Chief Commissioner I am in the privileged position of seeing the excellent work going on across our eleven counties in the Midlands and I am always humbled and thankful for the fantastic opportunities you, the leader, offer the young women and girls in your care. We have 14,000 volunteers across the Midlands who weekly give of their time freely, expecting nothing in return save the satisfaction of knowing they have made a difference.

May I, on behalf of all those young members you care for, thank you most sincerely for all you do and wish you a very exciting, happy and eventful Centenary year.

With very best wishes

Lesley Knighton

Chief Commissioner

PS: Keep Sunday June 6th Free!!!!

WEST MERCIA HAVE "GONE LIVE"

You should have received an e-mail giving you a password to access the "go live" site. If you have not received a password, you will need to contact the GO! helpline on 0808 168 1908 (which is free from landlines), and will have to give your Registration number and answer three standard security questions, alternatively you can email gosupport@girlguiding.org.uk to request your password, again you must include your membership number. If you have not completed the application process you will not have a registration number, i.e. you must have CRB Clearance and have had two satisfactory references returned.



The first thing you are asked to do is to check your own personal details and amend as necessary. For details that can not be changed, i.e. those that have a padlock alongside them, you will have to contact me.

If you have any problems/queries about GO!, you should initially look at the download help files on the system, which are very easy to understand.

There will be a two month amnesty for members to amend the Girlguiding UK qualifications you have gained, but do not appear on their GO! Record. Unit leaders will then need to add girl details on to the database as soon as possible.

It is most important that passwords are not shared with anyone and that information from GO! is not downloaded on to memory sticks/external drives/computer hard drives.

Commissioners, can you please ensure all outstanding queries from June exec and Census 2009 are sorted so Guiders can get access.

Wendy Cowdrey
County Registrations

Stop Press...

Articles for West Mercia SHOUT should be sent to Pat Steward- patsteward@blueyonder.co.uk
Tel: 01922 693862 or 07986 208083.
Articles for next edition to be received by 20th October, 2009 please