



Baltic Sea Lions 13th Coordination Conference

Hotel Roslagen, Norrtälje, Sweden, 23.-24.09.2011

Participants:

BSL delegates: Elzbieta Szmyd, BSL president, D121 Poland
Ilkka Siissalo, BSL past president, D107-B Finland
Harald Dräger, BSL past president, D111-N Germany
Ragnar Lõivukene, BSL vice president, D120 Estonia
Kjell Jonsson, D101-U Sweden
Tomas Grigas, D131 Lithuania

Other participants: Hans-Albert Schultz, DG, D111-N Germany
Zigurds Beinerts, PZC, Latvia
Iguna Beinerts, Latvia
Lars Edwards, PDG, D101-A Sweden
Hans Catani, PDG, D101-U Sweden
Gunnar Hemström, ZC, D101-A Sweden
Sanna Siissalo, CS, D107-B, Finland

Absent: Janis Elerts, Latvia
Delegates from LC Great Bear, St Petersburg

Opening of the conference.

BSL president Ilkka Siissalo welcomed all delegates and guests.
PDG Hans Catani gave greetings from LC Norrtälje and district 101-U.

Election of secretary and chairman for the meeting.

Ilkka Siissalo was chosen as a chairman and Sanna Siissalo as a secretary.

A short self-presentation of participants.

Acceptance of agenda

Agenda was accepted with minor changes and additions.

Minutes of the 12th conference in Sopot, Poland

The minutes were delivered in paper form and shortly reviewed. Status of action points was noted. Minutes were accepted.

Handing over the presidency and vice presidency of BSL

Ragnar Lõivukene was unanimously elected as the vice president of BSL. The presidency was handed over to Elzbieta Szmyd from Ilkka Siissalo.

LCI convention 2013 in Hamburg

The 96th international convention will be arranged in Hamburg 5.-9.7.2013 and 20.000 participants are expected. Harald Dräger invited everyone by giving out convention pins to all participants and banners to the president Elzbieta Szmyd and past president Ilkka Siissalo.

It was proposed that the BSL coordinating conference 2013 will be arranged in or near Hamburg after the convention, 10.-13.7.2013. It was also suggested that a stand and/or a seminar presentation promoting BSL should be organized during the convention. In order to have an official booth in the exhibition hall, an application for a free booth should be sent to Oak Brook. Another possibility would be to have a stand within the international market at the end of the parade. Harri Ala-Kulju will be running for the second International Vice President in Hamburg.

The next BSL conference

The next BSL conference was decided to be arranged in Tartu, Estonia, 27.-29.9.2012. Vice president Ragnar Lõivukene has already started the arrangements and presented the chosen location, a nice conference hotel near Tartu city centre.

The conference of 2014 was suggested for Latvia, but the final decision will be made next year.

Photo activity "Children see their world"

Harald Dräger presented the photo exhibition activity, where 12-year-old children in different countries take photos describing their everyday lives. The activity is organized via schools: each participating class receives a camera for taking the photos. The combined exhibition is then set up in different locations in BSL countries.

Similar concept could be used with different combinations of countries. It was agreed that the activity will also be promoted in the next NSR meeting in Reykjavik in January.

Status of the BSL project “Lions Aid to Carelia”

Ilkka Siissalo gave an update of the Finnish BSL project, which has now been successfully running since 2006, delivering e.g. 200 tons of clothes, shoes, furniture etc. to hospitals and institutions and ~250 reinstalled computers via the organization “Karjalan apu” in Joensuu and the local social service centers in Carelia. The operation is ongoing and there are again new lists of goods to collect according to the lists approved by the authorities in Moscow.

Other BSL countries were invited to join in, especially for special equipment, such as hospital beds or wheelchairs. The problem until now has been in the logistics: storage of goods at collection points and sending them to Joensuu. There is a container in Espoo, which can be used for temporary storage.

BSL webpage renewal project status

Harald Dräger presented the proposal for the new BSL webpage by the German district 111-N. Especially the project list should be changed into a more functional format. The basic layout will remain the same. In the future, there will be an internal communication platform for the delegates, with individual login and access system, e.g. projects added by the delegates have to be accepted by the president before appearing on the public website. German Lions have generously promised to sponsor the initial modification and maintenance of the system as well as the yearly fees.

The proposal was gratefully accepted by the delegates.

Current situation; development and projects in the various countries.

Estonia

61 Lions clubs, 7 LEO clubs, 1307 lions. District projects: support to the Maarja Village still goes on, as does the project "Hallo Friend" - home for each child with the aim to collect a fund to support families who take orphan children and to teach them. There was also a writing competition for children and the outcome has been published as a book.

An international youth camp was organized. The LEOs of Estonia have been very active and were awarded two high international recognitions.

District twinning with D111-N, Germany and close contact with D101-U.

Latvia

5 clubs, 75 members, so not very much going on but a high attendance percentage in meetings and activities. Co-operation project “Eye mission” together with US lions took place in Valmira. Latvian

lions organized collecting of 1200 people and US lions arranged eye check-ups and donated glasses or money for operations. This project will be repeated and extended to other areas. Another project was a fishing competition to collect money for a handicapped children's camp. In Liepaja, there is a project to build a rehabilitation playground for handicapped children. In Aluksne, Christmas gifts collected by Swedish Lions were distributed. There was also a co-operation initiative with a group of clubs in Germany, France and Switzerland.

Lithuania

29 clubs, 370 members, some increase from last year. The most important mission is to arrange a youth exchange camp in July/August 2012 near Kaunas (~15 young people, 10 days family stay, 5 days' camp), the arrangements are ongoing and the camp is now included in the official camp directory of LCI. A local club is taking main responsibility and part of the camp will be financed by the camps; sponsors are needed for the rest. Practical help and participants from other BSL countries are requested. One of the clubs is ahead of the others in attracting funds for Lions Quest etc. and it is important to make sure all the relevant information reaches the other clubs as well. Lithuanian lions now also have a part-time employee in administration, which is a big help in distributing information.

Poland

The webpage of Polish lions is exceptionally good: it contains information about everything that's going on and it is updated every day. There is a short monthly newsletter to summarize the latest addition – this approach could be applied also in BSL communication.

58 lions clubs, 6 LEO clubs, 1100 lions. The aim is to have at least two districts in Poland, but this will take some time and effort. 40% of lions are female. The LEO clubs have a problem of losing members when they finish school and move to another town to study. Poland had a youth camp and three Lions Quest workshops. There are both smaller local and bigger joint projects to increase visibility.

Germany

111-N: 3599 members, 20% women. 57000 members in the whole Germany, the biggest Lions nation in Europe. Contact to Kaliningrad: there is only one club left and they are quite separated from others, so they should be visited to get more co-operation.

There are quite many projects related to BSL and the German Lions are already very busy due to the Convention 2013.

Six people from the Baltic countries took part in the Fulton Adventure - sailing event on the Danish sailing ship Fulton. The Fulton project is now on hold due to safety issues preventing the ship from docking in the German harbours.

From German clubs' perspective, it is difficult to get new twinning relationships with Swedish and Danish clubs compared to the more Eastern countries.

Denmark

Sweden

In district 101-A: 1600 members, 70 clubs. In the whole Sweden the membership numbers are going down (six of the ten districts are now below 1250 members) and something needs to be done urgently - BSL could act as one source of inspiration.

(More detailed report tomorrow morning)

Finland

There are about 26.000 members and 950 clubs in the whole Finland. Similar problems than in Sweden, membership numbers have been going down but now the situation is leveling. The same applies to LEOs, number of members has stabilized at about 200. Clubs are now smaller than before but they are working together more, especially in the bigger cities.

BSL has been promoted in Finland and within the NSR by Ilkka and now the message is starting to get through: BSL participation is now recognized in Finland also at MD level, not just one of the three Baltic Sea shore districts. There are five Youth camps in Finland each year, next summer also in district 107-B.

Russia, St.Petersburg.

Olga is still the official representative of BSL but unfortunately she couldn't participate the meeting. Lion Sergey Kislov from Russia has contacted Ilkka to discuss possible co-operation with BSL.

One of the winners of the Peace poster contest is in financial trouble and has asked for help in the form of selling Christmas cards but unfortunately most countries already have their own Lions cards.

Banners, pins and flyers

Some contact information in the flyers is outdated and should be changed before printing new ones. Pins should be ordered, Ilkka will take care of this. Ragnar will find out about the costs of making new banners and order them.

Change of official representative of Germany

Harald Dräger handed over the role of official German BSL representative to Hans-Albert Schultz and thanked everyone for cooperation.

The second day, 24.09.2011 Lions International Relations & Baltic Friendship Seminar

Participants:

Mats Granath, DG, D101-A Sweden,
Lars Edwards, PDG, D101-A Sweden
Göran Grefbäck, D101-A Sweden
Mona Neppenström, IR, D101-A Sweden
Gunnar Hemström, ZC, D101-A Sweden
Gunilla Persson, DG, D101-U Sweden
Bernt Fors, IPDG, D101-U Sweden
Hans Catani, PDG, D101-U Sweden
Kjell Jonsson, D101-U Sweden
Stig Anderson, D101-U Sweden
Eila Pöllänen, Sweden
Elzbieta Szmyd, BSL president, D121 Poland
Ilkka Siissalo, BSL past president, D107-B Finland
Sanna Siissalo, CS, D107-B, Finland
Harald Dräger, BSL past president, D111-N Germany
Hans-Albert Schultz, DG, D111-N Germany
Ragnar Lõivukene, BSL vice president, D120 Estonia
Tomas Grigas, D131 Lithuania
Zigurds Beinerts , PZC, Latvia

Nordic Cooperation Council NSR

NSR is a cooperation organization between all the five Nordic countries (Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland) and they have had quite many projects in the Baltic area and Eastern Europe. The differences between NSR and BSL are that all the Nordic district governors are officially involved in NSR while BSL is between districts and that NSR has their own budget.

BSL – past, aims and purpose, ongoing projects

BSL is a cooperation of 9 Lions member states (Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Finland) around the Baltic Sea. BSL past president and founding member Harald Dräger reviewed shortly the aim of the organization and some past and ongoing projects. The role of BSL in the participating countries was discussed.

Ragnar Lõivukene updated the participants on the current status of Maarja village for disabled children, where three houses were directly financed by Lions and are now ready and in use. He also presented a new project ongoing in Estonia: renovation of a family centre of Estonian Agrenska Foundation, which supports disabled children and their families.

Elzbieta Szmyd told about smaller but long-term Polish projects, which could be extended in the BSL area, e.g. supporting poor children by paying for their lunch during one school year or collecting a busload of women from villages around Gdansk for mammography each week during ten years.

Youth exchange

Lithuanian Lions are going to organize their first youth exchange camp in summer 2012 and they need help from other BSL countries in the planning and in getting into contact with the youth exchange people in the different countries.

MD 101 Sweden IR plan

Göran Grefbäck told about the history of the IR activities in MD101 Sweden: e.g. youth camps since the 1960's and scholarships for Latvian students to continue their studies in Sweden.

PDG Hans Catani told about the current situation at MD level: collecting money to help people in the Horn of Africa and the tent activity. Swedish Lions send tents to catastrophe areas in the world. The tents are carried in the planes of a partner organization (MSB) and delivered via local Lions clubs in the receiving countries.

Bernt Fors told about recovery camps for sick Belorussian children arranged by Natasha Andersson and supported by Swedish Lions. This could in the future be carried on as a BSL activity.

IR plans of districts 101-A and 101-U

DG Mats Granath introduced the new IR representative of district 101-A, Mona Neppenström, who is also responsible for BSL during this year and promised to introduce and discuss BSL in the Swedish governors' meeting to possibly get other districts involved in BSL cooperation as well.

DG Gunilla Persson promised to bring up the BSL subject also in the cabinet meeting of 101-U.

Karelens barn & Lions Aid for Carelia

Eila Pöllänen and Stig Anderson told about the Swedish support project for Carelian children, Carelian culture and history.

Ilkka Siissalo presented Lions Aid for Carelia project as a concrete example of an ongoing BSL project.

Meeting was closed at 15.50 on 24.09.2011 with a song in Carelian language by Eila Pöllänen.

Chairman:

Ilkka Siissalo,
BSL past president.

Written by:

Sanna Siissalo,
secretary of the meeting