



LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL

Denmark Lions

District 201W2

DOUBLE YOUTH EXCHANGE SUCCESS 2009



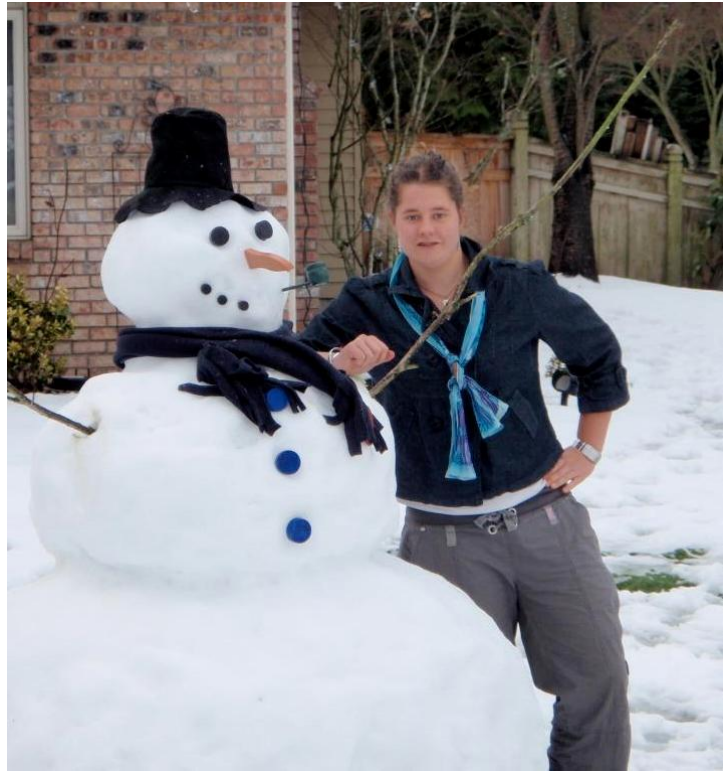
*Laura-Kate Reeves of Virginia, USA (right) and Sheridan Robbins of Denmark, WA
with a beached whale on the Albany coast*

Sheridan's trip to USA

In 2009, the Lions Club of Denmark embarked on not one, but two, youth exchange projects. Sheridan Robbins, an 18-year old TEE student was sponsored to travel to the USA for six weeks and in July, her family in Denmark hosted 17-year old Laura-Kate Reeves from Virginia, USA for two weeks.

Sheridan learned about the Lions Youth Exchange program when she searched the Lions website for her favourite, Lions Christmas Cakes. The program sounded exciting and it would help her achieve one of her ambitions – to travel to Canada. Many hours of part-time work in a local pharmacy raised \$6000 needed for the youth exchange trip. The Lions Club of Denmark kindly donated \$500 spending money.

Sheridan was accompanied by other Australian youth on her flight to Vancouver and subsequent bus trip to Seattle, Washington. Canadian host families were not available for hosting so her time was spent on the west coast of the USA. During her stay she attended a huge district Lions meeting, where she quizzed the assembly about everything Aussie. Sheridan was sponsored by the Lions Club of Tacoma South East in the USA and lived with one family for a fortnight and a second family for four weeks.



Sheridan enjoying a visit to Universal Studios, Hollywood and the snow in Seattle

After leaving Seattle, Sheridan rejoined Australian youth exchange participants for a few days in Los Angeles and San Francisco. "Experiencing my first white Christmas in America and seeing an ice hockey match were the highlights of my trip", says Sheridan. "I also enjoyed visiting Microsoft, the Museum of Flight, skiing and seeing the Seattle Sea Hawks. There was so much snow! After seeing Canada and the USA and breaking down the stereotypes, I plan to work in Canada when I finish my nursing studies." Sheridan remains in close contact with her host families in the US.

Hosting in Denmark

Sheridan's family were approached to host Laura-Kate. Parents Moira and Ian, brother Alastair and sister Kathleen had positive expectations after Sheridan's Youth Exchange visit, and were happy to host a visitor in their own home. Several emails between the Robbins and Reeves families broke down formalities. Sheridan and Kathleen collected Laura-Kate from Perth airport and drove her to their home town.

Laura-Kate joined the Robbins family on outings to the coast, Whale World, the Walpole Tree Top Walk, Gloucester Tree and other local attractions. Laura was keen to swim in the Indian Ocean despite the wet weather. She fitted in well with the family and was happy to experience the family's normal lifestyle. Moira commented that "Laura was quiet, relaxed and well-matched to our family. In Virginia, she and her brother have a herd of cattle and she enjoyed our country lifestyle. Laura is interested in a career as a small animal vet. The highlight of her Denmark stay was probably seeing the dead whale washed up on a nearby shore."

***For further information about the Lions Youth Exchange Program
go to www.lionsclubs.org.au/ye or contact your local Lions Club***