

## MERL TEAM & MENTOR PLAN

We all want Lions on our MD5 MERL team who are dedicated, energetic, and have a vested interest in seeing results (i.e. better retention, more new clubs and members, and better leaders in each district). After the DG, who fits the description of being the most dedicated, enthused, and most concerned about membership and leadership in each district better than the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> VDGs? Thus we are proposing that the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> VDGs from each district, along with the mentors, comprise the MD5 MERL team. The GMT Coordinator would serve as the MD5 MERL team chairperson.

The VDGs would be expected to only work within their own district even though they are part of the MD5 MERL team. LCI already recommends that the 1<sup>st</sup> VDG serve as the district MERL chairperson. Having the 2<sup>nd</sup> VDG also serve on the district MERL team gives that Lion experience on the MERL team before they serve as the Chairperson. Having the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> VDG as members of the MD5 MERL team brings continuity from the districts to the multiple district and involving both VDGs in the MERL program will help to obtain maximum benefit for our districts.

A more detailed description of the duties of the MD5 MERL team, including the mentors, is included with the accompanying job description. As stated before, the MD5 MERL team must be proactive and innovative. This means the team members must seek information about the clubs in their districts and actively (and tactfully) approach those clubs with resources, tools, knowledge and experience to help them, not just offer to help. The exact way this is done is up to the team because each club and each community is different and must be approached differently. Members who have dropped will also be contacted to learn how the club could have been more relevant to that member. These are not the only ideas the MD5 MERL team should act on as the team needs to be innovative and implement additional proactive ideas.

At the August meeting, both the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> VDGs would be brought to Minot for VDG training. The Membership & Leadership (M&L) committee understood from the March Council meeting that the Council felt the VDG training should transition from training the 1<sup>st</sup> VDG to training the 2<sup>nd</sup> VDG. This can start in 2009-2010 by bringing both the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> VDG from each district (if the district has both) to Minot for VDG training during 2009-2010. In addition to the VDG training, there would a MERL workshop on Saturday of the August Council meeting much like the August 2008 MERLOW Conference. This Saturday Conference would only include the DGs, VDGs, the reps, the mentors, and the facilitators and would be a MERL conference. All areas of MERLOW would be included in the discussion because the VDGs need to know all areas to serve as Chairperson of their district MERL team. The conference will be redesigned to allow adequate time for discussion and full interaction among attendees.

The DGs & VDGs would again be asked to bring their 3 year goals and action plans to the conference to share with everyone and possibly revise. All Districts will be 1 year into their goals and action plans so the DGs and VDGs will be able to share the parts of their plan that has worked, the parts that have not worked, and what could have been done better or differently to possibly make those parts work. This will be an interactive conference with several facilitators

with each facilitator responsible for an area of MERLOW. Each MERLOW area will be allotted a set amount of time and when that time is up we will move on to the next area thus ensuring that all areas will be covered. The facilitators will not lecture, they will facilitate a discussion among the attendees. We will emphasize proactive team building because only a team will be able to change the status quo, one or two individuals can not bring change by themselves.

LCI requests the contact information for the MD Membership, Extension, Retention, and Leadership Chairpersons. We will have 4 mentors (one each for ND & SD, one for CW & CE, and one for CN & CA) each serving 3 years at the discretion of the Council. For LCI purposes, these 4 mentors will be reported as the MD5 MERL team. They will receive information from LCI which they will pass on to the other mentors & the mentors will then distribute it to the VDGs in the districts they are mentoring. Having the mentors serve 3 years will bring continuity to the district MERL team leadership.

During the remainder of 2009-2010 year, MD5 would continue to train both VDGs instead of just the 1<sup>st</sup> VDG. In 2010-2011, only the 2<sup>nd</sup> VDG would receive VDG training but both VDGs would be brought to Minot for the August meeting for a MERL team conference. The plan is that this would continue in future years so the MD5 MERL team, other than the mentors, would have a 2 year rotation rather than a 3 year rotation. A plus to this is that if someone on the MD5 MERL team is not fulfilling their MERLOW responsibilities, they would only be on the team 2 years. Also, it would not be necessary to ask them to resign because they would automatically be moving off the team.

#### Reporting:

The 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> VDGs would be required to file a quarterly report with their DG, mentor, Council Chairperson, MD5 M&L Committee Chairperson and MD5 MERL team Chairperson (GMT Coordinator). This report would be similar to the reporting used by LCI for DG reporting in 2007-08 & 2008-09. A copy of that report is at the end of this document. The report would be due one week after the last day of each quarter. By the 15<sup>th</sup> of the next month, the mentor will summarize the reports from the districts they are mentoring & send that report to the Council Chairperson and the MD5 MERL Chairperson. The MD5 MERL Chairperson will summarize the reports and forward that report to all of the Council members.

#### Cost:

Having the MERL conference at the August Council meeting will be very little, if any, additional cost to the MD, and will certainly be much less than the 2008 August MERL Conference. We will have the DGs and all of the VDGs (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>) in Minot already. We have normally invited the MERL team to the August Council meeting but this year we will have the 4 mentors at the meeting instead of 4 MERL team members. PCC Leo Grossman will be the SD mentor and he will already be in Minot for the VDG training so we will only have 3 mentors to pay costs, not 4. Also PID Garnet Davis will already be in attendance as GMT Coordinator so there would be no additional cost for him as the MD5 MERL team chairperson. We will not bring the district MERL teams to Minot.

There will be additional VDG training costs in 2009-2010, because we will be bringing both the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> VDG to Minot based on your vote at the last Council meeting. However, whatever year

we would decide to switch from training the 1<sup>st</sup> VDGs to training the 2<sup>nd</sup> VDGs would increase the cost that year because we would be training two classes that year. We might as well do it as soon as possible because costs are only going to be going up. We may end up training a VDG who does not move up to DG, but is there any great harm in that? If our training is any good, that knowledge will still benefit the person and, in the long run, the district. And any year, not just this first year, in training the 2<sup>nd</sup> VDG we must realize that there may be 2<sup>nd</sup> VDGs who, for whatever reason (medical, personal problems, etc.) do not become DG. That is no reason to not train the 2<sup>nd</sup> VDGs.

We will not bring in anyone outside our MD for the conference although we may bring former Council members to Minot to serve as facilitators. (Note: We will have this more in place by the June Council meetings so that this paragraph can be more explicit.)

(See attached report sample below.)

# MERL Bi-Monthly Activity Report

VICE DISTRICT GOVERNOR NAME:

DISTRICT:

During the August MERL Conference, you developed a District goals and an action plan. The attached **Quarterly Activity Report** indicates your district's progress thus far as reported on the Monthly Cumulative Report.

After reviewing the report, please provide your DG, Mentor, Council Chairperson, & MERL Chairperson/GMT Coordinator with a brief report outlining your current activities by answering the questions below.

1. Based on the attached report, plus your current activities, what progress is being made in implementing your action plan and its goals.

- I expect to exceed our goals
- I expect to meet our goals
- I may need to revise our goals and plan adjustments

***What is Working?*** Please let us know the successful strategies that are producing positive results and the details of the activities that have helped your district.

***What Are Your Challenges?*** Please note any challenges that you are facing and how you plan to adjust your strategy to overcome these challenges.

2. What activities are planned to support membership growth during the next quarterly period?

3. How can your DG, Mentor, and MERL Chairperson/GMT Coordinator assist you further and support membership growth in your district?

Please forward this report to your 1) DG, 2) Mentor, 3) MERL Chairperson/GMT Coordinator, and 4) Council Chairperson by the last day of each quarter.