

THE ART OF POSITIVE TAIL TWISTING

By Lion Chuck Steinmetz and various sources

Definition

Tail Twister:

"The Tail Twister" is an officer and the "pep master" of his/her Lions Club. He/she promotes harmony, good fellowship, and enthusiasm in the meetings through appropriate **stunts**, games and the judicious imposition of fines on club members. There shall be no appeal of his/her decision in imposing a **fine**, provided, however, that no fine shall exceed an amount fixed by the board of directors of the club. The tail twister may not be fined except by the unanimous vote of all members present. All monies collected by the tail twister shall be turned over to the treasurer.

The position of Tail Twister sounds like a simple one. In reality, the responsibilities of Tail Twister encompass much more than collecting fines. Accept the responsibilities with the attitude you are making a very significant contribution to the overall success of your club's meetings and you and they are having fun!

THE TAIL TWISTER'S MISSION

How do some Tail Twisters manage to keep Club meetings lively and fun for all? How do they maintain the good-natured informality that inspires comradeship among Club members? What is their secret in keeping meetings cheerful? And where do they come up with their bags of tricks, their rib-poking methods of getting laughs and money from fellow Lions?

Quite a few Tail Twisters have become living legends in their districts for their expertise at bagging dimes and quarters during Club meetings, and doing it with a laugh. Some have gone beyond such time-honored excuses for levying fines, examples: penalizing Lions for wearing neckties or not wearing neckties, arriving late, dropping a fork during dinner, having hair too long, too short, or for having none at all. They have patent original schemes for Lionistically picking the pockets of the membership.

The primary goal is not to raise money, but to inject fun and laughter into Club meetings to help prevent them from being dull. Nearly every Club with constantly well attended meetings has an active Tail Twister who keeps members alert and looking over their shoulders to see what he/she is plotting to do next.

As a Tail Twister generates good feelings, he/she performs such duties at meetings as the President may request by seating members and guests, distributing papers, and running errands. Next to President, the Tail Twister is possibly the most important single person at meetings. The President should ask for the Tail Twisters to help by informing him/her of any expected issues. By demeanor, the Tail Twister sets the stage for the meeting and must deal with many different moods of members. There are times when the Tail twister uses his/her good nature to quiet noisy Lions,

sharpen inattentive Lions, calm hostile Lions, and generally act as a teacher of respect, etiquette, and parliamentary procedure. Tail twisting is assistance to officers and members the way a rodeo clown protects the riders.

Tail twisting is a way to recognize accomplishments of members and remind them of important events i.e. birthdays, etc. Therefore it is important for the tail twister to determine, for example, who has recently become engaged, bought a new car, become a parent, received a promotion at work or other noteworthy achievements.

Advice on Fining:

- While fining is a part of the job description, fines should be reasonable.
- Move about the room.
- Stand behind or by the member being fined.
- Make all eyes follow you. Motion is variety. It is lively. Standing still and talking is BORING!
- It is important never to embarrass anyone. Irregular attendees need a warm welcome, not attention to their oversights. It is best to fine for something other than attendance.
- Mention and welcome visitors, but fine only Lions
- If District officers are present, you may fine them if you wish, but never heavily.
- An observant tail twister can usually find enough reason to assessing fines without fining for imaginary offenses.

Advice on Stunts

Stunts are important at every club meeting and, to be most effective, the tail twister should have a different stunt or gimmick at every meeting, otherwise, there may be a lessening of enthusiasm among the members. With stunts, tail twisters have recognized a fundamental element of human nature---that work done in the guise of fun is many times more enjoyable. In fact, some of the most meaningful things Lions have done were accomplished in the spirit of fun and good times. But tail twisters need to use discretion and consider the safety and feelings of others when employing these diversions.

Tools of the Trade

- Fine Horn, Bell, Whistle or ???
- Fine Bucket
- Your bag of tricks for your stunts

Remember: The good spirit generated by the Tail Twister helps busy people relax, enjoy the camaraderie, and direct their attention to the pleasant tasks of humanitarian services.

That's what makes a good Tail Twister!