

Everyone's going quackers for city duck race

BNI ROMAN are going duck crazy. The networking group already has two ducks in the race with several other members still planning to get creative.

First off the mark was Debbie Rush with her JSW Insurance duck insured for all eventualities and the Simon O'Rourke duck has a lot to live up too with its creative owners.

The Hickory's Chester duck race will take place on September 19 when all corporate ducks will race on the River Dee, competing for the first prize of a half day's corporate motivational training donated by the Cheshire-based inspirational learning and

development company 'Successfactory'.

There are also prizes for the duck voted the most popular on Facebook, the best dressed duck which will be judged on the day and the new category of celebrity lookie likee duck.

Companies and organisations can adopt a duck for just £200 and decorate and dress it as they wish.

The ducks will all feature on the Countess fundraising Facebook page and be on display in the Grosvenor Shopping Centre before the race.

All the money raised will support the Babygrow Appeal. Lesley Woodhead, Countess

corporate and events fundraising manager, said: "It's a fantastic opportunity for teams to work together and great fun on the day. A lot of thought goes in to designing and decorating the corporate ducks.

"We had hundreds of members of the public there last year all enjoying the chance to view the decorated ducks before their race and choose their favourites which they could then cheer on.

"Last year was our charity's second duck race and our aim is to make this year's event even bigger and better! Call Lesley on 01244 364505 for more details or to order your duck!"



Grace Johnson, Oddfellows events coordinator with Ryan Edwards, Oddfellows marketing coordinator.

Making a splash

THERE'S something exciting taking place in Chester city centre that is sure to make a splash for charity!

On Sunday, September 13, a giant water slide is coming to Lower Bridge Street.

It will give 400 lucky people the chance to slide while raising money for the Babygrow Appeal and Transformation for Veterans.

For a chance to be one of the chosen 400, all you need to do is enter the Chester city slide online ballot at www.cityslide.co.uk/chester (you need to be over 18 to enter). It costs £2.50 to enter, with £1.50 from each entry going directly to the two local charities and the other £1 covering set-up costs.

The lucky winners will be picked at random and get the chance to slide for charity as they take on the Chester city slide.

Halfway mark reached in fundraising baby unit bid

A MAJOR fundraising appeal has hit the halfway mark in its £3 million bid to build a state of the art new baby unit at the Countess of Chester Hospital.

Fundraising bosses at the Liverpool Road hospital say they have been overwhelmed with the support of hundreds of families, businesses and individuals who have swelled the fund to the £1.5m halfway mark since its launch in 2012.

They are now calling for as much help as possible to reach the target of £3m.

The planned new neonatal unit at the hospital on Liverpool Road will be more than double the size of the current unit, providing improved facilities and a more spacious environment for the babies being cared for, and their families.

Hundreds of parents and relatives of babies whose lives have been saved by the aid and care given by staff at the current neonatal unit have been instrumental in or organising and taking part in fundraising events to boost the appeal.

Parents have shared their personal stories through the *Leader* and sister title the *Standard* every week.

The many fundraising events have so far included marathons, sky dives, driving challenges, coffee mornings, and sports events, meanwhile fundraisers are already looking



ahead to future events such as the Chester Duck Race.

The appeal has taken to so many hearts that parents and others who have not been affected, but can empathise with those who have, have given to the appeal and organised fundraising events to show their support.

Fundraising manager Janet Ratcliffe has issued a heartfelt thanks to supporters and is now looking ahead to reaching the appeal target.

She said: "The Babygrow Appeal has touched so many and people have really taken it to their hearts and through their words of encouragement, generosity and kindness, have got us to the halfway mark in this important appeal.

"It really is heartwarming to know so many people have recognised the importance of this new build and the level of care shown by staff to date in the existing neonatal unit.

"Support has been given in so many ways from businesses, organisations and individuals, but a large amount of support has been shown by families.

"We want to say a particular thanks to those people who have given to the appeal in what have been difficult



Delighted staff from the neonatal unit at the Countess of Chester hospital, Lucy Letby, Dr John Gibbs, Laura Eagles and Caroline Oakley celebrate news the Babygrow Appeal is halfway to reaching its £3m target. The staff are pictured with Sian Evans and her son Jacob, centre.

financial times.

"Even people who have not experienced having to have a child cared for within the unit have emphasised and supported and given generosity to the appeal. That is truly fantastic also.

"It is fantastic we have reached the halfway stage but now we are looking ahead to reaching our fundraising goal of £3m and are calling on people to get behind the appeal and continue to support the appeal, one we very much believe in and is vitally important."

Last year, the neonatal unit cared for about 450 babies, many of whom were very poorly, either in intensive care

or on ventilators.

Some babies stay in the unit for just a few hours, for others it can be weeks or even months.

Understandably, this can be a very anxious time for parents, who are often spending a lot of time in the unit.

Currently the restricted size of the unit means they cannot always be provided with the space and privacy they would like.

Marks and Spencer Cheshire Oaks' chosen charity of the year is the Babygrow Appeal.

The £6,000 raised towards the ambitious fundraising target of £24,000 helped take the Babygrow Appeal to the halfway point.

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Would your school or nursery like to help to raise funds to help us build a fantastic new neonatal unit?

Call Angie Lopez on 01244 366672 for further information and ideas!



ASH GROVE FARM NURSERY
Wrexham Road, Chester CH4 7QR
01244 680707
www.ashgrove-farm-nursery.co.uk



We're holding an OPEN DAY

on Saturday 8th August 10am - 2pm • Open to all •

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OTHER INCENTIVES AVAILABLE PLEASE CALL TO DISCUSS

Your children will be with highly qualified staff. Children are grouped into ages 0 - 16 mths, 16 - 31 mths, 31 - 36 mths & Pre-school in the nursery. Up to 12 years in the before school/after school and holiday clubs.

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SPECIAL OFFER
If you sign up on the day, there will be no registration fee.