

Balloons A-poppin in Cheshire & North Wales OSM



12:45 on Sunday 5 October witnessed the release of 319 virtual balloons above the virtual plains of Cheshire.

High winds in the stratosphere buffeted the balloons all over the place, bringing many changes of positions and leadership, until 12:45 on Sunday 12 October saw the first balloon across the line at Wrexham, with our Provincial Grand Chancellor claiming the title of first past the post and biggest windbag in the Province with his sponsored balloon, Little Monster, surprisingly named after one of his grandchildren.

Worthy Brother Jim Tang's balloon finished a good 4km in front of second placed Benton, sponsored by Very Worthy Brother Brian Ollerenshaw from Fidelity Conclave No 50.

Bringing up the rear, only a mere 98km behind the winner but 10km behind the bunch, was Out of the Blue,

sponsored by Brother David Warren of Shield of David Conclave No 345. There is a suspicion of interference during the race, but this cannot be proved.

This year's prize for the Conclave with the combined biggest windbags goes to Vale of Weaver Conclave No 278, who finished third, virtually out of sight and miles in front of their nearest Conclave rival.

The results were announced at the Provincial Sunday Lunch on 12 October, where several attempts to bribe the organisers were forceable rejected.

The Lunch was a highly enjoyable event, with 90 brethren, partners and guests combining to enjoy an excellent lunch, and contributing numerous raffle prizes which generated £1,000 to add to the £1,440 raised by the Balloon race.

Tony Stringer, Provincial Grand Supreme Ruler, confirmed that the charities to be supported this year are The Adventure Farm Trust of Altrincham, and Leeswood Under Fives Playgroup, Leeswood, Mold.

He also announced that the Province had already supported two charities this year with small donations. Cuddles, a small charity working to support the Neonatal Unit at Glan Clwyd Hospital, had been presented with £500, and Rixton with Glazebrook Community Plan Group had received £150 towards the purchase of a defibrillator, in conjunction with the Province of West Lancashire and East Lancashire, due to Rixton being close to the borders of all three Provinces.



Maesgwyn Hall, Wrexham