

MD19 Website Report

To: MD19 Council of Governors

Date: October 8, 2022

From: J.D. Nellor, Past Council Chair

It is hard to believe, but the “new” MD19 website is now four years old.

The website has undergone numerous changes since it was first launched, all in an effort to make it easier to use and to provide the access to information most useful to MD19 Lions and Leos.

Upcoming Changes. Here are changes and updates currently on the agenda:

- First is all under the hood: Moving the website from its current shared host to its own dedicated hosted account. This move will open space for adding databases (which will streamline annual updating every fiscal year) and will add space for MD19 to offer districts, committees and related entities to park their websites without having to pay for their own dedicated hosts.
- The annual cost to MD19 of this move currently is... \$60⁰⁰ (for a 3 year contract, \$84⁰⁰ for a 1 year contract). The move should be seamless to users. It is scheduled to be done this fall before the end of the year.
- Next will be the updates to the website triggered by redistricting. Those will done between January 1 and July 1, 2023 so they can go live on July 1, 2023. Expect some format changes necessitated by moving from 9 districts to 5 districts, but the basic format seems to be working so we don't want to mess with it too much.
- There are more plans down the road, but I will leave those for a future report.

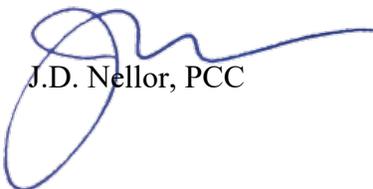
Email Spam: On to another topic: There have been concerns expressed from a few Lions that posting contact information on the websites is generating spam and phishing emails. We dealt with this when the new website first launched, but the question does pop up from time-to-time (particularly when the Council discusses moving the Roster to the website). I could spend several pages going into the details of this subject— in which case no one will read it. So let me summarize:

- We list email addresses and telephone numbers of club presidents and secretaries, zone chairs, vice district governors, district governors, the MD19 office, committee chairs and members and affiliated entities in various places on the website.
- We do not publish addresses on the website, other than the MD19 office address.

- It is not the website that generates spam, or that is the source of someone getting email addresses and sending spam. Although it is theoretically possible for someone to cull email addresses from the website: (1) We have installed significant filters to minimize the risk, (2) The information you see on the website is not really there. What you see is an image—the data (names, email, phone numbers) is not on the webpages. I can't say someone would not do so, but to pull phone numbers and emails off the MD19 website pretty much requires that it be done one at a time, which is not something spammers spend time doing.
- Unfortunately, the biggest source of spam comes from using your email. The only way to eliminate potential spam is to never send an email. Email is not secure. Email is transmitted via radio transmissions. There are businesses that intercept email transmissions and pull email addresses. (Look up ZoomInfo.com [which has nothing to do with ZOOM video conferencing] on the internet for an example). It is much easier and cost effective for spammers to buy lists from the likes of ZoomInfo.com, and shadier operators, than to pull email address images off a website, one by one, and then enter them, one by one, on a spreadsheet so they can use them.
- **An Email Solution?** That being said, there is a solution for those who want their personal emails to remain “private”. MD19 can provide vanity email addresses to leadership positions— something like “19g2zonechair@lionsmd19.org”, which can be passed on year to year. Or something more personalized, like “dgDebbieM@lionsmd19.org”. Technically we can do that today, but space is limited—once the website is moved to a dedicated account it will have unlimited emails it can issue.
- **Phone Number Solution?** As for phone numbers, if you don't want your phone published on the website, tell MD19 and it will not be published. I will let you assess the wisdom of remaining incognito to your constituents.
- I have obviously glossed over the details on this subject. If you want details let me know and I will point you to some resources that cover the subject in exhausting detail.

Last but not least, many thanks to all of the *ad hoc* proofreaders out there who catch and report the inevitable typos that sometimes make it to the public pages. Seriously, don't be shy about reporting an error, we want the information to be correct and want to know when something needs to be fixed. And thanks as well to all of the suggestions on things to add to the website and ways to make it better, many of which have been adopted. Keep the suggestions coming, please.

Respectfully submitted,



J.D. Nellor, PCC