

In the last edition *Contact* featured the angling exploits of Emrys Hughes from Aberystwyth and now turns the spotlight on another ace fisherman.

Owie's best ever catch

OWIE Roberts, a member of the Live Lines team in Anglesey, recorded his best ever catch on a recent fishing trip off the Welsh coast.

Owie is a keen angler and tries to indulge in his sporting passion at least once a week, weather permitting.

In July he landed his prize catch – a 64 lb tope – in Treaddur Bay, Holyhead, although modest Owie describes his triumph as “a bit of a fluke.”

The intrepid angler also organises monthly trips for a group of Manweb employees from Caernarfon and Anglesey.

Their fishing hotspots are a

wreck 26 miles off Port Dinorwig and the reef off Trefor on the Lleyn Peninsular.

Owie said: “We organise the trips with Andy Owen at Port Dinorwig, who has a smashing boat called Oddball.

“We catch a huge variety of fish including tope, bullhuss, cod, pollock and bass, and when it is the mackerel season, we catch a lot of those too.”

Mackerel can be used as bait for other fish, but a lot of it ends up on the anglers' dinner plates.

Monthly trips will resume in June and if anyone is interested in joining the fishing party, they can contact Owie on 01248 723809.



MD paints eyes of dragon for show

MANAGING Director Stewart Saunders echoed an ancient Chinese tradition to launch Manweb's sponsorship of the Christmas Show, *The Lost Dragon*, at the Chester Gateway Theatre.

Painting the eyes on the dragon is a ritual part of Chinese Dragon Boat racing where it is done to bless and give life to the sleeping dragon-boat – the supreme symbol of power in the eyes of the Chinese.

This custom is reflected in the Gateway's seasonal production where Yasmar, the lost dragon, is awoken when he is discovered by explorers in the icy wastes of Siberia, before beginning a series of adventures which bring him to Cheshire.

A respected member of the community is always chosen to do the painting of the eyes and Stewart was an automatic choice to perform the role at the photocall at the theatre.

This year's Christmas Show, sponsored for the

fifth time by Manweb, follows the journey of the newly discovered dragon from Siberia to the National History Museum and onwards towards Cheshire where he and 10-year-old Emily, his young companion, triumph over the powers of evil.

Directed by Deborah Shaw, the Gateway's Artistic Director, the entertainment is co-written by Deborah and Scott Ramsay, former head of production at the theatre, who wrote the original story.

The Show is packed with original song and dance numbers, and special effects guaranteed to delight youngsters in the audience.

The production runs until Saturday January 20.

Stewart Saunders has performed the dragon painting tradition before when he worked in Hong Kong with the China Light and Power Company before taking up his current position at Manweb Chester Headquarters.



Golfing Society winners

Pictured at the Manweb North Wirral Golfing Society presentation at the Eastham Lodge Golf Club are (left to right) Paul Kelly, Treasurer, Ian Jones, Winner of the Society Championship Cup, Brian Gibson, Captain and John Foden, Secretary.

Have you got news for us?

IF you have a story for *Contact* please get in touch with editor Anne Benson on 800 2098 (internal) or 01244-652098, or Ron Quenby on 01244-678575 or fax 01244-678749.

Appeal to help Kenyan mission

FORMER Manweb Community Champion Shirley Johnson is appealing for anyone with bandages and dressings which can be recycled to donate them for her next mission to support Kenyan medical workers. People should contact Community Relations Co-ordinator Jane Hall on 0151 609 2036. A full report on Shirley's work will be in the next issue of *Contact*.

Contact



NEWSLETTER FOR MANWEB PEOPLE

Christmas 2000

Christiann's festive plans to help people in need

TRUE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

MEMBERS of the audience at this year's Chronicle-Manweb Your Champions Awards dinner in Chester were amazed to learn how Christiann Barlow plans to spend her Christmas.

The winner of this year's Special Award will not spend Christmas day like other 10 year olds, opening her presents and tucking into her Christmas dinner, but will use the festive period to help people in need.

On Christmas Day Christiann is to be found in the soup kitchens of Liverpool helping to serve food to homeless people, and on Boxing Day the selfless youngster will be taking gifts to underprivileged children and visiting elderly people's homes.

She saves 50p of her £1.50 pocket money to buy toys for the Weekly News Toy Appeal which distributes Christmas gifts to hundreds of needy children throughout Runcorn and Widnes.

Christiann, who is a special needs pupil, has herself deliver-

ed over 400 gifts in the last four years.

But Christiann's goodwill does not stop at Christmas for throughout the year she sends letters to British soldiers in war zones and supports Paper Chase Trust, an African aid charity based in Runcorn.

Unsung

Hosting the glittering awards ceremony at the Chester Grosvenor Hotel, which gave recognition to unsung heroes and heroines who add to the life of their local communities, were Manweb Managing Director Stewart Saunders and Chronicle Newspapers Managing Director David Faulkner.

Guest of honour was Alan Halsall, better known as Coronation Street's Tyrone and Granada TV reporter Trevor Green acted as Master of Ceremonies.

A full report on the Your Champions Awards presentations at Llandudno and Chester will appear in the next edition of *Contact*.



Your Champion Christiann Barlow with her trophy.

Profits and service improve

SCOTTISHPOWER'S latest half-yearly results show an increase in operating profit by £117 million to £445 million. The UK businesses are delivering improved efficiency and customer service, while the Pacific-Corp Transition Plan is exceeding expectations.



Win family tickets for Drayton Manor Park

See page eight



Book a letter from Santa – see page two

POWERPartners

Powering for Age Concern

POWERPARTNERS has joined forces with Radio Ceredigion to drive forward an exciting new Christmas promotion. The Manweb ScottishPower Hamper Appeal will involve a Radio Ceredigion/ PowerPartners van being dispatched to every village and school in the Ceredigion area, collecting goodies and gifts for Age Concern.

Thousands of listeners in mid Wales will be kept up to date with the van's adventures by one of Radio Ceredigion's intrepid presenters, who will be reporting from the front lines with constant bulletins back to the studio.

When all the gifts have been collected by the van (provided by Bassetts Citroen, Carmarthen) and made up into hampers, they will be delivered to Age Concern in Aberystwyth who have already identified people in need of some extra cheer at Christmas. The Appeal will promote ScottishPower group's charitable initiative and provide a way of giving information about Manweb's PowerDesk.

New staff video club has it taped for charity

A VIDEO club is being set up at Lister Drive to raise money for PowerPartners. Staff are asked to draw up a list of the videos which they themselves would be prepared to lend out, and a general list of all the films on

offer is then circulated. Using a voucher scheme, staff then arrange among themselves to lend and borrow videos, paying £1 each time for the chance to do so.

"The club gives people the chance of enjoying videos without having to make the trip to their nearest video store - and it benefits PowerPartners at the same time," said Moira Renwick, Manweb Community Liaison Officer.

Doubling up holiday change

PEOPLE with foreign change left at the bottom of their bags after their summer holidays are being asked to donate it to PowerPartners when they visit Customer Service Centres and ScottishPower shops.

Customer Service Manager Gill Jones from Wrexham said: "We hope our customers will support this initiative, which will help to make their holiday money go a little further."

Donated change will be doubled in value by ScottishPower to benefit the five designated charities.



Regional Network Manager Phil Currie is captured by a gang of Halloween devils raising cash for PowerPartners. They are, left to right, Janet Ford, Karon Griffiths, Helen Lloyd, Pam Dorsey and Marilyn Wotton.



Michelle Pietryga of Prenton Power Systems is raising money any witch way she can.

A devilish idea to raise cash

PRENTON staff led by Power Systems' Operations Helpdesk and New Connections came up with a devilish idea to raise money for PowerPartners at Halloween.

They donned devil costumes and carried forks to create an eerie background to their fundraising which included selling cakes and charging for entry to the car park. The masqueraders raised £250, which was match funded.

The members of the Prenton Helpdesk under Janet Ford have won a ScottishPower Living Values team award for working together to achieve their aims.



Scott Tingey, a Skillseeker based at Prenton, joins in the ghoulish fundraising fun.

Letter from Santa in aid of PowerPartners

We have been asked by Santa to organise special letters for younger readers. If you would like to have a letter sent direct from Lapland HQ, Santa has asked you to fill in the attached coupon and post it with a £1 donation per child to: Wendy Ellison, Santa's Helper, Manweb Corporate Communications, Manweb House, Chester Business Park, Wrexham Road, Chester, CH4 9RF.

Special Personal Letter from Santa

To be sent to (Child's Name)

Child's Full Address

Postcode Child's Age

Your Name Contact Tel No



Wales Region EAC.



Mersey Region EAC.



Head Office EAC.

THERE are 60,000 customers off throughout the Manweb region, the phones are ringing and computers are being booted up as staff run through the doors into PowerSystem's emergency rooms - a Level One is well and truly underway.

As engineers are dispatched, problems logged and solutions sought, one team huddles round the table in the centre of the emergency room for a quick update and then all disperse to get the information they have gathered to the relevant people.

PowerDesk, an agreement with local radio stations to keep customers informed about problems with supplies and helping to ease the pressure on calls centres, has

Well prepared for the worst

been activated. The local radio stations, Marcher, Century, Ceredigion and Maldwyn are running regular bulletins.

Luckily this is just a rehearsal held to make sure the Emergency Action Centre and the Emergency Media Room are ready to be up and running in an instant.

The two Emergency Centres at Prenton

have now been moved. The EAC will be in Conference Room One on the first floor next to the restaurant, and the EMR will be in Conference Room Three.

The EAC and EMR, which is in the Hafod Training Room in Wrexham, are also ready to cope with the next battering the weather brings.

It showed come the real thing...

MANWEB staff faced a real emergency situation when floods hit England and Wales at the beginning of November.

Flooding at a substation in Ruthin meant 500 customers had to be taken off supply while the problem was dealt with.

Power was restored fairly quickly but some customers remained off while safety checks were done on the meters. The same safety problems were encountered in Mold, where the town centre was flooded.

Mike Machin, Team Leader at Mold, said the whole situation was surreal, as his pictures testify.

He said: "I have never seen anything like it. We had to tell some people that we had to turn their electricity off because their homes were flooded and it was unsafe."

"It was harrowing. One man was in tears as the water was halfway up his living room."

Meanwhile, Paul Burkhill

and Colin Edwards were dispatched to help out Simon Evans at Ruthin. "We rang a fishing tackle shop first thing and got three sets of waders for them," said Mike.

Alan Rigby, Operations Engineer, was out dealing with 33 KV substations in the region. At one point two kayaks sailed past him as the water levels rose around Rhyd-y-golau.



Rhyd-y-golau substation.



Entrance to Shire Hall.

Out of the floods into the fish bowl

THERE was one lighter story to emerge. Neil Broadbent, a Team Leader at Mold, was visiting one customer when he noticed a goldfish thrashing around on the living room floor. He picked it up and got it in a bowl of water in time to save its life after it had floated through from a neighbouring house with the floods.

Amazing 'Titantic' newspaper discovery



AN appeal is going out to Contact readers to solve Manweb's very own "mystery of the Titanic."

Prenton depot yardman Dave Johnston made an astonishing discovery while he was tidying up the yard behind the buildings on site. He chanced upon a copy of the *Daily Mirror* dating back to April 19th, 1912 which carries a report of the Titanic disaster. The vessel, thought to be unsinkable, sank after unaccountably striking an iceberg in the Atlantic.

Everyone at Prenton is baffled as to how the old newspaper came to be in the yard, and how it has survived over the years. "Dave amazed us all when he showed us what he had found," said Jane Hall, Community Relations Co-ordinator. "It could be that someone had been tidying up the offices, and the cutting had escaped somehow - but Contact readers might have theories of their own."

A £1 million grant scheme has been launched by Manweb's RuralCare to help preserve native woodlands.

Organisations involved in the creation and management of native woodland for the benefit of the community will be able to apply for grants up to £20,000.

Carwyn Jones, the Welsh Assembly Rural Affairs Minister, launched the scheme which will apply in the areas covered by ScottishPower and Manweb.

He praised the way RuralCare, set up to remove trees growing near overhead lines, is compensating by working with environmental organisations to create new biodiverse environments and mitigate the effect of cutting down valuable native trees.

He said: "I especially welcome the enlightened approach that has been taken by RuralCare in incorporating environmental gains into the programme of improving services. The project is not a cosmetic one and £1 million is a substantial sum to spend on environmental work."

First

Mr Jones then visited the Llwyni People and Wildlife Project at Connah's Quay, Flintshire, which is the first to benefit from the scheme, and in which the grant will fund the planting of native species on undeveloped land to create a nature conservation, community and recreation area.

The RuralCare Grant Scheme will be administered through a network of local workshops set up with representatives from the company and partner organ-

Helping preserve native woodlands

isations which include English Nature, Countryside Council for Wales, the Forestry Commission and many other interested environmental stakeholder organisations.

Gordon Christie, RuralCare Manager, said: "We hope to cultivate a co-ordinated approach to funding to make the best use of our grants and we believe this new scheme will enable us to invest our funds where they will do most good."

"RuralCare is providing a more reliable power supply during extreme weather, and an improved environment in the areas where we have worked."



Above, the party at the launch of the woodland grant scheme with far left Ken Vowles, Manweb Chairman, Barry Jones, MP for Alyn and Deeside (third from left), and Gordon Christie, Rural Care Manager (second from right).

Top, Ken Vowles, left, and Carwyn Jones, Welsh Assembly Rural Affairs Minister, pictured studying a field mouse, one of the species to be encouraged by the biodiversity project.

Christmas mercy aid

STAFF at Pentre Bychan contributed 70 boxes to Operation Christmas Child, the charity which transports shoeboxes full of essential items for youngsters to countries in Eastern Europe. The prime mover behind the contribution was Paul Morrison, Settlements Business Analyst, who produced a well-documented leaflet outlining the plight of children in grief-stricken areas and organised the packing of the boxes.

He's the Grandpa of the oompah!

FORMER Manweb electrician Jack Hogg is still playing his tuba in a concert band at the grand old age of 97.

Jack is the proud holder of the title of Britain's oldest tuba player and has an entry in the Guinness Book of Records.

Jack, who lives in Thingwall, Wirral, claims playing the instrument "soothes your mind" and he's nowhere happier than at the Royal British Legion in Heswall where he is a valued member of the brass ensemble.

Jack, who lives in Thingwall, Wirral, claims playing the instrument "soothes your mind" and he's nowhere happier than at the Royal British Legion in Heswall where he is a valued member of the brass ensemble. A keen player of the tuba as a youngster, he was 17 when he became a member of the Cammell Laird sea scouts band before leaving that company to join Manweb at Birkenhead, and he was a star player in the Cheshire Yeomanry Band before it folded.

"That was a lovely band," he remembered.

Down the years the veteran musician has played in six bands. One of his finest memories is playing in front of



Jack Hogg at home with his tuba and the certificate from the Guinness Book of Records.

the Queen Mother at Crewe.

"I still have no trouble at all with the playing," said Jack (known as Sam to his family), "It's all in the embouchure - the way you use the muscles of your mouth."

His favourite pieces include the hymn Cwm Rhondda, and

music from operettas.

Jack was a Manweb stalwart for 42 years, and his daughter-in-law Doreen (then Doreen Walker), aged 73, worked in the accounts department at Prenton until she retired. He has three grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Pupils from Bromborough Primary School are welcomed to the Welsh National Opera's performance of Carmen at the Liverpool Empire Theatre.



WNO stage community events

THE Welsh National Opera staged a series of education and community events during their Autumn 2000 visit to the Liverpool Empire, thanks to Manweb.

On the education front, a workshop on Carmen was run at Bromborough Primary School earlier in the year, and the class which took part was invited to attend the performance of the opera at the Empire Theatre on November 2.

Additional workshops were held during the

autumn visit for adult members of local theatres or choral societies who are interested in acting and singing, at Liverpool Hope, and for adults with learning difficulties at the West Vale Resource Centre in Kirby. Community events included a series of eight concert parties at homes for older people.

A leading violinist from WNO's orchestra performed classical and jazz highlights on board an Age Concern bus in Birkenhead.

Mystery knight of the road

A MYSTERY member of the metering department has been praised in a letter from a woman whom he helped when she got into difficulty with a puncture on the way to visit a stately home.

The driver of the Manweb van, who was "very loath" to give his name, signalled Mrs H Leffman to stop as she travelled on the road with three friends between Penmaenmawr and Llanfairfechan on the way to Plas Newydd on Wednesday October 4.

"He told me I had a puncture in a rear wheel, and then very kindly changed the wheel for me," wrote Mrs Leffman. "It makes me very happy to realise that there are such gentlemanly people on the road these days, and I cannot begin to say how extremely grateful we were for his kind and very willing assistance."

Donation buys vital equipment

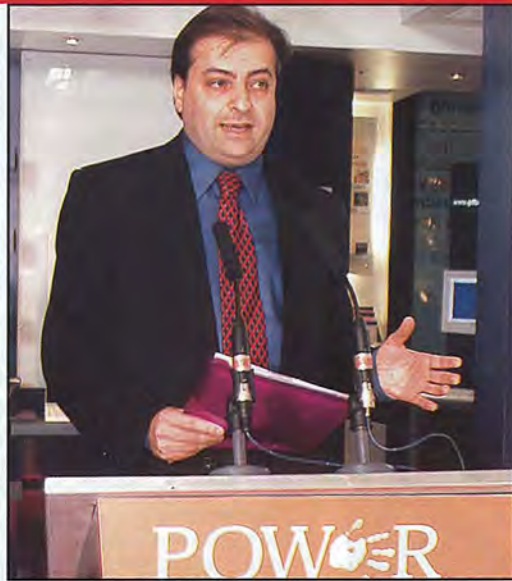
MONEY donated by Manweb has been used to purchase vital equipment by the Star Centre in St Helens.

The £700 raised has gone towards a suitcase containing sensory equipment which can be used either in the Centre or in children's homes.

For its first month of loan, the equipment, which bears a plaque indicating it was donated by Manweb, was used by Melanie Harrison, the granddaughter of employee Diane Dardis.

Safety day

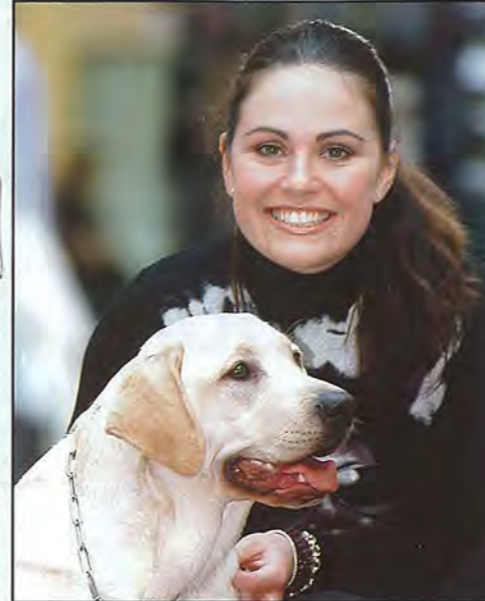
THE potential dangers of electricity were outlined to youngsters during a Safety Awareness Day at which Manweb was represented. The company took a stand at the event which was held at the Blessed Edward Jones High School in Rhyl.



Paul Pagliari, Chairman of the PowerPartners Charitable Trust and ScottishPower Group HR Director, at the opening ceremony.



Actor Ricky Tomlinson cuts the ribbon to open the One Stop Shop.



Brookside star Tiffany Chapman pictured with a guided dog at the opening.

POWERPARTNERS' first major venture in England was launched with a big fanfare - or rather piping - on October 18 at Manchester's Trafford Centre.

Jack Henderson, the Scottish-Power Pipe Band Secretary played in the celebrity guest who was to open sensorysolutions@trafford.

Ricky Tomlinson, who plays Jim from television hit comedy *The Royle Family*, turned out to cut the ribbon and officially open the UK's first ever "one-stop-shop" for people with sensory disabilities.

He joked with staff and guests before signing what seemed like hundreds of autographs for children from visiting schools.

Guests were given a tour of the shop and the chance to meet staff, as well as learn first hand all that the new sensorysolutions@trafford has to offer.

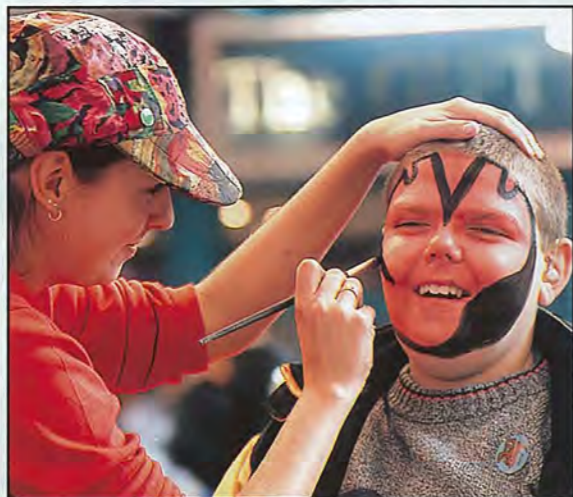
Sign language

But it did not all end there for events went on all day around the shop. Children from Kingsway Primary School, Davyhulme, Manchester, got a chance to learn sign language and those who were able to sign out their name were rewarded with goodie bags.

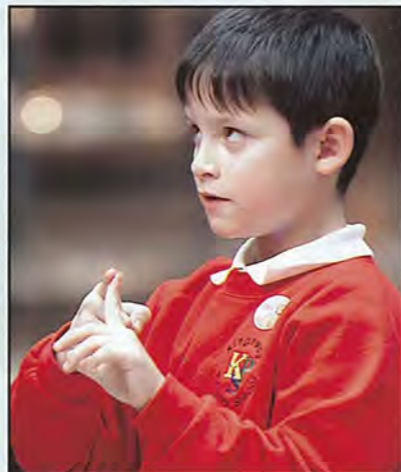
Children from St Vincent's School for the Blind in Liverpool and hearing impaired children from Stanley Road Primary School, Manchester, also attended.

Guide dogs and puppies, which were on hand because the shop is run in partnership with Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and RNID, were a big attraction for old

sensorysolutions@trafford launched with big fanfare



Facepainter Jo Ruscoe was busy at the launch - here with youngster Neil Orme of Oldham.



Jake Shaw of Kingsway Primary School, Manchester, learns finger signing at the launch ceremony.



Beverly Hughes, Minister for the Environment, right, visited the shop. She is pictured with Peter Jennings, Deputy Chief Executive of RNID, left, and Doris Moreton of sensorysolutions@trafford.

and young alike. One little girl was a bit nervous of the dogs but she was comforted by a big hug from Ricky.

Face painters were also in great demand, as was the Trafford Centre's mascot - a talking teddy bear in a car. Jugglers and musicians were also on hand to provide entertainment.

In the afternoon Tiffany Chapman, who plays Rachel Dixon in Brookside, came out to see the

centre and had a great time meeting the children and the guide dog puppies.

She also presented prizes to youngsters who had been taking part in a colouring competition during the day.

Beverly Hughes MP, Minister for the Environment, also visited the shop, which will offer advice and information to people with sensory disabilities who come to the Trafford Centre.

They will be able to gain access to a sign language interpreter or lip speaker to help them shop, obtain a deafblind guide to the Trafford Centre and see demonstrations of equipment for use at work and home.

Kath Wilson, Director of RNID England, said: "Deaf, hard of hearing, blind and partially sighted people represent an annual spending power of almost £40 billion, yet have trouble accessing goods and

services." Paul Pagliari, Chairman of the PowerPartners Charitable Trust and ScottishPower Group HR Director and Stewart Saunders, Managing Director, also attended the event.

As a special treat the UCI cinema in the Trafford Centre showed the new Disney film *Dinosaur* with subtitles from October 20 to 23.

Paul said: "It was a very enjoyable day and a great way to welcome such an innovative project."

Staff pull out the stops for Children in Need

MANWEB staff once again pulled out all the stops for this year's Children in Need Appeal coming up with a mind-boggling array of fundraising schemes.

Pentre Bychan staged one big pyjama party and the fun included men's legs and bellies being waxed, heads shaved, a giant raffle with prizes donated by local businesses, an all day "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" quiz, a sponsored car wash, a cake sale and a fast.

Administration Co-ordinator Anne Thompson said: "The day has been fantastic although the boys who had their legs waxed, including Customer Services Director Paul Archer, are still looking a bit sore."

Wrexham Customer Service Centre went completely dotty with their Pudsey Bear Island theme day, and stuck red and yellow spots as far as the eye could see - including on themselves.

Staff at Warrington had fun dressing up in St Trinian's costumes and team managers Danny Parr and David Thomas got in touch with their feminine sides by masquerading as women.

Gas Call Centre Manager Liz Foulkes and Shelly Batho raised money by completing a sponsored "sweatshop" at the gym, while upstairs in the



Two lions and a Welsh Dragon collecting for Children In Need - Caernarfon Super Centre staff, left to right, Tina Jones, Anna Edwards and Iona Ross-Jones.

Electricity and Dual Fuel Call Centre, a raffle and lottery took place and trainer Andy McDonald raised £60 by having his head shaved.

Warrington Customer Service Centre joined in the effort with a raffle for a scarf and flag donated by Warrington Wolves Rugby Club. The team persuaded Manager Kevin Hancock to don the Wolfie costume and become their mascot for the day, and he and Production Manager Irene Barnes who was dressed as a clown, collected money from people outside the centre.

Customer Service Representative Chris Radcliffe and her friend Gail Hotson took part in a karaoke marathon dressed as Minnie and Mickey

Mouse and pledged to keep on singing for as long as their voices held out.

Caernarfon Call Centre and High Street Customer Service Centre held a "Who wants to be a Millionaire" night with several teams competing for festive prizes. Members of the public in Caernarfon caught a glimpse of two lions and a Welsh dragon, aka Customer Service Representatives Tina Jones, Iona Ross-Jones and Anna Edwards, who were out and about collecting money.

Rhyl Customer Service Centre made its contribution to the fundraising frenzy by staging its own "Beach" themed day, with members of staff dressed up as pirates and day trippers.



Warrington Customer Service Centre staff join in the fundraising fun, left to right, Kev Hancock, Irene Barnes and Chris Ratcliffe.



All aboard for Children In Need at Rhyl Customer Service Centre with pirates, left to right, Jan Boyton, Yvonne Edwards and Pauline Hodgetts.

Your chance to buy employee shares

Own stake in the company

SCOTTISHPOWER is to launch a new Employee Share Ownership Plan later this year to give all UK employees, with more than 12 months service, a tax efficient opportunity to own a stake in the company.

The plan has been developed from provisions in the Government's Finance Act 2000 and in July, ScottishPower shareholders overwhelmingly approved its introduction, subject to Inland Revenue approval.

Eligible employees can purchase partnership shares from pre-tax salary, saving 22 per cent or 40 per cent tax on the contributions. Shareholders can elect to contribute between £10 and

£125 per month (or 10 per cent of salary, whichever is lower) which will be invested by the Plan's Trustees.

For each Partnership Share purchased, the company will match it with another one free of charge and the free shares must be held in Trust for a minimum of three years.

Eligible

The company will be giving £250 free shares to eligible employees to mark the launch of the Plan.

As shareholders, employees will be eligible to share in the profits of ScottishPower by receiving dividends, and can opt for cash dividends or additional dividend shares.

Love blossomed at a WAMs user talk!

A MANWEB couple have found happiness after meeting as a direct result of the ScottishPower take-over.

Matt Corr, who was based for three years at Queensferry but is now back in his native Scotland as a Senior Business Consultant in PowerSystems, was working on the implementation team of the WAMS (Work and Asset Management System) Project when he called in one Sunday to talk to WAMS user group members in Rhyl.

One of the team was Lesley Archer. They got chatting, discovering that they had a lot in common including a love of football, and later arranged to go out together. Now they are married and living together in Rhyl.

"It was love at first date," said Wales Region



Just married - Lesley and Matt Corr.

Service Co-ordinator Lesley, aged 31, who has been with Manweb Power Systems for 11 years. "We were the first couple to get married in a civil wedding at the

Northop Country Park Golf Club."

Celtic supporter Matt, aged 39, said: "We met as a direct result of the WAMS Project."



WIN FOUR SETS OF FAMILY TICKETS

DRAYTON MANOR, one of the UK's top family theme parks, is offering Contact readers the chance to win family tickets.

The tickets, worth £47 each, will admit two adults and two children to the park any day during the forthcoming season which runs from Saturday March 24 to Sunday October 28.

Among the white-knuckle rides are Shockwave, Europe's only stand up roller coaster, the £4million Stormforce 10 and Apocalypse, the world's first stand up tower drop with a terrifying 50mph plunge at the mercy of gravity!

Other attractions include the award-winning farm, the newly-themed children's area Robinson's land, the Sound Stage Theatre featuring Popeye and Olive Oyl in their own daily shows, a farm, nature trail, and garden centre.

Situated near Tamworth, Staffordshire, between Junctions 9 and 10 of the M42, Drayton Manor Park is easily accessible.

To win one of the four family tickets up for grabs simply answer the following question:

What is the name of the world's first stand up tower drop ride?

Send your answer on a postcard with your name, address and day-time telephone number to: Drayton Manor Contest, C/o Manweb Corporate Communications, Manweb House, Chester Business Park, Wrexham Road, Chester, CH4 9RF, by first post January 12th, 2001.

First four correct answers drawn out of the hat win the tickets.



ScottishPower Learning focus

Learn net know how

CONTACT readers who receive a computer for Christmas are being urged to take advantage of the free crash courses on how to use the Internet on offer from ScottishPower Learning.

SPL has teamed up with the BBC in the third phase of a major campaign to help people get the most out of the World Wide Web.

Free taster sessions are up and running at the Open Learning Centres on Chester Business Park and at Pentre Bychan office for people who

want to take their first tentative steps on the Internet.

Those wishing to take a course should contact Steve Gauller at Chester on 01244-652073 or Kevern Kerswell at Pentre Bychan on 01978-832068.

Steve said: "This is a great opportunity for anyone to log on to the Internet for the first time.

"Age doesn't matter and there is something for everyone. The Internet opens up a whole new world, and the best part is it's totally free."



Residents make truancy video

RESIDENTS in Speke Garston on Merseyside unleashed their acting skills to produce a video on the theme of truancy in a project co-sponsored by ScottishPower Learning.

The video, entitled "Outside the School Gates" and scripted by local writer Andrew Sherlock, deals with the effects of truancy on two very different families. It will be used by schools in the area to stimulate discussion.

"We are delighted to support the production of this video as it deals with real social issues amongst young people," said Neil Hunter, ScottishPower Learning Regional Manager.

● Pictured above are residents acting in a scene in the video.

MP presents certificates

STEPHEN Hesford, MP for Wirral West, presented certificates to young Skillseekers who have successfully completed courses run by ScottishPower Learning.

Before the presentation he got a chance to witness some of the work the youngsters have done first hand when he visited Melrose Hall, Hoylake, a drop-in centre for retired people.

Five Skillseekers have helped to rewire and renovate the community

hall under the expert guidance of Manweb and ScottishPower Learning staff. The practical experience they gained has helped them to achieve an NVQ Level 2 in Electrical Installation.

After visiting Melrose Hall, Mr Hesford, guests and the five Skillseekers went to Manweb's Training Centre in Hoylake for the presentation which also featured 16 first-year Skillseekers, who have just completed their NVQ Level 2 in Basic Engineering.



(left to right) Bernard Bradley, Stephen Hesford, MP for Wirral West and Stewart Saunders, Manweb MD

Alwyn races to buy life-saving monitor

ALWYN Jones has never forgotten the value of a respiratory monitor during the first year of his daughter's life.

So he decided to make sure members his local community were guaranteed access to a similar piece of vital equipment by raising the money to buy one.

Alwyn, linesman at Caernarfon Depot, chose the annual Snowdon Race as the means of raising the £1,200 necessary to supply a monitor

to his local surgery. Manweb supported his fund-raising with a £300 donation.

"Our daughter Elain had to use one during the early part of her life since she was a potential victim of cot death," he said. "Fortunately she is a lively two-year-old toddler today, but the monitor helped to give myself and my wife peace of mind at a very stressful time."

Caernarfon linesmen Dewi Williams and Alun Hughes also took part in the Snowdon Race.



Caption competition winners

EMRYS Hughes, Resources Manager at Aberystwyth, kindly judged our two caption competitions.

The winner of the Ostrich contest with the line "I have heard of bird in a gilded cage but this is ridiculous" is retired employee Hugh Jones of Llandudno.

The winner of the angling caption competition is "I am known as a big catch but somehow I think these fellas have beaten me to it" is Jacqui Hughes from Personnel Section at Wrexham.

Stone turns out to be 300 million years old



Rambler Eric Coley, left, with Jeff Clarke, senior area ranger for West Wirral, who is holding the ancient stone discovered by Eric while leading a walk.

Inset, close up of the 300 million year old stone.



Rambler Eric's astonishing find

HAWK-EYED rambler Eric Coley has made an astonishing find on one of his walks – a stone 300 million years old.

Eric, aged 77, was leading his "Prenton Backpackers" made up of members of the North Wirral retirees association when, at a location between the villages of Thornton Hough and Brimstage, his eyes fell on an unusual object in the trunk of a rotted tree.

He picked up the egg-shaped object with a dark metallic coating and immediately realised it was a rare geological specimen.

A subsequent visit to Professor Joseph Crossley, expert in earth sciences at Liverpool John Moores University, confirmed his hunch – the stone is a "concretion" originating from the Irish Sea Basin.

The sediment of haematite or iron oxide on

the outer covering of the clay ironstone is a result of the convulsions that took place as glaciers moved during the Ice Age.

"I had never seen anything like this stone," said Eric, who is fascinated by geology and himself has a collection of volcanic rocks. "I was gobsmacked to find that it was a product of the mysterious processes that were taking place when the earth was rumbling around and going through drastic changes."

He has donated the stone to the rangers at the North Wirral Country Park, based at Thurston, who will use it in their workshops for youngsters.

● Eric featured in a previous edition of *Contact*, back in 1992, when he identified a boulder uncovered by Manweb employee Phil Doheny, as being 12,000 years old.

Prize draw raises £13,200 for charity

THE EEIBA Prize Draw Club has just finished the accounts for the year ended September 30 2000 and is pleased to report that nearly £13,200 has been donated to the charity in the last 12 months with an equal amount being distributed as prizes to the winning members.

Last year the amount donated was £12,500 – the increase has been the result of the very successful promotion earlier in the year when nearly 1,000 new members agreed to join the Club.

The winners of the promotion's quarterly prizes of £500, £750 and £1,000 will be announced shortly in *Contact*. And remember – the special prize of a car will be drawn in January 2001. All members at December 2000 will be entered for this draw.

A complete list of the winning members in the 12 months to September 30 2000 has been prepared. If you would like to receive a copy, please send an s.a.e to Chris Shepherd, 6 Foxley Close, Lymm, Cheshire WA13 0BS.

EEIBA Prize Draw Winners October 2000: £300 B.M. Kyffin, retd; £200 S.L. Colley, retd; £100 J.H. Roberts, First Hydro; £50 M.A. Jones, Caernarfon; £30 D. Elbourne, retd; £25 M. Burnett, retd, J. Flanagan, retd, D.Oliver, First Hydro, G.J. Owen, retd, P. Cunningham, Contracting, D.W.M. Latimer, EEIBA member, K. Strefford, retd, K. Griffiths, retd, J.E. Chadwick, retd, M.C. Barrett, retd, T. Hayden, retd, G.S. Wright, retd, S.A. Ward, Queensferry, B. Sheen, retd, M.O. Hughes, retd.

PENSIONERS NEWS

Holiday was sheer poetry

KATH Jones of the Aberystwyth retirees association has composed a 20-line poem to commemorate the group's trip to Ireland.

The verse singles out for praise organisers Pauline Davies and Mel Evans, who drove the coach ("He's better than a courier, he's the leader of his troupe, / Making sure at all times we're one big happy group.")

Kath indicates that she now intends to paint the outside of her house green in homage to the Emerald Isle.

Sticks with a difference

SPEAKER Ken Williams described how he made his unusual walking sticks at a meeting of the retirees association in St Mary's Church Hall, Johnstown, near Wrexham.

His favourite was the one with the model of a border collie dog on the handle.

Winners of the raffle were Marlene Williams, Lilian Jones, John Hayes, Rhona Jones and Mary Jones.

E-mail Paul

FORMER instructor at Hoylake skill centre Paul Fletcher would like keep in touch with present and retired staff via e-mail. He can be contacted at the following address: pff@lineone.net.

READERS ASKED TO SUGGEST A TITLE FOR STUNNING PAINTING

Powerline is work of art

THE artist son of a former Manweb linesman has painted this stunning picture of a buzzard perched on power lines – after taking advice from his father on the technical details.

The oil painting of a scene near Llangollen by Cliff Davies features a scene familiar to his father Bob Davies, who was a linesman based in Chester for 33 years before retiring in 1992.

In fact when he was young, Cliff sometimes accompanied Bob on trips into the countryside in North Wales, and first formed his love of wildlife.

In more recent times the artist, who is a teacher of art and design at Ellesmere College in Shropshire and one of whose pictures of swans at Eaton Park

hangs in the Duke of Westminster's home, hit on the idea of the bird on the wire as a subject while driving with his sunroof open and frequently spotting buzzards using poles as substitute trees.

"I used my dad's knowledge to make sure that I had the power lines correctly wired up," said Cliff, aged 31.

The artist often paints from photographs or sketches and is especially interested in the interface between humans and the environment.

Cliff's painting of the buzzard is still without a title. Do you have a suggestion? Write to Anne Benson, *Contact* Editor, Manweb House, Chester Business Park, Wrexham Road, Chester, CH4 9RF.



Bargain holiday offer for readers

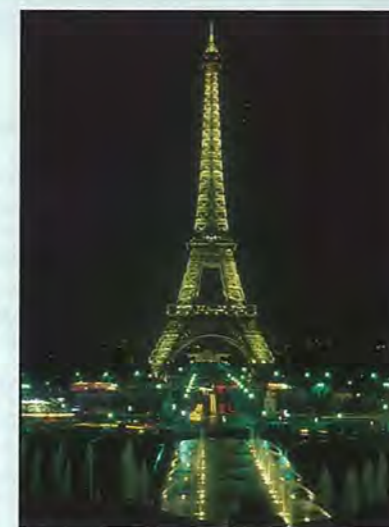
Jet off to Paris for a short break

FOLLOWING the success of a similar offer two years ago from leading specialist package holiday company ICT, *Contact* once more gives readers the chance of a bargain break to Paris.

From November 1 2000 to March 31 2001 holidaymakers can fly on Friday from Manchester for £144 (including £5 Manchester supplement) and spend two nights in a hotel, with buffet breakfast included.

The Paris short breaks include airport passenger duty and passenger service charge, but exclude transfers in Paris to your hotel from the airport.

The three hotels in the offer are the Hotel Ibis La Villette, overlooking the futuristic museum park La Villette, Timhotel Invalides, situated 10 minutes from the Champs Elysees, and Holiday Inn La Villette,



The Eiffel Tower at Paris one of the most famous landmarks in the world.

which is in the North of Paris and has all the refinements of a four-star hotel.

Prices are slightly higher through the rest of the year, and extra night supplements are available.

To make a reservation contact South Quay Travel on 020 7515 6577, and quote Manweb Offer.

Youth rugby support shows right results

MANWEB'S sponsorship of the development of youth rugby in North Wales is showing tangible results.

When the sponsorship of North Wales Youth Rugby started three years ago North Wales was the lowest district for youngsters playing competitive rugby – but now it is third highest.

Since its inception, the youth rugby development programme has benefited 10,500 under-12s to under-19s.

Coaching staff are delighted that their district now ranks higher than Llanelli and Neath, rugby hotbeds in South Wales.

Manweb also sponsors the North Wales Cup played for by senior teams.

Nan and billing room girls enjoy reunion

THE "Billing Room girls" who all worked together for Manweb at Rhostyllen in the 1960s/70s held a successful reunion at the Belmont Hotel in Wrexham.

A group of 20 ladies, including Nan Davies, Supervisor, enjoyed an afternoon buffet and attempted to catch up on all the gossip. Another reunion is planned before long.