

## New calendar is a birthday reminder

TWO Manweb staff have been involved in an unusual school project to create a 2002 birthday calendar featuring pictures of all the pupils and teachers.

The idea of asking each pupil at Boughton Heath Primary School to draw a self-portrait for the calendar came from Sue McRae, the wife of Don McRae, Manweb's Wales Network Manager.

They were both members of a group of fundraising parents at the school who helped to make the calendars, as was

Roger Wright, of Operations, who also has children at the school.

More than 270 copies of the calendar have been produced to raise money for a school music system and spotlights, and so far an impressive £1,000 has been raised plus £300 donated under Manweb match-funding.

Each month on the calendar contains the head and shoulders picture, name, year and class of pupils whose birthdays fall in that month.

As well as drawing themselves, the children also drew their teachers. The parents helped with the photocopying, hole-punching, and mounting of the pages into ring binders. "I very much enjoyed helping out with the manufacture of the calendar," said Don McRae.

Don's children Rebecca, aged 11 and Oliver, aged five, both go to the school, as do Roger Wright's daughters Francesca, aged seven, and Georgina, aged 10.

# Accolade for rugby initiative

MANWEB-BACKED sports scheme, which aims to introduce primary schools to rugby league, landed the runner-up prize in a national competition.

Rugby league club Warrington Wolves' Primary Link programme was narrowly pipped to the post by a Wimbledon Football Club scheme in the youth category of the Government's Sportsmatch awards.

Manweb sponsor the Primary Link scheme and have provided £50,000 to develop the initiative

which targets 15,000 children from 75 schools in Warrington.

The money has helped to fund more than 1,000 coaching sessions, 20 rugby festivals and a Learning Through Sport programme at key stages 1 and 2 of the national curriculum.

Adam Jude, Director of Community and Marketing at Warrington Wolves, said: "Even though we didn't win the main prize we were still the only rugby league club to be nominated for an award which was very pleasing.



Sports Minister Richard Caborn, left, presents certificates for the runner-up award in the Sportsmatch competition to Stewart Saunders, centre, and Adam Jude, Director of Community and Marketing for Warrington Wolves.

"We were up against tough competition but the benefits from the primary link scheme are there for all to see. More schoolchildren are playing rugby and there is an increased awareness of Manweb in the local community. Manweb's support has been fantastic. We really appreciate the company's

backing especially the professionalism they have brought to the club with regards to community development."

Sportsmatch encourages businesses to get involved in sport at grass roots level and since 1992 it has generated sponsorship for 72 different sports throughout England.



## Honour for founder

PAUL Kelly, treasurer of the Manweb North Wirral Golf Society, presents a trophy at Prenton Golf Club to founder member and secretary John Foster, for his dedication and involvement in the club as it approaches 25 years of age. See next edition for a list of the Society's venues next year.

## Sponsored bike ride cash handed over to foundation

CAERNARFON Maintenance Engineer Arwel Humphries presented a cheque for £2,100 to the Meningitis Research Foundation at a charity concert.

Arwel had raised the money through a sponsored bike ride from Holyhead to Cardiff, supported by Mike Jacks, Engineer from Rhyl who travelled by car to Cardiff and raised money by collection on the way.

The presentation was made at the village hall, Llangernyw, after the annual concert in which Arwel took part as a member of the Lleisau'r Frogwy choir.

He handed the money to Annwen,

Mike's wife, and his niece who also took part in the bike ride. Annwen and Mike lost their 12-year-old daughter to meningitis and since then have been very active in raising money for the Foundation, with support from family and friends, and have raised £40,000 so far.

A collection in the village hall raised a further £460 for the charity. Mike Jacks said: "We hold the concert at this time of year because it is around the time that we lost our daughter, and it is important to remind people that this is the most dangerous season for meningitis."



NEWSLETTER FOR THE MANWEB AREA

Christmas 2001

# Bridge solution to cable poser

POWER Systems engineers saddled with a difficult problem of taking cables across a river "hitched a lift" on a bridge being specially built as a Millennium project to carry a cycleway.

The ingenious solution was adopted during the final stages in a programme of network refurbishment in Aberystwyth when two 11kV cables needed to be taken across the River Rheidol.

The power cables were included at the design stage of the Rheidol Millennium Cycleway Bridge, and carried over inside two stainless steel ducts underneath the cycleway floor.

Initially, Manweb had considered getting the cables across the water by jet-tracking it under the river, but after bore tests it was decided that there would be no 100 per cent guarantee of success.

Threading the cables across



Project Engineer Mike Hartnell and Senior Project Engineer Geoff Thomson at the bridge.

an existing narrow gauge railway bridge was also ruled out as an option, and the engineers were delighted – and

relieved – when the once-in-a-thousand year godsend of the Millennium Bridge came on the horizon.

"We heard that Ceredigion County Council were planning a bridge to carry the Millennium cycleway that is being constructed round the coast of Britain," said Project Engineer Mike Hartnell who together with Senior Project Engineer Geoff Thomson drove the project through.

"We negotiated with the Council and they were happy to take us on board.

"The two six-inch ducts were built into the bridge and it is

now impossible to tell that they are there because they are painted the same colour as the bridge.

The only clue is the Danger of Death sign underneath.

"To thread the cables through the bridge was in position, we shot ropes through the ducts and then pulled the cable lines through.

The jointing was done very efficiently three days later by jointers Cliff Thomas, Dave Ricketts, Andrew Turner and Mark Richards.

Manweb has made a donation towards the cost of constructing the bridge.



## Stephanie's top champion

STAR for a night... teenager Stephanie Davenport was voted Champion of Champions at the Chronicle-Manweb Your Champions awards held at the Chester Grosvenor Hotel. FULL STORY SEE PAGES 4-5

## Linesman in cat rescue drama

DARING Aberystwyth linesmen Dai Edwards and Gary Jones answered a cat lover's SOS by performing a mid air pet rescue.

Dai used his animal instincts as he shinned up an eleven metre line to reunite the stranded tomcat with its owner.

The pair were sent in to investigate after reports the confused cat had spent a night up a Manweb line.

The grateful owner was impressed with Dai's retrieval skills and Gary's participation as back-up in the rescue.

Distribution Engineer at Aberystwyth Depot Celt Owen said: "The cat was clearly in some distress but it turned out to be his lucky day."

"The line had to be isolated and switched off before we could help but Gary, who is well known to be allergic to cats, was happy to remain with his feet on the ground for the operation!"

## Combating the cold

MANWEB is the major sponsor of a scheme to supply older people throughout Wales with thermometers to combat hypothermia.

The £7,000 which has been donated to Age Concern Cymru's information and advice services will help the organisation to distribute the thermometers to clients and client-based agencies.

Bilingual leaflets are going out to publicise the Winter Warmth initiative, urging people to keep a watch on plummeting temperatures.

"The sponsorship is part of our ongoing support of Age Concern," said John Kennedy, Customer Services Manager. "Older people are at risk during cold periods and it is important that we help raise awareness of the importance of keeping warm."

# Trainees complete modern scheme

FOUR Manweb trainees took centre stage at Hoylake House after successfully completing a four-year Modern apprenticeship.

Ray Berry, Martin Oldfield, Ian Newton and Frank Hughes received their certificates and presented a seminar on the subject of Safety in Changes in Joining Tools and Materials to a seminar at Hoylake..

The trainees successfully achieved NVQ Level Three in Electrical Distribution and Transmission Engineering, City and Guilds 2320 Part Two, various training courses at Hoylake House, and on-job experience in the regions.

Ray and Martin, who have now both been teamed together within Merseyside Operations, are looking to continue their learning by studying an HNC, as is Ian, who has been paired with Frank at Cheshire New



Power Systems Managing Director John Menzies presents awards to successful apprentices, left to right, Ian Newton, Ray Berry, Martin Oldfield and Frank Hughes.

Connections.

Project Engineer Colin Roberts said: "Their training has covered a wide range of courses, including first aid, computing and outward bound assessments to continue their personal development and key skills learning."

Martin Oldfield was also

named Apprentice of the Year and collected a shield for his attitude and keenness over the four year course, in which he overcame a broken leg to complete his studies.

Four ScottishPower trainees are also celebrating after completed their apprenticeships north of the border.

## Students benefit from placement

THREE A-Level students spent six weeks at the company on engineering projects under a Nuffield Bursary scheme.

The teenagers were assigned to Dave Langdon, investment planning manager based at Prenton, Ian Povey, senior planning engineer, and Ray Wright, environmental engineer. As well as doing projects of their own, and producing a report on their work, the students obtained a good general overview Power Systems

Dave Langdon said: "The scheme is a valuable exercise which is mutually beneficial. The student assigned to me, Anne Mahon from the sixth form



at Wallasey High School, helped to enter information into a new computer system. She also spent time with a woman engineer and gained valuable experience of the job from the point of view of a woman."

● Pictured above are the three students with their mentors.



## Staff presented with PTV awards

WARREN Finney, leader of the Deeside Area PTV team, and Roy Jones, of ScottishPower Learning, collected special PTV Recognition Awards at a ceremony in Cardiff. Warren (left) who was seconded from Power Systems at Mold won the title of Best Seconded Team Leader, and Roy (right) collected the award for Community Project of the Year on behalf of the Caernarfon PTV team led by Stuart Hogg.

## Simulation of supply crises after 'terrorist bomb' and 'storms'

# Emergency plans put to the test

THE effectiveness of Manweb's emergency plans was tested in two mock exercises involving a variety of staff throughout the organisation, as part of the company's drive to continuously improve its emergency response.

Operation Coniston simulated a supply disruption to 35,000 customers following a terrorist threat and subsequent detonation of an explosive device which had been placed in a major substation in Aberystwyth.

The incident, which occurred in the winter months at or near peak demand, challenged the ability of staff to restore the circuit within 48 hours. They were required to manage load shedding to give all customers an equitable share of power during the emergency, to deal with the environmental issue of a major oil spillage from the plant, and to implement bomb threat procedure.

At the centre of the action during the exercise were the PSMC at Prenton, the Head Office Emergency Action Centre at Prenton and the Wales



Network EACS and Zone Action Centres.

In the other emergency "dry run," Operation Husky, staff were tested on their ability to manage a major event involving prolonged customer interruption due to a storm.

The scenario involved a storm force gale which caused severe damage in Wales and the Mersey Network Area. Staff were required to restore 80,000 customers effectively and safely against a background of unexpected 100 mph winds which caused massive disruption to services and everyday life in the region.

The exercise was centred on the Emergency Action Centres at Prenton and Wrexham, and the Zone Emergency Action Centres in Aberystwyth and



Above and below, staff taking part in the mock emergency operations. Left, a wall chart in Prenton EAC.



Crewe as well as the Head Office EAC at Prenton.

In both of the incidents call centre staff were involved in message management, putting out accurate and up to date information to customers off supply. The media took part, with simulated enquiries and interviews, and telephony and

IT providers Thus and Calanais were involved in simulated network failures.

Robin Bradshaw, Emergency Planning Manager for Power Systems, said: "The simulations are a positive learning exercise and we always get something out of them to feedback to improve our emergency plans."

## Repositioning scheme helps sports dream come true

A £30,000 scheme to reposition overhead power lines underground is helping to realise a community's dream of its own sports centre alongside residential development.

Power Systems staff from Manweb's Oswestry Depot are all set to reposition the 11kV lines on the site adjacent to Guilsfield County Primary School. The scheme, which is now at wayleave stage, involves under-

grounding the cables along the boundary fences of the plot.

"We will be clearing the way for the sports pitches by removing the overhead lines which would have stood in the way and we are glad to be helping to facilitate this important local scheme," said Project Engineer Ian Rodger.

As well as a community hall, there will be a senior football pitch, a junior pitch and an all-weather facility.

## Praise for staff action in road crash drama

TWO Manweb employees have been praised for going to the assistance of a driver who was involved in an accident near Ruthin.

The man had lost control of his Saab which somersaulted over a hedge and tumbled over six times down a field.

Jointer Alistair Thomas and Peter Jones, Jointer's Mate and First Aider, witnessed the incident and went to help the driver, who was shaken but uninjured.

Peter prised open the door and treated him for shock while Alistair rang the emergency services.



Overall Sports Person of the Year Andrew Williams is presented with his award by Simon Weston.



Accepting the Overall Team of the Year award from Simon Weston on behalf of the Wych Centre are left to right, Charlotte Lathom, Elizabeth Lightfoot and Merle Ikin.



Overall Woman of the Year Joan Grimes receives the award from, left to right, David Faulkner, Simon Weston and Ken Vowles.



Overall Young Person of the Year Amy-Joy McNamara pictured with her mum at the awards night.

## Gala premiere for special film

A SPECIAL film for a special teenager formed the highlight of the gala evening at the Chester Grosvenor Hotel.

In the audience at the Your Champions Awards were eight lower sixth students from a school on Wirral who had made a short film about Champion of Champions Stephanie Davenport to be shown at the climax of the gala event.

The interview-style film of Stephanie was made in advance of the evening without the youngster realising she had earned the biggest accolade.

The AS Level media studies pupils at Weatherhead Lower School, Wallasey, were asked to research, storyboard, film and help edit a production under the guidance of Assistant Head of English Gemma Curran and a professional producer and director who runs his own TV company.

To make the "Stars in their Eyes"-type film the students went on location to Congleton to film Stephanie in action as one of the volunteers helping out the Youth



The Weatherhead school team who made the film about Stephanie Davenport.

in Action group in Cheshire for children with special needs and disadvantaged children which her sister Jenny, who has special needs attends.

Stephanie, aged 14, of Sandbach, tirelessly campaigns to raise money and awareness of the cruel condition which affects her sister. Jenny has tuberous sclerosis, an illness which has left her with

severe learning difficulties, behavioural problems, no speech, tubers behind the eyes and epilepsy.

Stephanie adores her sister and helps her mum Pam change her, bathe her and deal with her temper tantrums. Pam said: "Stephanie is marvellous with Jenny and also with other children less fortunate than herself."

## Unsung heroes and heroines celebrated at glittering awards night

# Champions winners are honoured

**A**N expectant audience gathered at the Chester Grosvenor Hotel for a glittering gala dinner held to announce the recipients of the 2001 Chronicle-Manweb Your Champions Awards.

The Your Champions winners were honoured after being chosen from hundreds of names submitted by the general public, charities and business organisations from across the Chronicle Newspaper Group area.

The celebratory dinner, the climax of months of deliberations, rewarded the unsung heroes and heroines who add to the life of their local communities, in five categories – Man of the Year, Woman of the Year, Sportsperson of the Year, Team of the Year and Youngster of the Year.

Hosting the ceremony before an audience of 200 including civic leaders, captains of business and industry and other community leaders were Manweb Chairman Ken Vowles and Chronicle Newspapers Managing Director David Faulkner.

The winners of the many categories, including Overall Champion of the Year accolades, collected a special "prism of light" award supplied by Dragoncraft in Anglesey, and they made the news in the Manweb area covered by the Chronicle Group's Pioneer and Wrexham Mail and its weekly Chronicle newspapers in Runcorn and Widnes, Ellesmere Port, Northwich, Nantwich, Crewe, Chester and Flintshire areas.

A special musical introduction accompanied the winners as they went up to accept their awards, which were presented in an area designed by Quadrant of two stages with a lectern on each, against a star-studded

backcloth. In the middle of the stages, a large screen flashed up the photograph of the winner.

During the evening, at which Falklands War hero Simon Weston, who set up the Weston Spirit charity, was guest of honour, the classical performers Graffiti Classics serenaded members of the audience with music in their distinctive style.

Overall winner in the Man of the Year category is Stan Lewis, known as "Uncle Stan," from Crewe, who for more than 40 years has been a key worker for the SCANS charity organisation which organises holidays for underprivileged children.

### Campaign

Overall winner in the Woman of the Year category is Joan Grimes, who launched a campaign to have ambulances fitted with computerised navigation aids after her husband died from a heart attack when medics lost the way to his home.

In response to her perseverance, Government Health Minister Hazel Blears announced earlier this year that all 3,000 NHS ambulances would have



Overall champion Stephanie Davenport with Guest of Honour Simon Weston and Manweb MD Stewart Saunders.

route finders fitted by March 2002.

Overall winner in the Sports Person of the Year category is Andrew Williams, a 20-year-old athlete from Flintshire who took part in the World Wheelchair Games in Nottingham this year, competing at the highest level – and doing so despite thieves stealing his bespoke wheelchair just before the Games started. Despite having cerebral palsy Andrew was ranked Number Two in the UK, and continues with his voluntary work for the Flintshire Disability Forum.

Overall Champion Team of the Year is the Wych Centre Youth Club, Middlewich's only such venue which has risen like

a phoenix from the ashes despite being burned down last August, and then again this January six weeks before it was due to reopen.

The 15 young women honoured have fought back yet again by raising £3,000 to fund new facilities.

### Amazing

Overall winner of the Young Person of the Year award is Amy-Joy McNamara, aged six, who has cerebral palsy but is now learning to walk on her own without a frame and can talk using a voice computer. Amy-Joy has an amazing past – she was found abandoned by the roadside in China at the age of two, later adopted by mum Sheila, and started her new life in Wirral two years ago.

A special award was presented to 14-year-old Stephanie Davenport as Manweb-Chronicle Champion of Champions, to the accompaniment of a special film about Stephanie made by the girls from Weatherhead High School.

● Manweb has donated £1,500 to the Weston Spirit charity. A report on the Wales dinner of the Manweb-Chronicle Your Champions Awards, at which actress Brigit Forsyth and actor Bruce Jones – Coronation Street's Les Battersby – were Guests of Honour, will appear in the next edition of Contact.



Overall Man of the Year Stan Lewis with, left to right, Guest of Honour Simon Weston, Chronicle MD David Faulkner and Manweb Chairman Ken Vowles.

Staff get up to cross-dressing capers, a fancy-dress karaoke, and a sponsored silence – all for a good cause



Silence – fundraising in progress. Deborah Quinn of Power Systems Wayleave Department pictured during her sponsored silence and getting a little help from colleague Clare Tudor.



Kisses for Pudsey – CSC Representative Chris Ratcliffe, right, and her friend Gail Hotston, a former professional singer, led the karaoke singing at Warrington.



Getting a soaking in the stocks at Pentre Bychan is Carl Postle, Team Leader in Credit Management.



Margaret Dunn, a CSC representative at Wrexham, became a Pudsey impersonator to raise money for Children in Need.

# Zany fundraising stunts lead a charity bonanza



Cross-dresser on parade at Pentre Bychan.



Karaoke singer and Wolfie at Warrington CSC.

**T**HE generosity and ingenuity of Manweb staff came to the forefront yet again during the Children in Need fundraising day with the company's plucky volunteers surpassing themselves in a series of stunts – and helping PowerPartners in the process.

An astounding £10,500 was raised in just one day by staff across the group – with this amount being matched by the company for PowerPartners.

At the Warrington Customer Service Centre, £1,358 was raised by staff in the town centre through a karaoke outside the shop at which the public were invited to strut their stuff, together with a related tombola and raffle.

Crowds formed around the karaoke singers whose wigs were provided by the nearby indoor market with equipment and back-up from Arc Promotions. Among the most prominent singing stars was CSC Representative Chris Ratcliffe who was egged on by Wolfie the Warring-

## POWERPartners

ton Woves mascot.

The “mystery man” inside the Wolfie costume was CSC Manager Kevin Hancox, performing the noble task for the second year running. “It was hot in there,” he said. “I’m glad it was November – I needed to take my head off occasionally to cool down.”

Throughout the day the eight staff from the shop took collection bowls round and staged the raffles, with prizes including a limited edition Pudsey Bear, and other items donated by people at the market.

### Moustache

At Pentre Bychan a sustained campaign of cross-dressing was mounted by staff in credit management and in the call centre. Anne Thompson sported a shirt, tie and a moustache – until CSC Manager for Merseyside and Cheshire Lorraine Jones asked her to take off the

facial hair before she would let her into her car.

Managers lined up in the stocks outside the Pentre Bychan building to receive sponges thrown by their staff. Just to emphasise the point further, buckets of water were available as a back-up.

Inside the office, Deborah Quinn, of Power Systems Wayleave Department, languished in enforced silence throughout the day, undertaking a sponsored period of speechlessness for the charitable cause. She was flanked by specially-made speech bubbles reading “Children in Need” and Shut Up.”

“This was a real achievement for Deborah because she is a bubbly, friendly girl who could talk for Britain,” said colleague Kathryn Newman.

In Wrexham town itself, staff at the Lord Street CSC wore Pudsey spotted eyepatches and

yellow ears, and held a brick a brac stall featuring clothes which they had donated themselves.

“People coming in to the shop loved it,” said Carolann Edwards, CSC Representative. “Men were trying ties on, women were going out wearing jackets – some of the girls tried to get them back when they realised how nice they looked.” The shop raised £108.

### Uniform

Prenton adopted a “school-days theme,” and opened a tuck shop at the Operations helpdesk so that people could queue up for grub wearing their short trousers and school ties. Prefect badges were worn, milk was issued in the afternoon and staff collected cash in the car park wearing school uniform. With a raffle also creating a lot of interest, £600 was raised.

Lister Drive entered into the spirit of the day with a raffle and a pay-to-park scheme. Some staff turned waiter and waitress in the canteen, a cake sale was held and two people came in dressed



Cross-dressing (just for the day) at Pentre Bychan were Andy Cronshaw, left, and Andy Hyslop who work in Credit Management.

in pyjamas. A teddy bear was taken hostage – and returned unharmed – and £300 was raised in total.

A “Who Wants to be a Millionaire” competition was staged at Caernarfon, backed up by a book sale. Both Rhyl and Aberystwyth held raffles.

Excellent prizes were on offer in Birkenhead CSC’s raffle – Margaret Reed won a VIP family

day out to the Liverpool FC museum and trophy room, Ian Timlin won the Everton prize and a customer from Birkenhead won the Tranmere ball prize.

Other totals raised were Pentre Bychan (£425) and Chester (£110). All money received round the depots and offices was matched by the company, and the match-funded amount was donated to PowerPartners.

# Ron Quenby's Christmas Quiz

1. Where was the composer Edward Elgar born?
  2. Which was the first transatlantic steamboat?
  3. What is an echium?
  4. Which satellite of a planet features active volcanoes?
  5. Which station was used to film parts of the classic Brief Encounter?
  6. Of which football club is TV chef Delia Smith a director?
  7. Which famous actress said: "Give a man a free hand and he'll try to put it all over you."
  8. Where is the Gobi Desert?
  9. From where do we get the word vandal?
  10. Who wrote the Barchester novels?
  11. Which club did Pele join in 1975?
  12. Which woman painter was born in the exact centre of France in the same year as Renoir?
  13. Duck toe, common toe and Derby - all types of what?
  14. Which fruit contains an enzyme that breaks down gelatine and is therefore not used to make jellies?
  15. Which American state is the Badger State?
  16. Who played Irene in the original TV adaptation of Calsworthy's the Forsyte Saga?
  17. Which animal is the symbol of the World Wildlife Fund?
  18. Electricity derives from the Greek name for what substance?
  19. Approximately what proportion of the air is oxygen?
  20. Who was the first barrister ever to be appointed a QC?
- The name of the person with the highest number of correct answers will be published in the next edition of Contact.

# Blood donor hits 75 pint milestone!



Lawrence Jassey, Director of Accident and Emergency at Liverpool University Hospital, left, presents a special plate to blood donor Dave Watts to mark his dedication in giving 75 pints of blood.

**D**AVE Watts has been presented with an award for donating an amazing 75 pints of blood over the years. The 53-year-old engineer based at Pentre Bychan has been giving blood since 1967, nowadays doing it once every 16 weeks if he gets the chance.

"I started when I was a student," said Dave. "I thought it was a good idea then, and I've always thought it was a good idea to donate. Certain operations can't go ahead without a blood transfusion - blood saves lives. In the early days I was so interested in giving blood my mother used to throw the Transfusion Service letters in the fire!"

Now Dave's dedication has been recognised with a special plate which was presented to him at the Roy Castle Centre in Liverpool by Lawrence Jassey, Director of A&E at Liverpool University Hospital.

"It was nice to get some recognition for the milestone of 75 donations," Dave said. "I hope it will encourage other people to give - in the worst case scenario they might need it themselves."

## Membership offer



RAC are now able to offer Manweb ScottishPower employees worry-free motoring with a saving of up to £30 on membership.

When RAC set out to join forces with a preferred utility company, ScottishPower, as a well-established and competitively priced energy supplier, provided the best fit.

The partnership has opened up new opportunities for both the RAC and ScottishPower. We have already established reci-

procal direct sales activity and over the coming months both companies will be talking to each other's customers to offer special promotions.

As an employee of Manweb ScottishPower you can take immediate advantage of this partnership with this exclusive offer. Simply join the RAC via the ScottishPower offer and save 20 per cent on your chosen level of cover.

And that's not all - you receive an ongoing 20 per cent

discount every year you renew your membership, saving you even more.

RAC brings reassurance with every journey you make, taking away the worry and cost of breaking down.

All you have to do to join is call 0800 068 1636 and quote code DT0134. Call now for a free, no obligation quote. And look out for RAC stands in selected locations.

## Foreign currency charity appeal

AN appeal is going out to Manweb staff to bring in their loose foreign change - especially from the European countries that are going over to the Euro - so that it can be converted into a donation to PowerPartners.

The idea came from Contact editor Anne Benson who realised that soon-to-be-obsolete currency would be a timely boost towards the £1 million PowerPartners target by March if it was collected.

Any employees who have cash left over from

their holidays in Europe are asked to bring it to donation boxes held by the PowerPartners co-ordinators Wendy Ellison, Karen Bloor, Melanie Jones, Jane Hall and Brian Davies. People are asked to search their purses, handbags and beach bags to see if they contain loose coins. The Euro will become legal tender in all but three countries of the EU (UK, Sweden and Denmark) from January 2002, and until April next year any change brought in by staff will be converted at the Bank of Scotland.



Children at Ysgol Llanilar with their donations for Age Concern are pictured at the Manweb sponsored van with collectors Dai and Betty Davies.

# Hampers reflect Christmas spirit

**W**HEN phone calls started flooding in from local schools Radio Ceredigion realised they would have to run the Manweb ScottishPower Hamper scheme again.

Last year schoolchildren collected around 500 hampers for older people which were distributed by Age Concern Aberystwyth.

So this year Manweb linked up again with the charity - a PowerPartners partner - and the radio station and took a van on the road around Ceredigion collecting goodies from 40 schools in the region.

The aim is to beat last year's total and the hampers will be distributed at Age Concern Christmas lunches throughout December.

At Ysgol Llanilar the youngsters filed out one by one clutching their offerings which they handed over to Dai and



Pupils at Ysgol Llansarian pictured after filling the collection van with their donations.



Betty Davies, while at Ysgol Llansarian there was no stopping them as they rushed out carrying brightly decorated boxes.

Three lucky youngsters from each school were interviewed live on Radio Ceredigion about their Christmas plans and hopes

for pre-sents. S4C also came along to film some of the collections and broadcast a live piece about the scheme on Heno.

Angela Milne, PowerPartners Charity Co-ordinator, said: "Last year's hamper scheme was so successful we just felt we had to run it again, as it was obviously so popular with the community."



A tasty celebration of Thanksgiving in style.



**MOST** people wait until Christmas to tuck into the turkey and cook for large amounts of people.

But Media Relations Manager Anne Benson decided to start early and held a Thanksgiving dinner for friends.

"I love cooking but don't get to cook much at Christmas as we have a small family," she explained.

"So I decided to hold a Thanksgiving dinner last year and invite all our friends that we want to celebrate with. It was such a success I held it again this year and in all we had 12 people. Luckily people brought chairs and crockery with them."

Anne, who writes a food column for the Daily Post every Saturday, got friends visiting from America to bring over essential ingredients such as fried onion bits for the green bean casserole.

"I asked American friends for their favourite recipes which they e-mailed over and scoured the internet for traditional ideas."

The finishing touch was the table decorations which staff at Manweb's restaurant in the Chester HQ lent her.

"The traditional decorations are pumpkins, corn, leaves etc. All the gifts of the harvest so the ones we had in the restaurant were perfect."

## 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.

## Crucial safety lessons

**MORE** than 1,500 schoolchildren from primary schools in the Warrington area attended Crucial Crew safety sessions held at the Tim Parry/Jonathan Ball Peace Centre in the town.

Staff from Powers Systems in Prenton, the police, the fire service, the road safety unit, the NSPCC and drug awareness groups attended over a period of two weeks. The sessions, organised by Manweb and Warrington Borough Council, sent out the message that electrical safety is crucial at all times.

# Helicopter delivers stand-by generator

A HELICOPTER was called in to make a mountain-side special delivery after a transformer failed near Llanberis.

When the Goat Transformer, situated halfway up the Cefn Du mountain, failed on a Saturday afternoon, cutting off the supply to four homes, the rugged terrain with boulders and steep rocks made easy access impossible.

Steve Heywood, engineer on duty,

organised a stand-by generator and alternative options for delivering a new 215-kilogram transformer were considered.

But it was clear that an approach through the back gardens of the houses, using slippery slate steps and climbing over an uneven surface, was a non-starter due to Health and Safety regulations.

Supervisor Paul Taylor obtained clearance from the duty manager to bring in

a helicopter and the terrain was duly scouted under the overall guidance of section engineer Kevin Hughes.

Linesmen guided the craft to the pick-up point and the drop was made expertly, with no problems despite the difficult geography. "It was a bit tight going in by pine trees, but the drop was accomplished smoothly," said Bill Nottingham, engineering assistant based at Caernarfon.

# WIN family tickets for The Snow Queen



**M**ANWEB is sponsoring the Chester Gateway Theatre's exciting Christmas stage version of *The Snow Queen*, written by Hans Christian Andersen.

Two family tickets (two adult/two children) are up for grabs through our winter competition.

The show is packed with music, magic, suspense, and spectacle with a host of unforgettable characters including the vicious Cobweb Spider, the Sun Magician Bhima, talking ravens, polar bears and a reindeer.

The play tells the story of the Queen who puts a spell on a young boy, Kay, and imprisons him in her ice palace, and of his friend Gerda's quest to rescue him.

The Snow Queen is an adventure for all the family running from Saturday December 1 to Saturday January 12 2002.

**To enter the competition simply answer the question: Who wrote *The Snow Queen*?**

Entries should be sent to Jan Cahill, Corporate Communications, Manweb House, Chester Business Park, Wrexham



Road, Chester CH4 9RF. Through their sponsorship of the production, Manweb has made it possible for Chester

Gateway to provide extra bench seating in the auditorium at a cheaper rate.

The support by Manweb also enabled the theatre to provide a fun pack for each school bringing pupils to see *The Snow Queen*.

● Pictured above is Manweb's head of Finance Graham Morris alongside one of the fluffy polar bears in the Snow Queen cast, at the penguin enclosure at Chester Zoo.

## Shortlisted for awards

**HARD** work by Manweb staff has ensured that the company is in with the chance of scooping two prestigious awards.

Manweb has been shortlisted for an Arts and Business award in recognition of its ongoing partnership with the Welsh National Opera which includes sponsorship of the North Wales Season and a number of community initiatives.

Meanwhile, the PowerPartners scheme to help the designated four charities has been shortlisted in the Utility Week awards.

## Club trip to theatre

**MANWEB** (Chester) Sports and Social Club are organising an outing to see *Whistle Down The Wind* at the Empire Theatre, Liverpool on Friday January 11.

Andrew Lloyd Webber's and Jim Steinmen's hit West End musical features the Boyzone hit *No Matter What* and Tina Arena's *Whistle Down the Wind*.

Information and tickets contact: Sarah Latham on 805-2297. £12 Chester Sports and Social Members £18 Non-Members

## Grants to fund insulation

**THE** homes of 269 council tenants in Vale Royal will be warmer this winter thanks to a special grant from Manweb. The grant of £34,580 was a 70 per cent contribution towards cavity wall insulation in council dwellings without central heating. Vale Royal Borough Council contributed the other 30 per cent.



## Music for the carols

**THE** annual Christmas sing-song will be extra special for the Gwynedd retirees this year because they will be accompanied by two keyboard experts.

Secretary Jean Jones, who is organist at the church at St Bueno at Clynnogfawr, will be joined by fellow musician Menai Owen to provide music for the carols when the retirees have their Christmas lunch at the Plas Menai Leisure Centre on the outskirts of Caernarfon.

## Festivities by the sea

**IT** was "Christmas by the Sea" for the Mid Cheshire retirees association when they took a Turkey and Tinsel break in Barmouth. The group of 36 stayed in the Harbour Hotel on the promenade, and enjoyed a series of mock-Christmas festivities in the run up to the real thing.

## Partying at Aintree

**THE** North Mersey retirees held their Christmas party in the Aintree British Legion, where they stage all their regular meetings. A carvery meal was followed by festivities including a raffle, bingo, entertainment and dancing.

## Gift for hospice

**A** NEST of tables has been presented to the St Kentigern Hospice, St Asaph, by the Clwyd retirees association in memory of Dennis Atkinson. Dennis, who was secretary of the retirees association for more than 10 years, was a patient at the hospice and the gift was in appreciation of the care given.

# Colin helps keep the books talking

**C**OLIN Edwards has retired from Manweb – but he is still on continuous stand-by in his other role as an assistant to a voluntary organisation.

Colin, aged 67, has been a service volunteer for the RNIB since 1980, when he was still in his job as energy sales engineer.

He is called out whenever blind and partially-sighted people are experiencing problems with the talking books which are issued to them as part of a nationwide scheme.

Calls come in to Colin via the local library, social services or the London HQ of the RNIB, which is a PowerPartners charity, and he responds by going out to addresses throughout the Vale of Clwyd.

"The talking book machines go wrong constantly," he said. "I sort them out with special tools and show the customers what to do if they have problems. It's not unusual for the tapes to spill and the machine to get clogged."

Among the people for whom



Colin Edwards with one of the talking books he repairs.

Colin supplies the free service is his next door neighbour and the wife of a man who used to work for Manweb.

Colin, who is a member of the Clwyd retirees association, added: "My mother was partially sighted and she used to have a talking book. I realised then that the RNIB is a wonder-

ful organisation, and I get a lot of satisfaction from helping it.

"I began as a service volunteer when I was reading the union journal and I saw that they were appealing for volunteers. I was at a loose end, and I thought it was time I started putting something back into the community."

## Great offer to visit Eden

**WITH** the nights closing in it's time to turn our thoughts to brighter times next Spring – and what better way to look forward than to book a special-offer holiday in Cornwall which includes an admission ticket to the spectacular Eden Project.

The attraction near St Austell is now firmly established as one of Britain's most talked about destinations, with its series of giant bubble-like conservatories set in the huge crater of a disused china clay pit. The domes are high enough to house the towering trees and rain forest of tropical climes and wide enough for the sun-baked landscapes of the Mediterranean.

The self-drive Eden Project break offered by Travelsmith Holidays Limited, which is over three, four or seven nights, also includes an admission ticket to the earlier project by Tim Smit, lead designer of the Eden Project – the Lost Gardens of Heligan.

You will stay at the top value Tregurrian Hotel, sited just yards away from Watergate Bay and four miles from Newquay. All the bedrooms at the



View of the arena at the Eden Project, Cornwall.

offer price have private facilities.

Prices per person are March 15-27 (three nights) £49; (four nights) £59; (seven nights) £95. The prices then increase slightly through the year until November 1 2002.

In the main season the holidays commence on specified days. For further details and to book, telephone the Travelsmith Holidays reservations line on 0870-748-1000 or 01621-784666 and quote reference C153MW to qualify for the special rates.