WHAT IS A CAMEL RACE?

BY PAULA FULLER
paulafuller@charter.net

A camel race is a hoot and holler and the most FUN fund raiser you can imagine. Only Judy Tyo, co-chairperson of the event for the Houghton Lake Rotary club and co-chairperson Kathy Kruch for the Kiwanis club had been to a camel race. They had to convince our two clubs how much fun it would be.

Both clubs went in together and put on the first Camel race in Houghton Lake in 2008. Kiwanian Ron Snyder cut out wooden camels 3’X5’ and put them on a stand. We sold camels to businesses, and they decorated and named them very humorously. For instance, the local radio station named theirs “DJ Humps” and the dentist “Flossie.”

We sold 30 camels the first year. There were five races plus a winner for each race for a sixth race and all over grand prize. Cash was traded for dollars. Big dice were thrown to determine which camel moved one space. People cheered for their camels as if they were alive.

We charged to get in, had a cash bar, and served hors d’oeuvers.

In 2011, we sold 36 camels, seven races, 300 tickets and have a waiting list for camels. We share everything equally between the two clubs. Not only did the people attending have a great time, but so did all of our members.

We made $5,000 for each club this year. Our next race will be August 25, 2012.