

WREXHAM SCHOOLBOY RAISES £160 FOR LOCAL HOSPICE THROUGH ECO-FRIENDLY VIRTUAL BALLOON RACE

Eyton Primary schoolboy Andrew Raffle, has raised £160 after taking part in an innovative 100% eco-friendly virtual balloon race to provide funds for Nightingale Hospice in Wrexham and the school PTA

Star-fundraiser Andrew was just one of the 73 pupils who took part in the week-long initiative run in conjunction with award winning Purepages Group based in Bolton, Manchester, inventors of this web-based fund raising system.

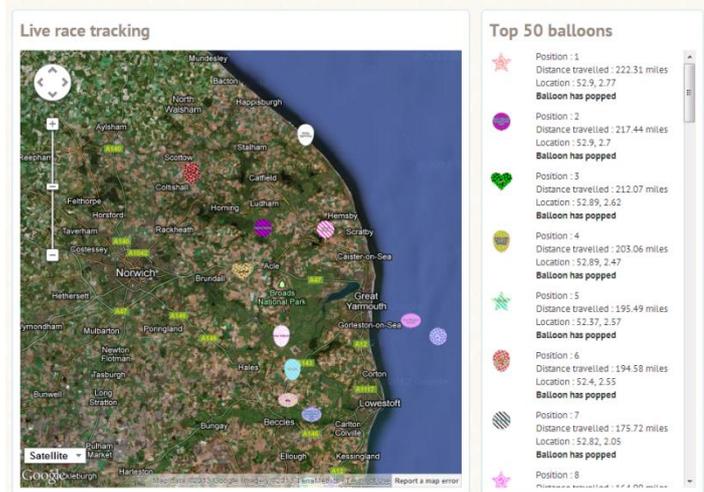
The unique Rentaballoonrace.com virtualisation process allows charities to raise funds but without the considerable negative effect on wildlife. Real balloon races using helium filled latex balloons have been seen as responsible for a growing number of deaths to sea birds, turtles and other animals when they, the latex balloons, eventually fall back to Earth after accidents or losing their helium gas.

As Georgina Hawkey from the school's PTA, explained: "We saw the virtual balloon race as the perfect eco-friendly alternative and a great way to raise pupils' awareness of environmental issues.

The positive response we received was overwhelming and we're really proud of our children who managed to sell over 400 balloons. The funds raised will make a huge difference for our community"

Mike Phillips, managing director of Purepages, further added: "All UK eco-charities are currently working really hard to get the Government to ban the use of such latex balloons for fund raising purposes, so we're pleased we can offer a great virtual experience instead.

Our www.rentaballoonrace.com software includes a series of complex algorithms and modules that mimic real balloons in both creation and race operation mode - for example, all the balloons fly in accordance with the prevailing weather patterns. Similarly, the balloon construction parameters and user chosen decorations can be changed at random 24/7 any time prior to the race launch. These parameters directly affect the altitude and the speed of the balloon's flight path and thus influence the client's chances of winning"





Top fundraiser Andrew was presented in front of his proud Headmistress, Mrs Caldwell, with a special prize of book tokens for his achievement by Mike Phillips, managing director of Purepages Group.

When asked how he managed to sell his 32 balloons, Andrew replied "I just told everyone it was a really good eco-friendly thing to do and that all the proceeds went to charity"

Andrew, who lives in a small hamlet of just 20 inhabitants, Gyfelia, sold balloons to every one of his neighbours plus some more at a gala day held

at the hospice itself. He is a keen member of the school's eco-committee who hold regular meetings to review the growth and sales of their own organic vegetables and to discuss any *hot environmental issues* of the day.

A similar virtual race is just starting for Hospice of the Good Shepherd, based just north of Wrexham in Chester <http://www.rabr.co.uk/hogs>

For more information please contact

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