

Local magician lights up Tonbridge and puts on a show for Tonbridge Mayor

Friday 8 March, 2013

A record breaking magician who put on a free show to cheer up 'gloomy' residents of Tonbridge will be on TV this week reporting on whether his campaign has worked.

Jordan Barker, 16, who only took up magic a year ago and already holds the world record for the highest throw of a playing card, will be featured on ITV News Meridian on Tuesday, March 12 from 6pm.

Working with Fixers, the national movement of young people 'fixing' the future, Jordan spread his magic around businesses and an old people's home.

He finished the day with a free magic show held at the Angel Centre which was attended by Tonbridge and Malling Mayor, Councillor Dave Davis.

Jordan said: "I got the idea for my Fixers project by going around my local town in Tonbridge and realising that people are a little more gloomy than expected and I wanted to change that. I wanted to give them something to smile about.

"I've been doing magic for just over a year and I really wanted to help cheer them up. So I spent the day just trying to make as many people smile as possible."

During the course of the day, Jordan attended an Age Concern day Centre in Malling and was slightly daunted by the audience.

He said: "I've never really done magic for an elderly audience before. I was quite surprised by their response because they were really appreciative."

Attendees were thrilled by the skills on show, with one man commenting, "It makes a change, it makes a wonderful change."

One of the carers at the centre praised Jordan for seeking to raise spirits amongst the community, especially older people.

She said, "The clients have really enjoyed it. It's lovely to have a young person perform as it's really interesting for them and it would be nice if we could have more of this kind of thing regularly."

Later that day, Jordan's magic show was attended by parents and their children and Tonbridge Mayor who was inspired by events.

Cllr Davis said, "I think everybody needs cheering, it's a good thing to look on the bright side.

"There's so much misery, we ought to have something to be happy about, and Jordan's succeeding in doing that, absolutely first rate."

Becoming a magician has had a significant impact on Jordan's life and he felt having the Mayor attend his show topped off a successful day.

"We did a stage show and we invited lots of people from the local area to come and watch it. The mayor came along which made it feel like it was really quite an important local event."

"Magic has definitely changed my life. This time last year I was pretty unsociable, I wouldn't really talk to many people, but now I'm really happy to talk to anyone.

"I hope I inspire other people by doing magic and maybe inspire them to try it as well."

"I definitely achieved what I hoped to achieve with my Fixers project, it went really well and really helped make people smile, and that's what it was all about."

Fixers is a movement of thousands of 16 to 25-year-olds across the UK who are supported to take action and change things for the better, addressing any issue they feel strongly about.

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How each Fixer tackles an issue is up to them – as long as they benefit someone else.

The award-winning Fixers project has already supported almost 7,000 young people across the UK to have an authentic voice in their community.

Now, thanks to a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers will work with a further 20,000 young people over the next three years.

Each Fixer is supported to create the resources they need to make their chosen project a success, with creative help from media professionals to make their own promotional material, such as films, websites or print work.

Fixers is a trademark of the Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT), a charity that brings together mainstream broadcasters, public and voluntary sector services, and viewers.

“Fixers started in 2008 as just an idea... an idea given a voice by some 7,000 young people over the past five years,” says Margo Horsley, Chief Executive of PSBT.

“They have reached thousands of people with their work, on a national stage as well as in and around where they live. They choose the full array of social and health issues facing society today and set about making their mark. Fixers are always courageous and their ideas can be challenging and life-changing, not just for themselves.”

Peter Ainsworth, Big Lottery Fund UK Chair, said: “The Big Lottery Fund is extremely happy to be supporting Fixers to engage with more young people to change things for the better. Thousands of public-spirited young people across the UK are campaigning to make improvements in their own communities. By providing a platform to highlight their voluntary work and many achievements, Fixers demonstrates the positive contribution thousands of committed young people are making at a local level and challenges negative stereotypes.”

One photo attached. Captions:

1. Magician Jordan Barker, his assistant and Mayor Council Davis

For images, interviews or more information, please contact Jatin Patel in the Fixers Communications Team by email jatin@fixers.org.uk or phone 01962 810970.

There are lots more stories about young people doing great things on the Fixers website, Twitter and Facebook pages:

www.fixers.org.uk

www.twitter.com/FixersUK

www.facebook.com/FixersUK

Notes to editors:

- Since 2008 some 7,000 young people in England have become Fixers and created 800 projects. Now with a £7.2 million grant from the Big Lottery Fund, Fixers is extending into Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.
- The Public Service Broadcasting Trust is a charity that brings together mainstream broadcasters, public and voluntary sector services, and viewers.
- The Big Lottery Fund (BIG), the largest distributor of National Lottery good cause funding, is responsible for giving out 40% of the money raised for good causes by the National Lottery.
- BIG is committed to bringing real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need and has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since June 2004. The Fund was formally established by Parliament on 1 December 2006.
- Since the National Lottery began in 1994, 28p from every pound spent by the public has gone to good causes. As a result, over £29 billion has now been raised and more than 383,000 grants awarded across arts, sport, heritage, charities, health, education and the environment.

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