From social media burnout to school pressures, anxiety and stress have a hold on our kids.
At Landscape Structures, we believe that childhood play instills important values into kids, and helps create the leaders of tomorrow. In other words, play shapes us. That’s why we partnered with the University of Minnesota’s Institute of Child Development to research what we already know: the simple pleasure of play is an essential part of healthy development. Request a copy of our white paper at shapedbyplay.com.
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KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

Kiwani is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to improving the world one child and one community at a time.

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
JIM ROCHFORD • KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

LIFE IS GREAT

During December, I had four very different but phenomenal experiences. The Eye of the Tiger Team went to John’s Creek, Georgia, and had the largest turnout of 16 prospective members. The club came together in two days.

Next up was a trip to the Louisiana-Mississippi-West Tennessee District. There, we chartered a Kiwanis club at a high school where the Key Club has reopened with 50 members. Several of the new Kiwanians had been Key Club members at this school.

By the end of our visit to the district, five clubs had opened.

Our next stop was to the Philippines Luzon District, where I installed 11 new clubs, was entertained by K-Kids, Key Clubbers and an Aktion club whose members were all blind. Not to be outdone, the Philippine South District had 18 new Kiwanis clubs — plus five new Circle K clubs. I met the president of the Philippines and the mayor of Manila along the way.

The month ended with perhaps the most impactful Kiwanis-family experience to date: the Tournament of the Roses Parade and 7,000-plus Kiwanis-family volunteers decorating our float, along with seven others. Our top membership producers rode the float, and I met with the presidents of Rotary, Lions and Optimists.

The Eye of the Tiger float was a big hit at the Tournament of Roses Parade.

Then, we joined half of the North American governors in Orlando, Florida, where we were scheduled to open three clubs, followed by a stop in Indianapolis for an online Kiwanis International Board meeting. We celebrated Kiwanis’ 103rd birthday with the Detroit No. 1 Kiwanis Club before traveling to Las Vegas to join the other half of the North American governors to open three more clubs.

We officially organized 84 clubs in the first quarter, which is the most in the modern era.

Why are we so focused on membership and new clubs? Because the more members and clubs we have, the more impact we will have on communities and youth. Working with The Formula Team, we will have a record-setting year in our impact on youth. We’re on the road weekly, identifying orphan Key Clubs as our priority to bring Kiwanis back to communities.

Thank you for all your hard work. Keep leading by example.

EXECUTIVE PERSPECTIVE
STAN SODERSTROM • KIWANIS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PARTNERS FOR KIWANIS

Over the past several years, Kiwanis has embarked upon an effort to identify partners that bring value to our clubs and members. We began with member surveys and club analyses. We looked at our members’ interests, such as travel, a Kiwanis-branded credit card or travel insurance. We studied popular service activities, like literacy programs, Key Club sponsorship, pancake events and playgrounds. As a result, we seek qualified partners, suppliers and vendors who meet our standards, support the Kiwanis mission and bring value to our ongoing work.

Two important points:

First, we never sell member mailing lists or personal information.

Second, we know every partnership will not appeal to every member or club; so, participation is optional. Our goal is to create enough partnerships so every club and member might find several that can be of value. Here’s a list of several that have recently joined us:

• Two Ten Footwear Foundation provides low-cost athletic shoes for clubs’ distribution projects.
• Kiwanis Gives Online, an online fundraising platform powered by Access Fundraising, helps our youth programs increase their fundraising power.
• United Medicare Advisors helps U.S. members navigate Medigap coverage.
• Penguin Random House Books brings a unique service project to K-Kids with its Read & Lead program, which includes themed book kits, educational materials and project ideas.
• HomeAdvisor offers exclusive concierge service when selecting a home-improvement contractor.
• IdentityForce protects your credit, privacy and personal identity.
• Protect America protects your home and family through automated home security.
• Cross Cultural Solutions provides global service project trips for Key Club members.
• National League of Cities works with Kiwanis clubs to engage in community discussions surrounding early child development issues.
• KidsRights provides Key Club members the opportunity to support global social issues platforms through its Peace Prize program. Find a complete list at kiwanis.org/partners.
Builders Club Week
March 19-23

Help make their big week work.

March will bring Builders Club Week — an annual opportunity to promote the program with service. Get involved! Help support the program in your area, and serve alongside its members. Start planning with the Builders Club you sponsor. Or contact one in your area. Help show off Builders Club next month!

Looking to sponsor a Builders Club?
kiwanis.org/slp
Letters

Readers of Kiwanis magazine's print version and blog respond to features from the December 2017 and January/February 2018 issues.

Join the conversations at kiwanismagazine.org or email magazine@kiwanis.org.

Voices

Kiwanis Club of Genk 3600, Belgium
Marleen Martens
Wonderful initiative!

Kiwanis Club of Kenner North, Louisiana
Janet Scaruffi

2018 bring breakthroughs for the autistic potential can be. There are so many road blocks from society that cannot understand how precious these young people are. May 2018 bring breakthroughs for the autistic and support for these families.

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Very Special Education

What great potential for fundraising for autism. This should be in every school, doctors' offices, medical centers, children's hospitals and every library in the world. What a wonderful book.

Jeanette Igoe
Kiwanis Club of Northside Naples, Florida

This is a great idea and story/news. I have an 18-year-old great grandson. He is a handsome young man and so loved, but autism draws the line as to what his full potential can be. There are so many road blocks from society that cannot understand how precious these young people are. May 2018 bring breakthroughs for the autistic and support for these families.

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Delightful article, such fun! Great story about Kiwanis in action.

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Battle of the Bulk

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James G. Jensen
Kiwanis Club of Bluffton, South Carolina
Kids need Kiwanis. And sometimes Kiwanians need people who can help us serve them. Kiwanis International has a whole roster of partners whose missions are similar to ours. Team up to extend your reach, increase your visibility – and enhance your club’s next signature project.

Learn about them at kiwanis.org/partners.
A recent walk through the hallways of a central Indiana middle school led to a surprising find. Taped to the wall and situated near photos of the most recent Teacher of the Year recipients was a handmade sign, printed with colorful handwriting: “Are you or someone you know cutting? If so, talk to someone.” There was a number to text for help, with a promise that someone would be on the other end to listen and offer advice.
Cutting, a form of self-injury, is common among young people. Just “Google” it and you’ll find countless articles and data. Experts say anxiety and depression could be at the root of it, but more severe mental illnesses could be a factor as well.

The Anxiety and Depression Association of America states that one in eight children is affected by an anxiety disorder. This could mean the child shows signs of fear, nervousness and/or stress. A child may suddenly stop wanting to go to school, or may seem shy even toward people he or she knows well. There might be sleep issues, an eating disorder, sudden emotional breakdowns or disinterest in things once enjoyed. While some anxiety is normal (who enjoys taking a final exam?), it’s not normal if it persists.

And it’s not OK to delay help. A Children’s Mental Health Report from 2015, conducted by the Child Mind Institute, states that 80 percent of kids with a diagnosable anxiety disorder and 60 percent of kids with diagnosable depression are not getting treatment. That’s a lot of stressed kids heading to school with a lot of baggage.

So what is going on and what can be done? To find out, we turned to an expert. Lori Desautels is an assistant professor in the College of Education at Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana. She has a background in counseling and did her doctoral work in philosophy with an emphasis on adolescent thought formation. She’s also written books on the subject of neuroscience.

Desautels sat down with Kiwanis magazine to explain why, if we understand how our brains work a little bit better, we understand how learning happens a little bit better. The brain can seem overwhelming. But knowing how it works is a great first step toward self-acceptance, happiness and good health.

(Oh, and science talk is good for the brain. So you’re likely to be smarter just for reading. And there are tips for Kiwanians to use as well.)

Kiwanis magazine: Let’s be honest: The topic of stress and how it affects the brain can be hard to, for lack of a better term, wrap our brains around. What should we know first and foremost?

Lori Desautels: What we’re seeing in schools across the nation right now, and probably beyond, is that the new learning disability really has become anxiety. About 27 to 33 percent of children in the United States right now are walking into schools carrying significant anxiety.

KM: That’s a lot of stressed kids.
LD: It is. And we’re seeing this not only with students but we’re seeing this in our teachers too. There is such an emphasis on testing. And teacher’s evaluations are often tied to test scores and merit pay. So that’s very stressful.

KM: You’re teaching students and teachers about the parts of the brain and how and when they develop. Why?
LM: It’s really a four-step process. We teach them neuroplasticity. We teach them the hippocampus. We teach them the amygdala, so they understand and can start to feel when they get triggered. And then we talk about the prefrontal cortex.

The amygdala processes emotion and learning. Any negative emotion activating it shuts down the frontal lobe, which is where we do school.
KM: Can you talk more about these parts of the brain and how they function?
LD: Brain science is helping educators to understand that when any of us is in a chronic stress response brain state, there’s a cluster of neurons in each side right above the temporal lobe called the amygdala, and that’s our emotional smoke detector in the brain. The amygdala processes emotion and learning. And when it’s ignited, when we’re angry, when we’re disappointed, when we’re scared, when we’re worried, any negative emotion activating it shuts down the frontal lobe, which is where we do school. That’s where we do life.

Behind our eyebrows is the prefrontal cortex, and this is the last part of the brain to develop. Research said for years, 25 was about the age when it finished developing. But now the research is sharing it’s late 20s to early 30s. So even without stress, this part of the brain is appropriately immature as we go through school. So we understand now that this prefrontal area is the seat of sustained attention. It’s where we emotionally regulate. It’s where we problem solve.

So not only does stress cause neurobiological damage: inflammation, disease. We know that it also affects learning.

Where we set goals. Working memory is there too.

But chronic stress, chronic adversity, literally not only throws us into a fight/flight/freeze response, where we’re constantly reacting, but we now see that it kills off brain tissue in an area of the brain called the hippocampus. The hippocampus works in conjunction with the amygdala. Our hippocampus is the seat of learning and memory, where we consolidate memory. In each hemisphere, it sits next to the amygdala inside the limbic brain. It’s supposed to stop the stress response. But there are these glucocorticoid receptors in the hippocampus, and when cortisol, which is our stress hormone, and adrenaline are constantly turned on, it’s like a constant drip, drip, drip. Because we’re wired to secrete cortisol under stress and then our bodies return to a homoeostasis — balance — once the stress has left. But we’re seeing children and adults with this drip, drip, drip — it’s like this chronic, ongoing stress response. And cortisol and adrenaline can actually increase the number of those glucocorticoid receptors. And then we see cell death in the
hippocampus. So not only does stress cause neurobiological damage: inflammation, disease. We know that it also affects learning.

KM: So if a child is experiencing anxiety or stress, no matter the reason, that stress takes over the amygdala. And our frontal lobe doesn’t know how to handle that yet because it’s not fully developed. Wow. That explains a lot about how young people deal with stress — or don’t.

LD: Exactly. That frontal lobe under stress is hijacked. Our brain develops through experiences. So, when you look at a child’s environment, when you look at the relationships, the attachment, the connection that is there or lack thereof, or just the environment, we know that impacts brain development in ways we didn’t understand in the past.

KM: How does our lack of completely understanding the brain hurt us?

LD: The adolescent brain is very misunderstood because beginning at about 4th or 5th grade, development is not linear. Development is messy and chaotic. What we know is starting around 9 or 10 years old up until about 15, this is the second greatest time of brain development. And as educators, we’re not prepared and we weren’t taught to understand how that impacts learning in the classroom.

We’re helping our teachers to understand that our old ways of practicing behavior management, our older ways of teaching are not in alignment with how the brain develops. USA Today reported nationally that between the ages of 10 and 14, the suicide rates have doubled between 2007 and 2014. And I’m a firm believer that a big part of this is because we are misunderstanding brain development. The brain is so fragile in those adolescent years.

KM: It’s incredible to think there’s so much development happening at this age.

LD: Between the ages of 10 and 15 or 16, the brain has the most potential it will ever have again in its lifetime. It’s a sponge, taking in everything. And it can change. But adolescents are emotional. Remember, their limbic system is fully developed. The amygdala is fully developed. So they’re walking around with these hot, fiery emotions. But the frontal lobe is underdeveloped, so it’s very hard to dampen that stress response.

KM: So how can you dampen the stress response?

LD: We’re helping teachers and students to understand that for learning to happen, we all have to be upshifted. We have to be in our frontal lobe. Because if you’re triggered, and you’re in your amygdala, and if your child is in his amygdala, nothing good is going to happen. We actually escalate each other and the conflict grows bigger. So when you’re a teacher and you have a class of 25-35, and kids are triggering each other and you get triggered, we are helping teachers to understand they need to take a step back for a minute. Research is showing that the stress response is dampened by two ways: breathing and movement.

KM: What does this look like in a classroom?

LD: People look at you funny when you say “meditation” in school. We still equate that with religion. But meditation is really a focused-attention practice. And it helps students to regulate. We’re teaching

A long exhale lowers your heart rate, lowers your respiration, lowers your blood pressure.

Continued on page 48
Perks and Recreation

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, KIWANIANS FIGHT NATURE DEFICIT DISORDER WITH A NEW PUBLIC PLAYGROUND.

One summer day, a group of children eagerly gathered at a new play area in Greensboro, North Carolina. As they scanned the surroundings, half of the young people were puzzled by one of the play structures: a long, smooth log centered on a support, fitted with handles on each end.

The mystery object? A seesaw made by staff at Greensboro Parks and Recreation.

“We had to explain to them how to make the other person go up and down,” says Vonda Martin, the City of Greensboro’s park planner. “It’s very telling when you design something that you think is very simplistic, but other kids never had the opportunity to play like that.”

Introducing today’s technology-loving children to the simple fun of outdoor play is behind a rapidly growing movement based on connecting young people to nature. And thanks to a US$30,000 donation from the Kiwanis Club of Greensboro, the Kiwanis Nature Play Yard — which debuted in October 2016 — does just that.

Words JULIE SAETRE  •  Pictures THE CITY OF GREENSBORO
Each year, the club supports one major project in addition to its regular commitments. When club Secretary Liz Reinecke reached out to the Parks and Rec Department for ideas, the staff thought of a piece of land that had been donated to the city. The original owners had asked that it be used for nature-inspired play, not a traditional playground.

“In today’s environment, we always see kids with video games and phones, and they spend so much time indoors,” says Preston Allen, the club’s immediate past president. “They don’t spend much time out in nature. So the idea was to put together a park that was not the typical playground equipment, but things that kids would climb on and jump from one thing to another and be exposed to different kinds of plants — all those kinds of things.”

After a series of meetings with the community, the Greensboro club and city staff shared their vision for the play area with Robin Moore, director of the Natural Learning Initiative of the North Carolina State College of Design. Moore, an architect and urban planner, is internationally known for his designs of play and learning environments for children and has authored several books on the subject.

When designing a nature play area, he says, it’s not only the children he needs to consider. Many of today’s parents must be persuaded to take a chance on what once was a common outing. Not only do the adults have misgivings about an all-natural play space — no foam floors, no padded surfaces — but the idea of letting kids venture into a non-controlled environment gives them pause, reinforced by highly publicized cases of missing children.

“There’s a lot of anxiety among parents about letting their kids outdoors,” Moore explains. “The mass media plays these incidents time and time again to the point where people think a stranger is waiting to kidnap your kid around every corner. And the statistics don’t support that at all.”

Parents also worry about everyday risks, Martin says.

“(We) have to design ‘safe nature,’ so the kids feel safe and their parents feel safe allowing them to play and be creative and smell the flowers and watch the insects and not be afraid of a bee.”

Journalist Richard Louv brought these issues into the limelight with his 2005 book “Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder.” The book links deprivation of the natural world with childhood obesity, depression and attention disorders.

The not-for-profit organization that Louv co-founded, the Children & Nature Network, maintains a research library on the nature/child connection. Recent studies reveal a multitude of benefits for youth who spend time in nature: increased physical activity, decreased risk of obesity, improved relationship...
skills, better academic performance and reduced stress and aggression.

Such play also connects children to the importance of being kind to Mother Earth, Moore says. “Hopefully, that leads to an understanding of human dependence on the natural world … linking that to the big picture in terms of global climate change and taking more care of the planet.”

For the play yard, Moore and his team concentrated on the site’s configuration, including grading, accessibility issues and placement of play elements, as well as on a detailed landscaping plan. From there, the Parks and Recreation staff took over, crafting a climbing fort from a stockpile of fallen pine trees, an all-natural child-size table and chairs, rope- and log-based climbing apparatus and more. A digging area lets children search for buried treasure hidden in the soil by staff.

The city’s botanical garden pros brought Moore’s landscape plan to life with plantings that encourage young explorers to wander off the beaten path.

“In the public gardens, the kid factor is ‘pretty’ and ‘respect’ and ‘don’t pick the flowers’ — all the things that you can’t do,” Martin says. “You can do that in the Play Yard. You don’t have to be prim and proper. You can get your hands dirty and you can run around and you can fall down and you can skin your knee on the tree.”

Adds club Past President Allen, “You learn that when you fall down, you get up and you wipe it off and you keep on playing.”

And how will those protective parents react to a skinned knee?

“The parents that are into this are kind of scattered,” Moore says. “But if you put something compelling on the ground, they will appear. … We know from our research that this kind of activity is very empowering and gives children a sense of control over their lives — the feeling that you can do anything.”

“You can run around and you can fall down and you can skin your knee on the tree.”

VONDA MARTIN, CITY OF GREENSBORO PARK PLANNER
WINGED VICTORY

RISKING LIFE AND LIMB TO SPREAD THEIR CLUB’S MESSAGE, NASHVILLE KIWANIANS FLY HIGH.

On a sweltering Saturday afternoon this past September, many residents of Nashville, Tennessee, chose to stay inside, relaxing in the refreshing chill wafting from hard-working air conditioners. Kelly Koeppel wasn’t one of them.

Instead, the Nashville Kiwanis Club member was perched atop a precarious-looking winged contraption, which itself rested on a 30-foot-high platform rising from the Cumberland River. In minutes, four of her fellow club members would push Koeppel and her craft off the platform’s edge, sending her plummeting into the water below.

While the scenario might sound like some sort of ill-advised hazing ritual, the Kiwanian quintet actually volunteered to take on this bizarre task as part of a Red Bull Flugtag event. The Austria-based energy-drink manufacturer has hosted flugtags (a German term meaning “flight days”) around the world for more than two decades. Participating teams construct their own human-powered aircraft and then, on event day, launch the craft into a body of water.

Team members also must don themed costumes and perform a one-minute skit to music before taking the plunge. Judges choose winners based on a combination of flight distance, creativity and popularity with the public.

Why would a group of otherwise sane Kiwanians agree to such a peculiar task? Simple: To raise awareness of their club, its community contributions and the Kiwanis mission.

Or, as craft designer and team ground-crew member Chad Sutton puts it, “We really got the Kiwanis name plastered all over the place. It was pretty cool.”

Koeppel is no stranger to generating positive publicity. As president of k2forma, the company she founded in 1997, Koeppel specializes in helping clients with

Words JULIE SAETRE
Pictures CURTIS BILLUE, JACK BROCKLEY AND RED BULL
“The first thing I asked was, ‘Do we want to do an epic and awesome crash and burn, or do we want to try to fly as far as we can?’” says Chad Sutton, designer of the Nashville Kiwanis Club’s Flugtag craft. “And the team elected to do the latter.” The “Flying Kiwana” traveled the second-longest distance in the competition.
advertising, marketing, design and digital media. When Red Bull announced that it would host its second Nashville-based Flugtag, she immediately saw the promotional opportunities for her Kiwanis club.

Founded in 1916, the Nashville Kiwanis Club boasts a membership roster of more than 240. To keep the club thriving, officers strive to recruit enthusiastic members across a wide range of ages. Its Young Professionals group holds monthly socials for those ages 20 to 45 to engage them in networking, volunteering and forming new friendships. Some 80 Nashville Kiwanians fall into this age range.

“That’s been the largest area of growth,” says Victor Legerton, the club’s executive secretary.

Koeppel approached the Young Professionals about involving both the group and the club as a whole in Flugtag. The Young Professionals got on board, and soon the entire club agreed to back the project.

“(It went) from humble beginnings to ‘everybody’s involved,’” recalls Koeppel. “It’s been fun to see all the different people and interests that have jumped on board. It’s really awakened a lot of members in the club and connected them in a different way.”

Adds Legerton, “Which is one of the things we had hoped the Young Professionals group would do: revitalize and reenergize some of the longtime members. And (the Flugtag) project certainly has done that. It’s also brought in a couple of new members already.”

Sutton is one of them. An advanced lead engineer at GE Aviation, Sutton has an extensive background in aerospace mechanical design, including testing and manufacturing of aircraft and rocket engine components. His father, a longtime Nashville Kiwanis Club member, asked if Sutton would be willing to design the Flugtag craft.

“He always spoke of this group that he was in,” Sutton says. “He tried to get me to come out a few times before, but I always viewed it as one of those old-man groups where they’d wear hats and tassels. I mean, I knew nothing about Kiwanis at the time. … But (the Flugtag project) sounded interesting and like something fun to do. I came to a meeting, talked to a few people, got to know them. It was quite different than I thought it would be, and I wound up joining the club two weeks later.”

He faced an unusual challenge with the Flugtag craft, as Red Bull strictly regulates construction guidelines. Vehicle size and weight are limited, the craft must be unsinkable, and building materials must be environmentally friendly, among other very specific requirements.

“(We were) figuring out, ‘What does this thing look like? How do all the parts fit together? How in the world are we going to assemble it and transport it?’ And you’ve got to worry about things like ergonomics and safety upon impact to make sure that our pilot is safe. The human factor was a big part of it.”

Cost also entered into the equation. Once the craft makes its splash landing, Red Bull reps tow it away. Team members can’t salvage any of the wreckage.

“The humor in the issue is that you’re building this thing that needs to carry a person safely to the water, but it’s literally a ‘dispose and throw-it-away’ airplane,” Sutton says. “It’s almost like pulling a Bic razor out of the plastic, using it and throwing it away.”

Up on the Flugtag launch platform, Koeppel waited atop Sutton’s finished craft, dubbed the “Flying Kiwana.” According to the back story created by the club, this half koala/half iguana sprouted wings after drinking a Red Bull. The idea came from a stuffed toy that Legerton bought at the 2000 Kiwanis International convention to support Children’s
Miracle Network Hospitals. He invented a past for the creature, and club members decided to theme their flight around it.

But Koeppel wasn’t thinking about Kiwana’s mythical beginnings. She was focused on the moment at hand and her task ahead as the craft’s pilot. Sutton had incorporated a simplified control system into the Kiwana. The team’s four ground-crew members would run while pushing the craft off the launch pad. Then, by pulling a lever, Koeppel could make the nose of the craft rise.

“There’s no way, unless our runners were from Kenya, that we were going to get enough air speed to actually take off that (launch) pad,” Sutton explains. “We were going to have to drop a good eight to 10 feet, get enough air speed with the additional gravitational pull and then she’d be able to pull back on the stick, level the plane and fly forward.”

Koeppel took that responsibility seriously. The team’s goal was not to make the most spectacular crash landing, as many other participants opted to do. The Kiwanians wanted to surpass the existing Flugtag flight-distance record of 258 feet. Knowing she’d need strength to maintain her perch on the Kiwana and control its pitch, Koeppel had worked with a personal trainer three times a week leading up to the competition.

Now, as she anticipated the team’s turn to launch, she concentrated on mental preparation.

“I knew that I had a very specific job to do, and I knew that I needed to stay very centered in order to do it,” she says. “When I was on top of the plane, it was a combination of trying to quiet my mind and center myself, meditate and bring my heart rate down. But also it was a combination of just appreciating that moment, because it (had been) so much work, and it was going to be over so fast. So I was just sitting there with my eyes closed, trying to feel the sun on my face, just slow that moment down.”

Sutton, meanwhile, was coming to terms with the reality of his role as one of the ground-crew members. Not only does the crew push the craft off the launch platform, they follow it into the water. So when the master of ceremonies announced that it was go-time for the Flying Kiwana, he’d be taking a leap of his own. Clad as explorers searching for the mysterious Kiwana, Sutton and the rest of the crew performed their 60-second skit as more than 60,000 spectators looked on. Before he knew it, the crew was running at full speed, pushing the flight machine.

“Your adrenaline is pumping so hard that all things black out,” Sutton says. “Sure, we’d done push trials, but we hadn’t done push trials on the edge of a 30-foot cliff.”

Koeppel had a similar reaction:

“It was terrifying. I was very much (thinking), ‘Don’t crash.’ I didn’t want to faceplant like some of the planes. (But) I have good reaction time, and I was really prepared. It’s over the edge and I’m like ‘Pull. Pull. Pull.’ And then, blah, water. And that’s it. Then it’s over.”

When she broke the river’s surface, thankfully unharmed, Koeppel had no idea whether her flight had succeeded or failed.

“At the end of the competition, even though the Flying Kiwana didn’t break any records, its members accomplished their most important goal.

“It would have been nice to set the world record,” Sutton reflects. “But the goal of this was to make a physical presence of the Kiwanis name, and I think we did that. And we did it in front of a whole lot of people.”

Kelly Koeppel, Kiwanian and Craft Pilot

“We did exactly what we wanted to do, what we envisioned. It was a one-shot deal, and we got it right. It was amazing.”
On competition day, observing the other teams became part of the fun. “We were all really interested to see how everybody else did,” says Flying Kiwana pilot Kelly Koeppel. “So we would get (the Kiwana) into place and then we would run back to the fence and try and watch the other teams and their skits and their planes.”
Tackling a major event takes dedication but can score big results. Fly high with this advice from the Nashville Kiwanis Club.

• Know what you’re getting into. Kelly Koeppel headed the Nashville Kiwanis Club’s five-month involvement in planning for and participating in the Red Bull Flugtag. “Be really honest with yourself about the kind of commitment it takes to pull this kind of thing off, because for many of us, this was a second full-time job.”

• Make sure enough members are invested. “You need a core group of leaders who have resigned themselves to see this through. You can’t have a project like this fall on two or three people,” Koeppel cautions. “It’s just too big.”

• Take it seriously. Koeppel organized various committees to focus on all aspects of the event, from building the craft to writing and choreographing the skit to handling public relations. “We actually used project management software to connect everybody to the information and the process and deadlines.”

• But don’t forget to enjoy the experience. “It was really fun to be a part of a project like this, with so many people who had so many different points of input,” Koeppel says. “We have created unique bonds through this project, and that makes the whole thing worth it.”

• Use your success as future motivation. Koeppel faced her fear of heights and successfully piloted a human-powered aircraft off a 30-foot-tall platform. “I will always be able to look back at that (event) video and say, ‘Look what I was doing when I was 42.’ Anytime I’m feeling a little lazy, I can always go back and say, ‘Yeah, I can’t use that age thing as an excuse anymore.’”

The sky’s the limit when marketing your club

Working on a long-term event does more than raise a club’s profile. Says Chad Sutton, “You can really get people in your club active and excited and engaged.” Adds Kelly Koeppel, “We learned a lot about ourselves and each other.”
Global service

RARE DISEASES ARE A GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM. ONE DISTRICT HAS DECIDED TO ACT.

Words PATRICK MAUREL

Kiwanis members around the world have taken on many different fundraisers and signature projects. In an effort to share some of these ideas with other members in a fresh way and to get people thinking of new project ideas, Kiwanis magazine is launching a new feature titled, “In their words.”

This month, we kick it off with a piece by Montpellier, France, Kiwanian Patrick Maurel, a research and laboratory director and expert in the field of molecular biology who introduces Kiwanians to the work the France-Monaco District is doing related to rare diseases.

By definition, a rare disease is one that has a low prevalence, meaning fewer than 1 in 2,000 in Europe, 1 in 10,000 in Australia or one that affects fewer than 200,000 people in the United States. However, low prevalence does not mean low impact.

There are between 7,000 and 8,000 rare diseases, which collectively affect approximately 5 percent of the world’s population, or about 400 million people. This adds up to about 37 million Europeans, 1.2 million Aussies and 16 million Americans. Rare diseases make no distinction between ethnic origin or social levels. They are present and strike everywhere. Almost everyone knows someone who has a family member suffering from a rare disease. And these diseases are causing a global public-health problem.

THE CHILDREN ON THE FRONT LINE

Most rare diseases — 80 to 85 percent — are of genetic origin (due to a mutated gene) and often appear clinically immediately after birth or during early childhood. Hence, half of the people affected by a rare disease are children (representing about 200 million worldwide). These diseases are chronic, irreversible, continue throughout life and 65 percent are disabling and/or life-threatening. It’s estimated that 35 percent of the infant mortality rate is due to rare diseases.

Another major problem is they are difficult to diagnose. Families often spend years trying to understand what’s making their child or loved one sick. Most rare diseases have no cure (a therapeutic treatment exists for only about 250 of them).

Since pharmaceutical companies are, for evident economic reasons, reluctant to undertake long, costly and risky research on a disease that would only affect a few hundred or thousand people in the world, there’s a critical need for other means for financially supporting the research on these diseases, in terms of diagnostic, molecular understanding and new treatments.

A TRUE KIWANIS MISSION

All of this information leads us to this question: Should children die from a rare disease merely because the number of cases is so small?

In the France-Monaco District of Kiwanis, we believe that fighting against rare diseases is a true Kiwanis mission.

Therefore, we have decided to make rare diseases our major national program by providing two kinds of support:

• To families of kids, helping them to get appropriate medical care
• To the Rare Diseases Foundation, a French institution involved in medical and clinical research on such diseases
IN THEIR WORDS

MARGOT’S CASE
Margot (below) was 6 years old when her case was presented to the France-Monaco District in March 2016. Suffering from cerebral palsy* since birth, she had never walked and was moving in a wheelchair or crawling along on the ground.

The only way to improve her condition was a selective dorsal rhizotomy, a delicate neurosurgical technique to reduce spasticity and improve mobility in children with cerebral and lower extremity spasticity. But the best surgeon for this operation was Tae Sung Park, the Shi H. Huang professor of neurosurgery and neurosurgeon-in-chief at St. Louis Children’s Hospital in Missouri. And Margot was in France.

Margot’s parents evaluated the costs, including travel, hospital bills and housing, and realized they could not make it. Hence, Margot became the first case for the France-Monaco District. In a few months, more than 55,000 euros were collected.

She had her successful operation in St. Louis a few days before Christmas 2016. During their stay in St. Louis, Margot’s family received a lot of help from the Kiwanis Club of Crestwood-Sunset Hills. Since September 2017, Margot has been walking without help for the first time in her life.

RESEARCH FUNDING
Although being quite useful, all our actions aimed at helping families will not eradicate rare diseases. The only way to reach this goal is to develop new methods of diagnostic and therapies.

Since 2016, six research projects selected by the Rare Disease Foundation have been funded by the France-Monaco District, including Fragile-X syndrome, Cockayne syndrome, genetic mechanisms of developmental malformations of cerebral cortex, hereditary optic neuropathy, endocardial fibroelastosis and genetic diagnosis of severe intellectual deficiency.

The Kiwanis members of the France-Monaco District are very proud of what they have accomplished and are continuing their fight against rare diseases.

*Strictly speaking, cerebral palsy is not a rare disease since its prevalence (1-4/1000) is slightly higher than the definition (1/2000). However, it is the most frequent motoneurone-linked disability in children. In addition, the handicap of these children is similar to the one related to other “true” rare neuromuscular diseases. We, therefore, included this disease in the France-Monaco District’s actions on rare diseases.

KIWANIAN WITH A CAUSE
Patrick Maurel spent most of his career at INSERM, the French Institute for Health and Medical Research, as a research and laboratory director. He holds a Ph.D. in molecular biology (Paris University) and has authored 215 papers in international scientific reviews (PubMed). He’s been an expert in hepatology and drug detoxication. His group also worked on hepatitis C virus and stem cell biology. He has been fellow of several scientific societies involved in liver diseases and drug detoxication. More recently, he joined a biotech company (MedesisPharma) as chief scientific officer. This company is developing drug delivery systems for the treatment of neurologic and rare diseases as well as drug-resistant cancers.

Maurel has been a member of Kiwanis since 2011. He has been president and secretary of the Kiwanis Club of Montpellier, as well as lieutenant governor. In the France-Monaco District, Maurel is the person in charge of Rare Diseases projects and fundraising.

Learn more about the Rare Disease Foundation at fondation-maladiesrares.org.
What Kiwanis project makes you the proudest? Tell us more at shareyourstory@kiwanis.org.
YOU’RE ALWAYS A WINNER AT A KIWANIS CONVENTION

103rd ANNUAL KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
JUNE 28-JULY 1, 2018
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
KIWANIS.ORG/CONVENTION
Eagle Scout candidate Ethan VonDuhn had a somber request when he approached the Kiwanis Club of Brecksville, Ohio. He had learned that patients who were brave enough to report sexual abuse and seek treatment at a hospital had to leave their clothing behind as evidence. They often were given second-hand, hastily gathered garments in return — providing little comfort in an already traumatic time. A local hospital was seeking donations of new outfits to distribute instead.

Would the Brecksville Kiwanians help? Not only did club members say yes, but they recruited the other 10 clubs of Ohio Division 24 to join the effort. And sadly, there was much need. Hospital nurse Elizabeth Booth expanded on VonDuhn’s original information when she spoke to the Brecksville club. Sexual abuse is more common than many people think, she explained, with an increase in opioid addiction and human trafficking creating even more cases.

The Division 24 clubs knew exactly what they needed to do. They collected monetary donations, held fundraising events and ultimately purchased enough clothing to create 100 gift-box donations for preteen and teen girls.

“After being through a traumatic experience, the need for new, unused clothing is important for a person’s self-esteem,” says Kevin Brusk, a Brecksville Kiwanian and former Division 24 lieutenant governor who led the project. “Each package contained a modest outfit consisting of a top, slacks, socks and underwear. One of the most important items in the packages was a handwritten note of encouragement. We wanted these girls to know that there are people who care about them and love them, and...
that there is good in the world.”

For example, one note read, “Please know that you are thought about and admired for your courage and strength.” Another said, “You are beautiful and lovely. Things are going to get better because people do care about you.”

Kiwanians carefully wrapped each outfit in tissue paper, inserted a note and gift-wrapped the box in preparation for delivery.

“When we arrived at the hospital, our favorite nurse, Elizabeth, along with a local TV camera and some outreach staff from the hospital, greeted us,” says Brusk. “They had known the number of packages that we were bringing but were overwhelmed when they saw them.”

Afterward, the Kiwanians once again met with Booth, who reiterated the importance of the donations. The beginning of the healing process greatly affects a victim’s future, she explained. The members’ donations and kind words foster trust and show compassion at a time when the young women most need such encouragement. Many of the recipients, she added, asked to keep the boxes that held what Brusk and the other club members called Kiwanis Care Packages.
The package was relatively small, but the celebration surrounding its delivery to Golden Grove Basic School in Jamaica was a big one.

CVM television was there, along with a representative from the Jamaican Parliament. Members of the school board also were in attendance, as were officials from the Early Childhood Commission.

Golden Grove is in St. Ann, the largest parish on the island of Jamaica. And this past September, the crowd had gathered to see 10 tablet computers being donated to the school by the Kiwanis Club of Moneague St. Ann, with funding provided by the Kiwanis Foundation of Jamaica and the club itself.

As the tablets came into view, recalls Charissa Williamson, Golden Grove’s training teacher, students became elated.

“Theyir smiles grew, and the excitement that was given off by them was breathtaking,” she says. “For days after, they would come to the school and ask, ‘Teacher, can I get my tablet, please?’”

That’s exactly what Williamson wants to hear.

“In our technological world, it is crucial that students begin learning about technology at a tender age. Children learn best through engagement, and what better way to engage them than through the use of tablets?”

The Moneague Kiwanians agree. “Different children also learn things differently,” explains Yulanda Coombs, the club’s secretary. “The tablets make it possible for us to adapt to three very different styles of childhood learning: auditory, visual and kinesthetic.”

Still, she adds, more was needed. “We realized the school lacked a facility to promote the use of technology in teaching and learning. Providing the tablets was phase one of addressing this need.”

Phase two involved creating the E-Learning Center at Golden Grove by renovating a corner of one classroom.

“We painted the area in a bright royal blue and a golden yellow, then branded the walls with a big Kiwanis International logo,” says Coombs. “As many students rushed to marvel at the bright colors used to paint the area as rushed straight to the tablets.”

The tablets are the latest example of the partnership between the Moneague club and Golden Grove. Past projects include donating desks and fencing, planting shade trees and providing school uniforms, books and tuition to families needing financial aid.

“To the Kiwanians, we say thanks,” Williamson says. “Thanks for choosing our school and allowing our students to excel.”

Tablets make e-learning easy in Jamaica.

Words John Simmons
WOULDN’T YOUR CLUB RATHER SPEND TIME AND MONEY LIKE THIS?

Get products and services from Kiwanis partners – at discounts exclusive to Kiwanis clubs. Thanks to Club Resources, you can explore the buying power of Kiwanis Warehouse. And you can request discounted shoes online from Two Ten Footwear Foundation for club drives and programs.

Save time. Save money. Then use them where they matter most.

kiwanis.org/club-resources
A child’s best friend

A CLUB PAIRS AT-NEED CHILDREN WITH SERVICE DOGS.

Words WENDY ROSE GOULD

For many, dogs serve as dear companions. For Halle Berg and her mother, Shakira, their golden retriever, Sandi, is that and more. Sandi was gifted to the Bergs as part of the Alert Service Dogs for Kids Academy, a program founded by the Kiwanis Club of Grand Junction, Colorado, and headed by Rita Crumpton, a club member and dog trainer.

The program pairs service dogs at no cost with children who have “silent disabilities,” including diabetes, epilepsy and allergy-alert issues. Five years ago, Crumpton took the idea to the club, and members enthusiastically decided to move forward.

“It took me two years to get it all set up and ready to go, and to find a puppy and a child. I found Halle, and an attorney in the club helped with the paperwork. From there, I went looking for volunteers in the community,” explains Crumpton.

Two veterinarians committed to wellness packages for two puppies each for the necessary two-year training period. A family-owned pet store offered supplies and food at cost for six dogs, and a trainer volunteered to do the initial training. Additionally, the club annually allocates funds, and one member has committed to providing US$1,000 a year for 10 years. These donations go toward purchasing puppies and funding their advanced training.

Halle, who is hearing-impaired and has diabetes, epilepsy and heart arrhythmia, was the first to receive a puppy and graduate from the program. Two more puppies are in training with their boys, and four kids are on the waiting list, with more puppies on the way.

“Sandi has helped me in every way and form, even when I’m not sure what’s happening,” Halle says. “He even makes sure to cuddle me when I’m sad. Sandi is the best dog ever, and I love him with all my heart.”

Her mother’s life has been truly altered as well.

“He does everything. He goes to the fridge, opens the door and gets her a snack when her blood sugar is low, and then goes back and gets her tester,” she says. “When she’s having a seizure, he corrals her, makes her lay down and then lays on top of her before alerting an adult.”

Since Sandi entered the Berg’s lives, Shakira has received only two calls from Halle’s school — down from six per day.

“The program may not impact a whole bunch of kids at once, but it is going to save a child’s life,” says Crumpton. “To me, that’s my job as a Kiwanian: to improve the world one child at a time.”
In 1997, Maria de Lourdes Valarezo Loayza faced a challenge familiar to many devoted to service: opening a new Kiwanis club. In Loayza’s case, the club was to be in Ecuador. Although she had no prior experience taking on such an endeavor, she formed the Kiwanis Club of Chuquiragua-Quito, named after the national flower of Ecuador.

When the club was still new, Loayza learned that young Ecuadorian women from low-income backgrounds often had to drop out of high school after their third year, while many men went on to graduate. So Loayza and the Chuquiragua club members decided to dedicate their service to women’s education.

“Our desire was for these women to graduate from high school and later continue to study in university or enter the workforce,” Loayza says.

Club members decided to implement a scholarship program to help women complete high school and university. To fundraise, members sold crafts and organized bingo nights and other community events. As the new club became more active, it received additional donations for scholarships. Today, the scholarship program is the club’s signature project.

For high school students, each scholarship provides US$200 a year. For university students, a scholarship offers $300-$500 per semester. Through 2017, 437 high school women had received scholarships, allowing 417 of those students to graduate. Twenty-six women in university have received scholarships.

The club also holds workshops on self-esteem, sexual education and personal growth for scholarship recipients and their parents. Loayza hopes these workshops will help women strengthen their communication skills and learn to find proactive solutions to the challenges they encounter.

“We saw how this program raised their self-esteem, that these women became the best students in their school,” Loayza says. “They learned to not be victims of their circumstance and to confidently face their futures.”

Gabriela Chalá received one of the club’s scholarships when she was 14. The funds, along with her scholastic efforts, enabled her to enroll in the Universidad Central del Ecuador. After graduation in 2016, she went on to work for Buen Trip Hub, an innovation company, and Guapulo.com, a blog focused on technology and entrepreneurship.

Chalá’s success story is one of many that Loayza has witnessed since implementing the scholarship program.

“From their testimonies, we’ve seen that our help has been effective and that our hard work has been worthwhile,” Loayza says. “Our volunteer work has allowed us to dedicate our personal time to these dear young women, transformed into great women, the pride of our society and our country.”
A ray of hope
HOW ONE KIWANIS CLUB IS TACKLING OPIOID ABUSE.

Words JULIE SAETRE

Fostoria, Ohio, is a city of connections. Located at the conversion point of three counties, Fostoria is crossed by five state roads and one United States highway, and more than 100 trains travel through the city each day. But its latest connection might be one of its most crucial. This past year, the Fostoria Kiwanis Club sparked the development of H.O.P.E. in Fostoria, a task force of diverse representatives united in addressing the opioid crisis.

Ohio has the second-highest rate of drug overdose deaths in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Center for Health Statistics, and the Ohio Department of Health reports that more than 86 percent of unintentional overdose deaths in 2016 involved opioids. It’s not just well-known prescription drugs and heroin that are doing the damage. Synthetic opioids fentanyl (up to 100 times stronger than heroin) and carfentanil (5,000 times stronger than heroin) are responsible for an increasing number of the state’s overdose deaths.

Kiwanian Amie Hathaway, a former president of United Way of Fostoria, decided it was time for her city to become proactive in addressing the epidemic. She approached the United Way office with an offer to join forces.

“We have the bodies (for volunteering). United Way has connections that we might not have otherwise,” she explains.

Thus began the H.O.P.E. (Heroin/ Opioid Prevention/ Education) initiative. Comprised of 13 volunteers from law enforce-ment, health care, the faith-based community, Fostoria City Schools, addiction/recovery centers and families impacted by opioid abuse, H.O.P.E. strives to serve as a resource for educating the community and steering those who need help to appropriate organizations.

Mircea Handru, the executive director of the Mental Health Services Board of Seneca, Sandusky and Wyandot Counties, is a H.O.P.E. volunteer. The Mental Health Services Board contracts with various agencies that provide help for those seeking prevention, treatment and recovery support, so Handru sees the opioid impact daily.

“Heroin is an extremely hard addiction (to break),” he says. “I have personally experienced so many (clients) that I work with who have relapsed — or who relapsed and are not here anymore.”

This year, H.O.P.E. will hold a total of six educational sessions, focusing on key aspects of the crisis, from the role played by prescription drugs and signs of addiction to barriers to treatment and recovery. In the future, Handru says, task force members hope to implement long-term support services.

With opioid-related deaths surging across the United States, H.O.P.E. members know the task they face won’t be an easy one. But they refuse to be daunted.

“We realize that we may never be able to measure our impact,” says Hathaway. “But we’re all satisfied that if somebody hears the message and one life is saved, we’re golden. It will be worth every minute we put into it.”
Birthdays

THESE CLUBS CELEBRATE 25TH, 50TH, 75TH AND 100TH ANNIVERSARIES IN APRIL.

100TH—1918
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, April 9
Johnstown, Pennsylvania, April 15
Holyoke, Massachusetts, April 17

75TH—1943
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, April 12

50TH—1968
Lehigh Acres, Florida, April 10
Greater Tulare, California, April 11
Martin, Tennessee, April 18
Toulon-Doyen, France, April 20
Woodmar-Hammond, Indiana, April 30

25TH—1993
Geleen, Netherlands, April 7
Central Pensacola, Florida, April 7
Prescott, Wisconsin, April 15
Pei-Tun, Taichung City, Taiwan, April 15
South Hall County, Georgia, April 22
Tung-Yi, Taichung City, Taiwan, April 27
Houston Sunrise Breakfast, Texas, April 29

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Seriously, we know.

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- Normal Prostate Function*
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*THESE STATEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN REVIEWED BY THE FDA. THIS PRODUCT IS NOT INTENDED TO TREAT, DIAGNOSE OR CURE ANY DISEASE.
Kiwanis nerd

CLUB OPENER WEARS HIS NICKNAME WITH PRIDE.

Words JACK BROCKLEY

When friends and family members started calling Terry Cunefare a “Kiwanis nerd,” he didn’t like it. “It hurt my feelings,” he says. No more. “The more I thought about it, I’m proud to be a Kiwanis nerd. By serving kids and our communities with other passionate Kiwanians, you receive much more than you give. Life is good.”

Cunefare’s association with Kiwanis International President Jim Rochford goes back to 1999-2000 when they worked together to open the Kiwanis Club of Eureka, Illinois. “That club is still going strong today,” Cunefare says. “They sponsor a Key Club, Builders Club and do many projects for this small community. I reflect back and wonder, what if this club didn’t exist?”

Since that time, he has helped open 40 clubs in the Illinois-Eastern Iowa District and 10 in five other districts.

“Truth be told,” says Rochford, “he’s one of the best new-club openers in the world.”

Cunefare offers this simple advice: “We all need to ask everyone to join Kiwanis — friends, family, co-workers — so they can experience the awesome feeling we all get when a project has been completed.”

Visit kiwanis.org/roar to learn more about Terry Cunefare and his tips for opening Kiwanis clubs.

TERRY CUNEFARE
KIWANIS CLUB OF EAST PEORIA, ILLINOIS

ALL-STARS

MEMBER SPONSOR
JOHN LORENZO
WESTCHESTER, ILLINOIS

Lorenzo was his district governor’s assistant and rock of support for the mega-field effort in Chicago, which opened seven clubs in 60 days, with an eighth soon to open.

CLUB OPENER
GARY GRAHAM
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

Graham had his fingerprints on all five clubs opened this year, working actively in the field on three of them along with Governor Britton.

GOVERNOR
OTHA BRITTON
LOUISIANA-MISSISSIPPI-WEST TENNESSEE

Britton has opened five clubs since October 1 in a district that opened one club between October 2013 and April 2017.

STAFF
JEFF OATES
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Oatess is the go-to man for all areas of membership. He also has tremendous customer-service skills.

Read about all of the all-stars at kiwanis.org/roar.
TOP 5 DISTRICTS FOR CLUBS OPENED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>District</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Philippine Luzon</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(Tied) Illinois-Eastern Iowa, Taiwan</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Philippine South</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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TOP 5 DISTRICTS FOR MEMBERS ADDED

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TOP 5 INDIVIDUAL CLUB OPENERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Club opener</th>
<th>Clubs opened*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Alan D. Guire</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Anna Wu</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(Tied) Jim Rochford, Valarie Brown-Klingelhoefer, Mahmood Bashir</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOP 5 INDIVIDUAL NEW-MEMBER SPONSORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>New members*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Anna Wu</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ya-Hua Tseng</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(Tied) Dominic Pelayo, Marilyn Mendiola, Wong Siew Hai</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Numbers current as of January 9, 2018

THE FORMULA:
Open a new Kiwanis club
Have you visited a community and thought that it might benefit from Kiwanians’ service? The Formula provides resources to help you determine whether a community needs a Kiwanis club. Visit kiwanis.org/clubopener for more information, as well as help creating your own lasting legacy within Kiwanis.

KEEPING SCORE
For his tenure as the 2017-18 Kiwanis International president, Jim Rochford is focusing on new-club opening. In support of this year-long initiative, each issue of Kiwanis magazine will list the top club openers by district, individual and sponsor. Keep an eye on future issues for a progress update on new-club openings.
**MNT UPDATE: PHILIPPINES OFF THE LIST!**

In November, the Philippines eliminated maternal and neonatal tetanus, the third country to come off the list in 2017. Since Kiwanis International joined UNICEF for The Eliminate Project, we have eliminated MNT from 24 countries. Unfortunately, mothers and babies in 15 nations are still at risk of this deadly but preventable disease. Fulfill your pledge today so no more babies die.

**THREE DOG NIGHT TO PERFORM**

Legendary band Three Dog Night will entertain Kiwanians and guests during the Celebrate! Gala, to be held at the Paris Las Vegas Hotel on Saturday, June 30, during the 2018 Kiwanis convention. Dinner is included, with a cash bar available. Learn more at kiwanis.org/convention.

**IN MEMORIAM: STANLEY E. SCHNEIDER**

Stanley E. Schneider loved to golf. He enjoyed selling cars and flying. And he once told me that he was happiest while working on Kiwanis projects with his wife, Millie.

Stan, a life member who was our 1976-77 Kiwanis International president, died January 3, 2018.

I have always considered him a quiet giant of a leader. In the Ohio District, he was known as the membership guy. He traveled the state to make sure clubs had a mentor to help them through membership struggles, and he’d stay in the community until they were back to charter strength. He loved working with clubs.

As Kiwanis International president, he expanded leadership education, championed our Service Leadership Programs and introduced “Safeguard Against Crime,” urging members and clubs to “Lead the Way” in protecting and serving our communities. This was a change of pace from Kiwanis’ past Major Emphasis Programs and attracted the support of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Thank you, Stan, for leading the way.

*Alan Penn, 2011-12 Kiwanis International president*

**DINA MOVIE WINS ANOTHER AWARD**

“Dina,” a documentary about life on the autism spectrum, features in the starring role Pennsylvania Aktion Club member Dina Buno. The film won the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival and also, more recently, the 2017 International Documentary Association Award. Search for the film today via On Demand, or visit radi.al/Dina to watch on iTunes.
Warning: They’re contagious.

You’ll be moved by their energy, inspired by their enthusiasm and awed by all they do. Sponsor a Circle K International club, and you’ll not only change the lives of its members and the people they serve, you’ll change your own life too. These members are passionate about service and perform over 400,000 hours of it each year. Catch their fervor for improving the world.

Sponsor a CKI club today. Learn more at kiwanis.org/charter.
From our partners

MEMBER BENEFITS
Kiwanis International partners with several organizations that offer products and services that can help your club. Learn more at kiwanis.org/marketplace.

FUNDING FOR PLAYGROUNDS
Kiwanis partner Landscape Structures will again sponsor the Legacy of Play contest, now in its fifth year. Clubs have the chance of winning US$25,000 in playground equipment to create a lasting legacy of play in their community. The contest will begin April 12. Watch facebook.com/kiwanis for more details.

KIDS RIGHTS
Key Club is partnering with KidsRights to share the mutual belief that young people can make a difference and inspire students to take positive action both in the community and globally. At left, William Sims, Key Club International president, and Minyoung Kim, Key Club International vice president, meet with the 2017 International Children’s Peace Prize winner Mohamad Al Jounde. Learn more about Mohamad’s story at keyclub.org/kidsrights2017.

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES
National League of Cities helps city leaders build strong communities by elevating successful city practices and expanding the capacity of local leaders. NLC and Kiwanis have a strong commitment to school readiness and family engagement. Learn more about how NLC helps cities take action on behalf of young children and their families at nlc.org/early-childhood-success.

MARCH FOR BABIES
Join March for Babies and help give all moms and babies a healthy start in life. Sign up today at marchforbabies.org/kiwanis and register your club. Money raised is a lifeline for babies in the neonatal intensive care unit, connecting them with the critical treatments and care they need. The community you’re joining helps moms at every stage, from preconception to annual family walk day. The research you fund will help every mom and baby for generations to come.

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NEW K-KIDS PROGRAM
K-Kids Read & Lead is a literacy program created in partnership with Penguin Random House and Kiwanis International. Through this program, students will have the opportunity to read books based on themes, such as bullying, environment, hunger, literacy and influential people, and then participate in service projects based on the book themes they read together. The kits start at US$55 and contain a curated selection of books with ancillary materials to create the service projects appropriate for each theme. Learn more at kkids.org/readandlead.

IMMUNIZATION WEEK
Kiwanis will promote the importance of immunizations during the World Health Organization’s World Immunization Week, April 24–30, 2018, along with UNICEF USA, LDS Charities, Rotary International, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and other organizations. Kiwanis members know that #VaccinesWork. Through The Eliminate Project, Kiwanis members provide funds for vaccinations that save countless mothers and babies from deadly maternal and neonatal tetanus. Watch Kiwanis social media, websites and emails to learn how your club can participate. Learn more at TheEliminateProject.org.

SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW
Conduct a workshop at the 2018 Kiwanis International Convention! We’re expanding the education sessions — and that means opportunities for Kiwanians to share their expertise. Share yours!

Learn more and apply at kiwanis.org/convention/education
students how to breathe in really fun ways, novel ways. Breathe in your favorite color, breathe out a worry. A long exhale lowers your heart rate, lowers your respiration, lowers your blood pressure. It’s the exhale that matters more than the inhale.

**KM: Why do you think we’re seeing so many more children facing severe anxiety and stress?**

LD: I like to use the term adversity. When I say adversity it could be anything: lack of sleep, boredom, lack of good nutrition, or at the high end it could be sexual abuse, domestic violence. So many reasons. Our poverty across our nation is significant. About 25 percent of our children in adolescence in the United States are coming from poverty. Poverty is an adversity. Along with poverty, when you’ve got both parents working and in a survival brain state, sometimes neglect happens. And so that child is pretty much on their own. They have responsibilities at young ages that they shouldn’t. That hijacks and interferes with their own development. I also think we’re living in the most populous, diverse, technologically savvy time. So technology has really disconnected us, even though it’s connected us. Our children, even though they’ve been raised as digital learners and digital natives, find technology to be stressful.

We must attend to the social and emotional and brain health of a student. That’s first. That’s foundational. Then learning happens.

**KM: What can the average person do to help?**

LD: When you are volunteering or working with children or adolescents, there is nothing more important than connection and building a relationship. I think of tutors. I think of YMCA volunteers. I think of Boys & Girls Clubs. I think of Kiwanis. And this is what people don’t realize: One healthy attachment or connection with a caregiver — it doesn’t have to be a parent or relative — can change the trajectory of that child’s life because it changes the way the brain begins to fire. It actually upshifts so that child starts to feel felt. When we feel purpose, when we feel felt by someone else, we upshift. We move from that fight/flight/freeze response into the frontal lobe. So we can help by helping a child feel felt and connected. We can model how we handle adversity and we can teach regulation.

**KM: Do you have any other tips on how to approach a stressed child?**

LD: Remember that no one calms down when you tell them to calm down. So when you approach a child, ask these three questions: What do you need? How can I help? What can we do to make this better? You almost shock a child because they are ready to posture and defend when they’ve made a poor choice. You actually distract the brain state, so instead of posturing and defending and getting ready to fight or run, you upshift gradually to that frontal lobe. You may not get an answer from them, but they hear you. So we’ve encouraged teachers to continue to ask, even if the head goes down. Even if they start to walk away. They hear you.

**KM: It makes sense to teach young people how their brains work so they know why things are happening.**

LD: We are helping teachers and students to understand the science beneath our behaviors, and that objectifies it. So suddenly it feels safer — you don’t feel like there’s anything wrong with you. You begin to understand, ‘Ohhhh, it’s my amygdala.’

**Between the ages of 10 and 15 or 16, the brain has the most potential it will ever have again in its lifetime.**

Lori Desautels
Assistant professor, College of Education, Butler University

Turn the page to learn more, including ways you can help.
We’ve reached the most important part of The Eliminate Project: fulfillment. If you made a pledge, it’s time to give your gift. Help save more than 53 million lives from maternal and neonatal tetanus.

Finish the fight.
Fulfill your pledge.

TheEliminateProject.org/give
Now you know that stress and anxiety can actually turn off parts of your brain that help you learn. But what causes stress in young people, and how can you help? There are lots of fun ways, but it comes down to two main ideas: Get them moving and breathing. If you volunteer in schools or with young people, this information can help you to help them.

**COMMON CAUSES OF STRESS IN KIDS:**
- Bullying
- Grades
- Divorced parents
- Violence in the home
- Moving to a new home or school
- Sexual, physical or emotional abuse
- Social anxiety
- Peer pressure
- Fear of failure
- Tough classes
- Too many activities
- More responsibility
- Dating pressure
- Social media pressure

**FUN WAYS TO PREPARE FOR LEARNING**
- Listen to music
- Dance
- Pop bubble wrap
- Breathe deeply/focused breathing
- Tapping therapy (learn more at tappingsolutionfoundation.org)

**WATCH THE VIDEO**
Kiwanis magazine recently took 10 kids, ages 11 to 17, to The Escape Room, an interactive game setting where players have one hour to gather clues and get out of a locked room. Following the escape challenge, brain expert Lori Desautels, an assistant professor in the College of Education at Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana, talked with the group about how their brains work and how they can offset stress and anxiety with breathing and movement. Visit kiwanis.org/2018stress to watch the video.
Around the world, kids need Kiwanis. When you give to the Kiwanis Children’s Fund, you help other Kiwanians reach them. You support the projects that Kiwanis clubs and districts can’t afford on their own, and you help fund Kiwanis family programs for all ages and abilities. You extend your impact... and change the lives of children near and far.

kiwanis.org/childrensfund
WHAT'S YOUR STORY?
If your club has a success story, simply email a summary and a few photos to shareyourstory@kiwanis.org to be considered for possible future use in Kiwanis International publications.

READ KIWANIS MAGAZINE ONLINE
Enjoy the inspiring stories you love from Kiwanis magazine online in an easy-to-share format.

Visit kiwanismagazine.org to read about great Kiwanis projects, then share those stories and photos via social media buttons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and more, found right on the page. It’s that easy.

When you read something you love, pass it on. #kidsneedkiwanis #kiwanis