HEROES
ON THE FRONT LINES

FROM HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOMS TO NURSING HOMES AND SCHOOLS, KIWANIANS AROUND THE GLOBE ARE STEPPING UP TO HELP FIGHT THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS.
In Honor of
Strong Women Everywhere

She Believed She Could, So She Did

When a woman believes in herself, she can face any challenge, rise above adversity, and accomplish her goals. Now, you can honor a strong woman you know—your daughter, sister, granddaughter, friend, even yourself—in a special way and with a personal touch. This meaningful keepsake is hand-crafted of mirrored, beveled glass and features butterflies, a beloved symbol of change, on all sides. The statement on the front captures women’s empowerment:

She Believed She Could So She Did. Plus, the silvery heart charm tied with a ribbon to the sculpted butterfly topper can be personalized FREE with any name. The music box plays “You Are So Beautiful” and includes a poem card.

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Order this powerful musical treasure now at only $59.99*, payable in two installments of $29.99 each. Our 365-day money-back guarantee assures your complete satisfaction. Strong demand is likely, so act immediately! You need send no money now. Just complete and mail the coupon today, and indicate the name(s) for personalization.

YES. Please accept my order for the She Believed She Could So She Did Personalized Music Box(es) as described in this announcement. I need send no money now. I will be billed with shipment. Would you like more than one? Please print the name for each music box reserved (up to 10 letters per name).

1. ___________________________
2. ___________________________
3. ___________________________
4. ___________________________

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*Plus $9.99 shipping and service, per box; see bradfordexchange.com. Please allow 4-6 weeks for shipment. A limited-edition presentation restricted to 295 crafting days. Subject to product availability and order acceptance.

www.bradfordexchange.com/29414
MARCH 2021 • VOLUME 106, NUMBER 2

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The mission of Kiwanis magazine is to empower and inspire Kiwanis members to make lasting differences in the lives of children — and to share their powerful work with the world.

ON THE COVER
Angelo Ciardella
Photo by Dax Melmer Photography

HEROES • Page 12
Mike Delfs, president and CEO, Jamestown Regional Medical Center; Kiwanis Club of Jamestown.
I’ve been thinking about dreams and wishes a lot lately. Maybe it’s because I’m feeling stuck at home during a pandemic that, as I write this, isn’t easing. I’m anxious. I want to get out and go places and see people and hug friends again.

Feeling stuck can really drag you down. Some people feel stuck in a job that isn’t satisfying. Some feel stuck in a relationship that isn’t healthy. Sometimes people are literally stuck — stuck in mud, wheels spinning.

But feeling stuck can be a real motivator. It can be exactly what we need to get out of a rut and move forward to bigger and better things, like those wishes and dreams I mentioned earlier. Sticks can be a way toward collaboration as well. At Kiwanis, we have daily team huddles where we’re asked if we “have any stucks.” It’s our way of thinking of ways to get unstuck as a team.

Focus on your sticks this month. Think about where you are personally and where you want to be. Are you stuck and why? Who can help you?

Now, let’s put those same ideas into the context of Kiwanis. Have you taken time to think of where your club is stuck? Where Kiwanis International is stuck? Do you have dreams and wishes for your club or organization? Use the Workbook on page 50 to brainstorm with your Kiwanis friends. Don’t let any dream seem too big.

I remember feeling so excited to take part in an event called “Hands Across America.” My family and I stood hand-in-hand and joined strangers to attempt to form a human chain across the entire country to raise funds for Kiwanis and bring awareness to hunger, poverty and homelessness. I felt part of something big and wanted to feel that rush forever.

What big things will you dream up? What will you wish for?

Did you know? Some believe the superstition of blowing a dandelion sends its seeds into the air, carrying your thoughts and dreams to loved ones. When’s the last time you made a wish on a dandelion?

KASEY JACKSON
EXECUTIVE EDITOR
LEARN TO LEAD OUT LOUD.

Your career. Your community. Your club. Kiwanis Amplify can help you improve them all. Dive into eight leadership topics with subject experts. Explore the interactive online modules at your own pace. Then interact with other participants to turn lessons into reality. Become the leader your workplace, club and community need.

Get registration details and costs at kiwanis.org/amplify.

SCAN HERE FOR DETAILS.
President’s message

Kiwanis clubs and districts have been developing leaders since 1915 primarily through individual mentoring and business networking. Today, the evolution of business environments and increasing social needs of communities require more and better-equipped leaders. These leaders must demonstrate their ability to realistically visualize the future, understand a diverse population and promote servant leadership. Providing tomorrow’s leaders with the skills to make the most of these opportunities requires a more structured and deliberate approach.

In 2018, the Kiwanis International Board, the Kiwanis Children’s Fund Board and a member task force identified the need for better prepared Kiwanis leaders. To address this need, Kiwanians and staff designed Kiwanis Amplify, a unique curriculum to enhance the leadership skills Kiwanians need to be successful within our clubs, districts and communities and in ventures outside of our organization. Participants will be exposed to a spectrum of skills in a virtual interactive format presented by a world-class faculty. It is anticipated that Kiwanis Amplify will attract potential community leaders to join Kiwanis.

Kiwanis also has an obligation to offer youth members these leadership opportunities. The inspirational ideas developed for Kiwanis Amplify are the basis for the innovative Global Leadership Certificate program being created and implemented by Kiwanis staff. In fact, this will be a natural evolution of the leadership development programs Kiwanis has offered our youth partners since 1925.

The future of Kiwanis is dependent on an abundance of leaders of all ages. Being recognized as a trustworthy source of leadership development will uniquely position Kiwanis to attract more members and expand its service reach.

Learn more on page 10 and sharpen your leadership skills by participating.

Executive perspective

It has been about a year since most Kiwanis clubs responded to the pandemic by moving meetings online. For many clubs, of course, the traditional format offers a level of camaraderie and fellowship that only in-person gatherings can provide.

But not all was lost. Late last year, Kiwanis International collected information from more than 1,500 club secretaries — and we got some surprises. For example, 66% of clubs maintained the same meeting frequency. And 41% reported the same number of members — or more — at online meetings. In fact, some members who found it difficult to attend in-person showed up more often.

Many clubs saw improvements: 45% said virtual meetings improved access to speakers. Clubs also reported increases in guests from other clubs, including Service Leadership Programs.

Ultimately, we’ll move back to in-person meetings. And that’s great. But I hope you’ll keep the virtual option. The “hybrid” meeting has become an effective way of engaging members.

It also brings new considerations. If virtual attendees participate in discussions, you might need a fee-based tool like Zoom or GoToMeeting. If they only watch and listen, a free streaming service like Facebook Live or YouTube Live will suffice.

Either way, prepare to make a small investment in lighting, microphones and cameras. Find a member to handle set-up and production. Use multiple meetings to introduce new technology. And get resources at kiwanis.org/covid. Done well, the virtual option can make meetings accessible to more people.
Want to help the Class of 2021 remember how much fun Key Club was? Head to the Kiwanis Family Store. We’ve got pins, T-shirts and much more to help make the experience unforgettable.

kiwanis.org/store
What’s happening

TRENDS, TIPS, FACTS AND FIGURES FROM KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

Clubs leading membership growth

Here are the clubs that led the way in growth through December of this Kiwanis year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLUB</th>
<th>NEW MEMBERS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kiwanis Club of Seattle, Washington</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Club of Bukit Mertajam, Penang, Malaysia</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Club of Westfield, Indiana</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Club of Mount Sterling, Kentucky</td>
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<td>Marbel, Philippines, Kiwanis Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweet Onion, Neua Ecija, Philippines, Kiwanis Club</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Club of Spring Lake, North Carolina</td>
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<td>Zaragoza Walang Gulat, Philippines, Kiwanis Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ampuol Layag, San Carlos, Philipsines, Kiwanis Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kiwanis Club of Valparaiso, Indiana</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Club of the Last Frontier, Puerto Princesa, Philippines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hide-A-Way Lake, Texas, Kiwanis Club</td>
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<td>Maharlika, Cagayan De Oro City, Philippines, Kiwanis Club</td>
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<td>Progressive Pangasinan, Philipsines, Kiwanis Club</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Club of Levittown, New York</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Club of Monterey, California</td>
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<td>Berea, Kentucky, Kiwanis Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kiwanis Club of Te Aho Tini O Te Tama, Tahiti</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Club of Tierra Nevada, Philippines</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Club of Robson Ranch, Denton, Texas</td>
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<td>Kiwanis Club of Stellacoom, Washington</td>
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<tr>
<td>Siesta Key Kiwanis Club, Sarasota, Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kiwanis Club of Elberfeld, Indiana</td>
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Congratulations to all the Kiwanis clubs around the world that have added members this year!
Youth protection training webinar coming

On April 6, youth protection training will be available online through a webinar called “Get Trained! Youth Protection Policies and Practices Club Overview.” Kiwanis Youth Protection Specialist Melissa McMann will host the session via Zoom at 8 p.m. EST. The topic is especially relevant in April, which is both Child Abuse Prevention Month and Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month.

If you or your members have not received youth protection training this year, the upcoming webinar is a key opportunity. For more details, visit kiwanis.org/youthprotection.

Kiwanis clubs get access to Home Depot discounts

All Kiwanis clubs in the U.S. have access to a new resource for discounts on the products they need for service projects. Thanks to Kiwanis International’s partnership with Home Depot, clubs can participate in Pro Xtra, Home Depot’s loyalty savings program.

Club access to Pro Xtra is designed to make funds go further by reducing service project costs. Benefits include:

• 20% discounts on all paints, stains and primers.
• Volume and bulk pricing discounts.
• Monthly, member-only discounts on select products.
• Online access for 24 months to receipts and details of club purchases for service projects — a key feature for projects that require expense tracking when a grant is involved.

To find more details about Pro Xtra and to register for the program, go to kiwanis.org/homedepot.

Kiwanis Youth Programs board gets expansion, new perspectives

As the Kiwanis year continues, the 2020-21 Board of Directors for Kiwanis Youth Programs is up and running. One notable development this year is an expansion of the board’s membership. Under the leadership of Peter Mancuso and 2020-21 Kiwanis International President Art Riley, a motion was created to adjust the board’s composition to include new perspectives. As a result, it now consists of members who have expertise in various fields such as youth protection, education, finance and more.

The Kiwanis Youth Programs board members for 2020-21 are:

• Paul G. Palazzolo (Chair)
• George E.H. Cadman (Vice chair)
• Michelle Study-Campbell (Designated director)
• Karin Church
• Gary Cooper
• Kip Crain
• George R. Delisle
• Chuck Fletcher
• Alexis Langerak
• Donna T. Parton
• Daniel Vigneron
• Bert West

Key dates in March

Aktion Club Week [1-5]
Builders Club Week [15-19]
Kiwanis Amplify to connect members with leadership experts

What do a “Shark Tank” contestant, a “ninja warrior” and a former Builders Club member have in common? They’re all subject experts for Kiwanis Amplify. An online program for anyone who wants to enhance their ability to lead, Kiwanis Amplify consists of eight topics, with 56 sessions presented by 38 subject experts.

Precious Williams will present The Power of the Perfect Pitch. A 13-time National Elevator Pitch Champion, bestselling author and former contestant on “Shark Tank,” Williams says that many people don’t know the value of a great pitch.

“It’s not just in business,” she says. “Every time you open your mouth, you want people to see the difference you bring.”

Even knowledgeable people can fail to make that difference clear.

“They don’t know how to bring it to life,” Williams says. “People will see pretty quickly, I know how to bring it to life.”

The right framework

Delroy Waugh will head sessions on emotional intelligence and strategic thinking. Once a Builders Club member, Waugh’s experience in talent acquisition and development has helped him see how emotion and data work together.

“To lead people well, you have to know not just how smart they are, but how human they are,” he says. Emotional intelligence helps tap into that.

Understanding strengths, weaknesses and solutions is also key to Waugh’s work on strategic thinking.

“When you hear ‘strategic thinking,’ it seems like a big nebulous concept,” he says. “But it’s really about solving a problem. The question is, how do you get the right framework to apply your instincts to strategic thinking?”

A lasting imprint

Like Williams, Alex Weber might be familiar from television. Affiliated with “American Ninja Warrior” as both a host and competitor, he is also a successful businessman and speaker. For Kiwanis Amplify, Weber will present Creating Powerful Moments. To be powerful, he says, a moment must leave an imprint.

“Powerful moments do exist in isolation,” he says. “But if they exist for a team or group and have a lasting effect, that’s the goal.”

In fact, Weber adds, that goal applies to all of life. “If the subject intrigues you, it will serve in all settings. To create a powerful moment is to create a powerful life.”

The program’s particulars

Kiwanis Amplify is designed for members to participate via interactive modules, which will be released weekly. Participants will work through the material at their own pace and be able to interact online. The program will culminate in June with a session during the 2021 Kiwanis International convention.

To learn about topics, registration and more, go to kiwanis.org/amplify.
NEED VISION COVERAGE? VSP CAN HELP

We’ve partnered with VSP® Vision Care to provide members access to affordable, comprehensive coverage through a VSP Individual Vision Plan.

• Low out-of-pocket costs on eye exams, glasses, and contacts

• Personalized care from a VSP network doctor

• Plans start as low as $17 a month

vspdirect.com/kiwanis/welcome
HEROES

ANGELO CIARDELLA
Photo by Dax Melmer Photography
ON THE COVID-19 FRONT LINES

WHILE A HORRIFYING PANDEMIC QUICKLY RAGED, MANY KIWANIANS STAYED ON THE FRONT LINES READY FOR THE FIGHT. THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE BRAVE MEMBERS AMONG US.

NOTE: Interviews for this feature took place in December 2020.
For two months, I volunteered to relocate four hours away to Mississauga in order to help another home owned by the company I work for that had been heavily affected by COVID-19. I spent my birthday — and all of May and June — living in a hotel and working alongside an amazing group of dedicated people to care for those who call that facility home.

It was a humbling experience and one I will never forget. Seeing the pandemic firsthand was a jarring experience.

There have been many challenges throughout this time for me. Having to cancel my club’s signature project, our residential summer camp at Kiwanis Sunshine Point, was absolutely devastating, but the right thing to do. We will open our doors again when it is safe. This was the first time since 1947 that camp didn’t run, but now more than ever we are committed to continuing to support the children of our community. Another tremendously difficult thing has been having to step away from my work as a personal support worker in order to attend my clinical placement for school, as healthcare workers are barred from being in two healthcare facilities in Ontario at this time. My extremely dedicated colleagues at the long-term care facility where I am employed have been working to the bone to support our amazing residents.

The pandemic has taught me so many things. Wash your hands. Cover your sneeze. Be patient in line. Perhaps most important though, the pandemic has taught me that a little kindness can go a very long way. At a time where so much is unknown and so much is unfolding, there is still so much to do for the children of our communities. And even though that may look very different from what we are used to, it is so vitally important now more than ever.

"It was a humbling experience and one I will never forget. Seeing the pandemic firsthand was a jarring experience."
Whether it’s a pandemic or not, there is no average day in healthcare. Sometimes we’re making strategic decisions. Sometimes we’re rounding with departments and building individual relationships. Today, half of my time is spent preparing for and reacting to the pandemic. While we’ve had a long year and hard days, I’m so proud of this team and how it is continuing to care for the community.

During this pandemic, I’ve learned how resilient people are. Most people, provided you give them support, do amazing work. My role is to remove roadblocks. And so far, what we’ve seen is legendary. Human nature in healthcare is to step up and go above and beyond. That’s what we saw in March 2020 and that’s what we continue to see today.

“I’ve learned how resilient people are. Most people, provided you give them support, do amazing work.”

The pandemic requires the level of seriousness you see in the media. Today, people are confused or distrust the media and I understand their reasons. However, these preventive measures are important. For example, North Dakota had one of the highest rates of positivity in the world. In any year, due to the flu, we have people in the hospital, of course. However, we never had half of our census as all flu patients before. As Kiwanians, our purpose is to improve the community one child and one community at a time. Right now, easy and inexpensive ways to do that are washing your hands, wearing your mask and practicing physical distancing. When the vaccine is ready, with few exceptions, we recommend people receive that too.

To fellow front-line workers: Keep fighting the good fight. We’re here with you and for you.
To the general public: Please be aware, if you’re not on the front lines, your decisions have consequences that mean people end up in the hospital.
As the vaccines come out, educate yourself. We recommend everyone on our team receive them because herd immunity is our ticket to normalcy. Won’t it be nice to have our traditional events, meetings and pancake days again?
When the pandemic hit, we closed our facility to all outsiders, including musicians, exercise leaders and volunteers. With social distancing guidelines, my calendar focus shifted from large group activities to one-on-one and independent projects that could be enjoyed safely by individuals spaced throughout our large common space. We remain in a complicated position now with the government pushing us to open our doors while we strive to protect our residents and staff against new waves of the virus.

I don’t see things getting back to normal soon. Every step forward is riddled with concerns: Is this too soon? Is it going to backfire? We kept COVID-19 out of our facility for more than seven months. We heeded the state’s order to allow families to finally come inside for visits with a plexiglass booth, then we got hit. The timing was coincidental; we do not believe a family brought us the virus. All the same, we had to push our quarantining more strictly than ever before, and we had to utilize our isolation unit. We have halted the virus and returned to the level of socially distanced engagement from prior months, but we are once again concerned about authority recommendations to allow public vendors back inside.

The main change in our club was the shift to meeting through Zoom. During the first few months of isolation, we didn’t meet at all. We slowly got into the swing of alternating club and board meetings, then added speakers and online socials. Our satellite club has resumed monthly meetings in person, but our primary club meetings remain online. Meanwhile, most of our service projects didn’t miss a beat. The needs in our community didn’t fade, and neither did our determination to serve.

“I don’t see things getting back to normal soon. Every step forward is riddled with concerns: Is this too soon? Is it going to backfire?”

COURTNEY TAYLOR FALLWAY  New Braunfels, Texas, USA
Activities director, memory care facility
Kiwanis Club of New Braunfels, Texas; past Key Club member, New Mexico District; past CKI member, Louisiana-Mississippi-Tennessee District
This is my 16th year leading the independent Pinecrest School in Annandale, Virginia, and there has never been another time like this. There has been a constant need for innovation. Rethinking how things are done and figuring out how to do them — or do away with them and start from scratch — during this surreal time. My experience certainly helped navigate this moment in time, but there really was nothing to compare it to. A big change being in person at school during a global pandemic has been the tremendous focus needed on health, safety and wellness: masks and shields, distancing, sanitizing, cleaning, limiting interactions around the school and maintaining class pods, supporting staff and families that are feeling anxious and so on. Teaching is not easy on a regular day, and all of this has significantly increased the challenges. There has also been a need to learn new skills. Prior to March 2020, I had used Zoom a total of six times. I then went to using it daily. 

This time has reaffirmed for me the importance of grace (for myself and for others) and gratitude. I also think meeting this moment by staying present and being open has really been a critical part of doing well in this time of uncertainty. Getting too far ahead of anything these days is not productive. I think Kiwanis clubs have also had to think critically and innovate to continue to engage members. Our club is having virtual meetings and there have been some physically distanced service projects. Our club has a foundation that would have spearheaded a large-scale in-person service project this past Kiwanis year had it not been for COVID. Now we are seeking input from members and planning to distribute mini grants to local charities in need. We are still investing and supporting the community, but in a different way than we had imagined.

NICOLE MCDERMOTT Annandale, Virginia, USA
Educator
Kiwanis Club of Tysons, Virginia; past Key Club and CKI member of New England District

“This time has reaffirmed for me the importance of grace (for myself and for others) and gratitude.”

Nicole McDermott in her classroom.
worked for more than 35 years at the Saverne hospital. I was a young retiree and was called back by management to take part in a COVID-oriented consultation with three of my other retired colleagues. This consultation is carried out seven days a week.

None of us hesitated to return to serving in an unusual situation where the values of solidarity and cohesion between caregivers and patients were clearly felt. The population was thankful toward the hospital and its stakeholders, as everywhere else in France.

And to go back to the patients we consulted, we witnessed the usual range of illnesses, unfortunately with some very affected patients on the one end, whose grim prospects we were very well aware.

Kiwanis has also been a big supporter of the hospital through fundraising campaigns.

“None of us hesitated to return to serving in an unusual situation where the values of solidarity and cohesion between caregivers and patients were clearly felt.”
When Grenada registered its first case of COVID-19 in February, the government immediately instituted a national lockdown and 24-hour curfew. The Ministry of Information Communication Technology was suddenly thrust into the role as an essential service provider.

It was my responsibility to facilitate virtual sittings of the cabinet, thus ensuring that the main decision-making arm of government continued to function during the lockdown. Additionally, I was responsible for ensuring that important information from the Ministry of Health, the Royal Grenada Police Force and the government agencies in general was disseminated via virtual means to the citizenry on a timely basis. Thus, the ministry facilitated all of the government’s press briefings, broadcasts and updates.

The government also announced that public workers were expected to work remotely and that schools should also convene remotely. In response, the Ministry of ICT implemented the Avaya Remote Worker Solution. The solution allowed officers to answer, make and transfer calls to other office extensions throughout the public service from the security of their homes using their mobile devices. A number of Office 365 licenses were commissioned, and training was delivered virtually to public officers so they could communicate and collaborate remotely via Office 365, OneDrive and Microsoft Teams. In addition, the ministry developed solutions to facilitate virtual sittings of the court.

Meanwhile, once the schools in Grenada closed their doors, the Ministry of Education was able to launch a platform to facilitate remote teaching and learning. The M-Star Learning Support Platform, developed by the Ministry of ICT, brought both students and teachers together on an integrated platform, providing user-friendly tools and resources and making proactive engagements with students a simple matter.

I was also responsible for ensuring that all government IT systems were fully functional during the lockdown period, that connectivity was at its optimum and that all government servers and data were safe and secure. Hence, though the public service was on lockdown, the Officers of the Ministry of ICT functioned as normal.

FINLEY JEFFREY
St. Andrew, Grenada
Permanent secretary, information communication technology, Public Service of Grenada
President of the Kiwanis Club of St. Andrew, Grenada

“I was also responsible for ensuring that all government IT systems were fully functional during the lockdown period.”
Texas has been hit hard with COVID-19. In November, we became the first state to reach a million novel coronavirus cases. In the Rio Grande Valley, we have seen our own sets of challenges as we continue to fight this pandemic. As a nurse practitioner, I have continued to provide patient care to the patients that I serve, addressing their medical needs and their mental health needs as well.

The pandemic has certainly brought on many challenges to how we deliver patient care. One of the biggest challenges has been how we see and examine our patients. Traditional exams are face-to-face with close proximity, allowing the caregiver and patient to use body language to help with communication. Currently, we are seeing patients via telehealth (audio and video), by phone and on rare occasions we have them come in for a face-to-face consult. For a lot of us, this has been challenging because seeing the patient’s overall appearance is an important part of our examination. One of the things that I have noticed since the pandemic has been the higher volume of patients experiencing issues with anxiety and depression.

One of the biggest challenges I have faced during the pandemic has been the limited resources that are available to address my patients’ needs. I have seen patients who have lost loved ones, their jobs, their homes, the ability to pay for their medications and are experiencing food insecurity.

This pandemic has taught us many lessons. I think the biggest lesson is that we must always strive to be prepared for the unexpected. We must learn to work with others and be aware of the resources that we have available.

I think the role we have as Kiwanians is amazing and we do a great job by supporting our cause and our mission. I would like Kiwanians to know that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Things will get better and we must continue to be hopeful. As a person and healthcare provider, I would like to remind everyone to practice safety and to continue to follow all CDC recommendations.

“I think the biggest lesson is that we must always strive to be prepared for the unexpected.”

AARON SALINAS Edinburg, Texas, USA
Nurse practitioner
Kiwanis Club of Edinburg

HERO

Aaron Salinas

20 KIWANISMAGAZINE.ORG
I’ve been working 25 years as a military veterinarian, 15 of which I’ve served as chief of the Belgian Military Veterinary Service and the last three years as chairman of the NATO Veterinarians.

A colleague of mine had the idea (to use working dogs to detect COVID-19 in people) and tested it with positive results with a few dogs of the Paris Fire Brigade. I still know a lot of people worldwide in the area of working dogs, and I wanted to bring all people in Belgium together to avoid spreading of efforts. I got the approval of the government to perform the study, and the Ministry of Public Health of Belgium gave us 60,000 euros.

The biggest success was bringing together universities, the Ministry of Defense, National Police and Civil Protection on this project. We were discussing in the district board how to develop a program to create visibility for Kiwanis. Since I am active in both, I saw an opportunity with a double-win situation. Kiwanis has a huge network that can bring in a short time volunteers for the project. I was hoping for a lot of media coverage for this original project, so good for Kiwanis to be associated with a project with a very good social impact. The result of media coverage was much more than expected.

We have started training the dogs. I am excited and hope to prove that our dogs can indeed indicate positive carriers of the COVID-19 virus. Then I hope to convince the government to invest in dogs and people, so schools and all other economic and social activities can go back to normal as soon as possible.

“Kiwanis has a huge network that can bring in a short time volunteers for the project.”

Learn more about Miguel Stevens’ project with working dogs at kiwanis.org/covid19dogs.
BON VOYAGE

TRAVEL MAY BE RESTRICTED THESE DAYS, BUT YOU CAN STILL DREAM OF YOUR NEXT GETAWAY. HERE ARE SOME OF OUR FAVORITE SPOTS — ALL WITH A KIWANIS CLUB NEARBY.

If the pandemic has you on lockdown, you’re not alone. We’re sick of being stuck inside too. And since we like a great adventure as much as anyone, we decided to take you with us on a virtual trip to some amazing locations that all have one great thing in common: Kiwanis. Yes, that’s right. All of these beautiful locations have at least one Kiwanis club in town or nearby. So when it’s safe to travel again, where will you go? Will you learn about the local culture? Get lost in a great book while lying on the beach? Wherever you go, look up local Kiwanians and join them for a meeting or project. Make friends around the world. After all, fellowship is part of what Kiwanis is all about. Enjoy the trip!

Photos by Kasey Jackson
Multnomah Falls, Oregon, USA
TRAVEL

Kathmandu, Nepal

San Diego, California, USA

Paris, France
Keeping kids safe from online threats is a top priority. Story by Julie Saetre

When the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic one year ago, a worldwide transition to remote work and education occurred for many almost overnight. And while we were preoccupied with adapting careers and schoolwork to a virtual experience, online predators suddenly had an influx of distracted, stressed and overwhelmed children, tweens and teens who could be accessed at the click of a key.
Titania Jordan (left), saw the results first-hand. Jordan is chief marketing officer and parent information officer at Bark, a tech service that uses software to monitor young computer users’ online activities for threats such as cyberbullying, sexual predators and adult content. Bark also alerts parents and guardians to signs of depression, suicidal thoughts and other concerns.

“Online predation at the onset of the pandemic rose 23 percent,” says Jordan. “And by that, I mean at Bark we alert parents to digital dangers, and we sent 23 percent more alerts surrounding this danger specifically of online predators. Because predators were quarantined, they knew kids were stuck at home and they were using that to their specific purposes.”

Jassamine Tabibi (right), is a research associate for the Learning Network/Knowledge Hub at the Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children at Western University in Ontario, Canada. Not only did the pandemic bring more kids online for longer times, but it also put added stresses on parents and guardians, making them less able to effectively monitor their children’s virtual activities.

“Parents may be at work, busy working from home or navigating their own challenges related to the pandemic, (for example) job loss and substance use,” Tabibi says. “Children may be looked after by siblings or grandparents who may not actively be monitoring what children are consuming online.

In April, May and June of 2020, Canadian police in a variety of regions saw an increase in reports of sexual exploitation of children. In those same months, reports to the United States’ National Center for Missing & Exploited Children from young people who had been sexually exploited and citizens noting people trying to sexually abuse children online increased by 81%.

A year later, internet dangers are no less of a threat. While some people are returning to the office...
“The ability for somebody to message your child or comment on one of their posts if they have a public account, the ability for (kids) to search and then land on problematic content — that exists no matter what social media platform they’re in.”

or classroom, tech experts don’t anticipate that the dependence on in-person attendance at work, school and meetups will ever return to pre-pandemic levels. “We have transitioned into a new world. It’s a new society,” says Nevin Markwart, (left), chief information security officer at FutureVault, a Las Vegas, Nevada-based company that provides a virtual secure “vault” where clients deposit, store and manage important documents. “The circumstance that we lived through in 2020 is probably going to perpetuate itself for the rest of time.”

Even before the pandemic, online threats to kids were concerning. In 2019, Bark analyzed more than 838 million messages sent via texts, email, online games and over 300 apps and social media platforms. The findings were enough to make any parent or guardian take note:

- 76.2% of tweens and 78.4% of teens experienced cyber-bullying as a bully, victim or witness.
- 70.7% of tweens and 84% of teens encountered nudity or sexual content.
- 55.1% of tweens and 67.1% of teens engaged in conversations about depression.
- 35.1% of tweens and 54.4% of teens were involved in a self-harm/suicidal situation.

Jordan, who also authored the book Parenting in a Tech World and founded its companion Facebook group, often hears from anxious parents who want to know if certain social media sites or phone apps are more dangerous for kids than others. Unfortunately, there’s no easy answer. “The ability for somebody to message your child or comment on one of their posts if they have a public account, the ability for (kids) to search and then land on problematic content — that exists no matter what social media
“Netflix has great content for kids, but it also has adult content. And if you haven’t implemented the parental controls and PIN code for it, your young child could stumble upon content that they’ll never be able to unsee.”

platform they’re in,” she says. “Let’s talk about YouTube. A lot of parents think, ‘Oh, my kid just goes to watch videos. No big deal.’ Well, there is a comments section on YouTube, and if you are not using YouTube Kids or have certain parental controls select-ed, that comment section can be incredibly toxic.

“Netflix has great content for kids, but it also has adult content. And if you haven’t implemented the parental controls and PIN code for it, your young child could stumble upon content that they’ll never be able to unsee.”

Adds Tabibi, “In general, predators are luring kids on approximately 200 online platforms young people use to connect.”

It’s enough to make you hide your child’s phone and ban them from the internet on the family computer. But that’s the wrong move, experts caution. Kids increasingly depend on those devices to socialize with peers, do research for school and learn new skills, from sports techniques that help them improve on the field to hobbies they enjoy. And if they do sneak access and then encounter an online threat, they’ll be reticent to report it, making them more vulnerable than ever.

So what’s a concerned adult to do? Experts say you can help protect your child while still ensuring they benefit from the positive aspects of the World Wide Web.

Get real about the threat. “The first thing for parents to keep in mind is that this is actually a problem,” Jordan cautions. “Some people have the ‘not my child’ syndrome. Yes, it can happen to your child. There are many stories about kids being lured away to meet people that they met through video games and Snapchat, and it’s kids that knew better. They knew ‘stranger danger.’ Their parents talked to them about these things, and it still happened.”

Activate parental controls. Your cable system, internet and cell phone providers most likely give you the ability to limit the types of content your children can access and actions they can take. So do some of the most popular social media apps. Contact your service provider or plug the name of the service or app along with “parental controls” into an internet search engine for instructions. You can also consider a free or fee-based monitoring service that will track your child’s activities and alert you to concerns.

Don’t overlook lessons on basic security. One of the most
common overall internet threats is phishing, when a cybercriminal sends you an email that resembles one from a seemingly familiar site or contact, like a bank, online shop or friend or family member. Somewhere in that email will be a link, supposedly to your account information, a discount, a contest award, a funny video or any number of other inviting offers. When you or your child click on the link, you go to a website that downloads malicious software on your device. It might monitor your every keystroke, identify your passwords and search the web for your bank, credit card and shopping accounts. Or it could install ransomware that will lock you out of your computer, and the criminal will demand payment to allow you back in.

This is bad enough when it happens to your personal devices. But with more parents working from home and more kids needing online access for education, chances increase that your child might put your work devices at risk too, cautions FutureVault’s Markwart.

“There’s the potential for a huge spillover from students needing to get online and parents acquiescing and allowing business devices to be used on that basis,” he says. “That has a number of security ramifications. The greater the opportunity for there to be uploads and downloads, the greater the opportunity is for someone to be phished.”

Markwart suggests teaching basic “internet hygiene” as early and as often as we teach children to wash their hands and brush their teeth. Stress the importance of not clicking on links without verifying that they’re legitimate (simply hovering your cursor over the link will reveal the actual web address behind it) and not sharing passwords with anyone but parents or guardians.

Know how predators work. As in the real world, online predators “groom” their targets to put them at ease and gain their confidence. “Predictors may pretend to be in the same age group as those they chat with through various platforms or pose as a trusted adult to form a bond in hopes of eventually meeting in person,” Tabibi explains. “They may engage in a number of danger-

“Predators may pretend to be in the same age group as those they chat with through various platforms or pose as a trusted adult to form a bond in hopes of eventually meeting in person. They may ask a lot of questions about (the child), school, feelings and experiences, but reveal very little about themselves.”
ous activities with a child online known as ‘luring.’ This can include convincing a child or youth to reveal personal details about themselves and family members, send photos or meet in person. They may ask a lot of questions about (the child), school, feelings and experiences, but reveal very little about themselves.”

If a predator gains access to a child’s address, they might also send gifts with instructions not to tell anyone about the “secret.” These tactics — part of a technique known as “love bombing” — are especially effective on children already suffering disproportionately from pandemic-exaggerated stresses like abuse or neglect at home, depression and anxiety or a parent’s addiction to drugs or alcohol.

To safeguard against these threats, have candid, age-appropriate conversations with your child, stressing that while the internet brings many positive benefits, it also comes with dangers just like “real life.” Even young children can and should learn this lesson, Jordan says.

“With regard to online predators and sexual abuse and some of the most terrible things that happen to kids in this world, your 6-year-old might not be able to comprehend that concept. But what they can comprehend is the concept of a tricky person: ‘There are people online who are going to trick you. They might seem really nice. They might seem really friendly. They might even offer you a gift or coins in an app. But they are trying to trick you. They are not good people.’”

Strangers aren’t the only danger. Don’t make the mistake of being so fixated on threats from the outside that you overlook one of the most frequent causes of internet harm.

“While the risk of online predators targeting children is very real,” Tabibi says, “it is important to remember that cyberbullying from people that children do know — peers, classmates — is common and has the potential to become even more commonplace with remote learning.”

Light, a company that uses artificial intelligence to help web hosts find and eliminate toxic and dangerous posts and activities, released a study showing that during the initial quarantines in
spring 2020, hate speech between kids and teens increased 70%.

“There are plenty of stories about children as young as 7 and 8 and 9 dying by suicide because of cyber bullying and other mental health issues,” cautions Jordan.

**Watch for warning signs.** Whatever the online threat, be vigilant in monitoring your child’s behavior on and offline. Are they sleeping or eating more or less than usual? Have their grades dropped? Are they no longer participating in activities they love? Do they seem angry, sad or anxious, especially when they’re using tech? Do they huddle over their phones to block you from seeing the screen or frequently retreat to their room with a phone or laptop? These are all signs that something could be amiss and you probably should have a conversation.

**Be present.** Don’t just talk to your child about the responsibilities and dangers that come with using the internet. Talk *with* them.

“If you come at it from a place of, ‘You need to do this because I told you,’ you’re probably not going to get very far,” warns Jordan. “But if you do it from a place of, ‘Let’s navigate tech together. Mom and dad have certain concerns and questions too, and we’re going to get through this,’ you’ll get a lot further.”

And even if you have no interest in online games, if your child loves them, make an effort to learn. The next time they go online, watch them in action and ask about the plot, how to play, what levels you can explore and who they’re chatting with.

“You wouldn’t drop your second grader off at an elementary school without ever stepping foot in the building,” says Jordan. “You’re going to look at the locks on the doors and see if the bathrooms are clean and get to know the classroom. You’re going to check it out. Same thing. You can’t let your child play Minecraft or Roadblock or fill-in-the-blank game without sitting there beside them and watching.”

Finding funding

KIWANIS CLUBS HAVE BEEN EXPLORING WAYS TO RAISE MONEY WITHOUT IN-PERSON EVENTS.

Story by Tony Knoderer

There seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel. As the development and distribution of vaccines for COVID-19 continue, prospects improve for society’s return to the pre-coronavirus normal. Of course, we haven’t reached that light just yet. And until we get there, the need for social distancing and virtual operations remains.

For Kiwanis, that means a continued disruption of the custom of gathering in one place to do what Kiwanians do. Club meetings. Service projects. And the fundraisers that help so many clubs keep their coffers full and reach the kids who need them.

By now, it’s a familiar dilemma: When your regular fundraisers traditionally require bringing people together, how do you make up at least some of the difference without in-person events?

Over the past year, Kiwanis clubs have found answers in different ways. Some are taking advantage of Kiwanis partnerships while others are using technology to reach out — or even widen the net.

In all cases, they’re benefiting from old-fashioned, never-give-up initiative.

The gift card option

Many Kiwanis clubs have found that filling the fundraising gap doesn’t always require an alternate version of their classic events and signature projects. In fact, some clubs have been raising money by … spending money.

Last year, Kiwanis International began a partnership with ShopWithScrip. Through the program, clubs and members can buy gift cards from participating businesses — which then give a percentage of the purchases back to the club through its ShopWithScrip account.

ShopWithScrip currently has a roster of more than 750 brands, including restaurants, retailers and other frequently patronized businesses. The donation, which varies by brand, ranges from 2% to 20%.

Even before the pandemic, some clubs were using the program because of its fit with their members’ needs. For them, participation is more than just a stop-gap measure until COVID-19 is gone. Consider the Kiwanis Club of Ty-
Start Your Fundraiser
IDEAS FOR CLUBS

sons, Virginia, which began using the program as far back as 2009, when it was a young professionals club and needed an unorthodox way to raise money.

“We were looking for a way to do fundraising that was hands-off rather than ‘selling’ things,” says Jeffrey Wolff, who was the fundraising director at the time (and is again this year). “Service was what we really concentrated on.”

‘Drip’ fundraising

Today the club’s membership continues to be predominantly made of young professionals — so the chance to raise money over time while focusing on service remains crucial.

“We’ve never been great at fundraising,” Wolff says. “It’s not our focus. ShopWithScrip is part of an arsenal of nonspecific fundraisers that didn’t require selling or auctioning things.”

In fact, he calls it a form of “drip fundraising.” That is, the money comes in steadily over time rather than requiring a specific start or end, as in a fundraising event.

With ShopWithScrip, participating clubs get a monthly payment based on the total value of the gift cards they sell and the retailers’ respective rebate rates.

When a club creates an account, it uses its Kiwanis Club ID number as its associated identification code with the program. Every time the club sells a gift card — or the card is reloaded — the club is credited with an amount that will be part of its monthly rebate.

Since it doesn’t require massive amounts of organization, Wolff likens the program to “found money” — as long as the club promotes it among its members. It helps, he adds, that the ShopWithScrip roster includes major restaurants and retailers with many locations.

“With a little organization, you’ll have a little money coming in,” Wolff says. “That’s what helped launch it in our club.”

The importance of promotion

Currently the Capital District secretary, Wolff has also seen the importance of promotion and encouragement beyond his own club.

“It’s a big factor for some clubs,” he says. “Everyone buys gift cards for some reason or another. It’s all in the matter of promoting it.”

In most clubs, Wolff adds, the program is not likely to replace fundraising initiatives altogether. But in a club like his, which rarely has more than 30 members — and doesn’t often focus on fundraising as a collective endeavor — such revenue matters.

“It helps augment,” he says. “It may not generate thousands of dollars, but it can generate a few hundred here and there.

“And if a club has more members, with a wider reach?” he adds. “Yeah, it could make a big difference.”

Going virtual

For so many clubs that have major fundraising events, just saying, “Wait ‘til next year” isn’t that simple. Success can create
a certain amount of reliance on
the funds that events bring in,
whether they’re for the club’s
own accounts or the kids who
need Kiwanis.

But clubs are finding that virtual
versions of their fundraisers are
mitigating some of that loss —
and even providing a surprising
level of success.

In Florida, the Fort Myers
Metro-McGregor Kiwanis Club
conducted its first virtual 5K run
in December and January. It came
after 12 increasingly successful
years of hosting an in-person
version of the event. In fact, the
BUG Chase 5K Run had become
so popular by 2019 that the club
had to cut off registration for that
year’s event before it become too
big to handle.

“We would do it at a local na-
ture center,” says Rachel Toomey,
the club’s committee chair for the
event. “It’s a cool run — it goes
through the woods and paths of
the nature center.”

And because the proceeds
support the club’s work with the
Bringing Up Grades program, as
well as its other work for Kiwanis
Youth Programs, the club encour-
aged youth participation.

“It’s fun to have an event that
includes kids too, especially when
it benefits kids,” Toomey says.
“We have youth registration, and
we keep that fee lower so they can
come.”

In fact, all ages, abilities and
levels of competitiveness are
welcome. Technically, participants
don’t even have to run at the Run.

It’s a community
event — something
that people came to
anticipate each year,
and a name-builder
for the club itself.

Then came the nov-
el coronavirus. Like
many clubs, the Fort
Myers Metro-Mc-
Gregor club reached
a point in mid-2020
when decisions had
to be made. The
first was the most
fundamental: Do
we cancel this
year’s event?

Sponsor solutions
“It had been a hard fundraising
year,” Toomey says. “Our other
biggest fundraiser is a coupon
book with local restaurants. We
just didn’t do that because every-
thing kinda blew up.

“So it was important to keep
going.”

Fortunately, many of the usual
fundraising mechanisms could be
replicated in a virtual event. For
instance, a portion of the funds
come from participant registration
— which can be handled online.

In addition, Toomey says,
sponsorship has long been a big
part of the event’s success. Some
of that support has been through
in-kind payments, such as re-
freshments and food (and use of
the park from the nature center).
But a visual presence during the
event was also part of the appeal.
The club found it could continue
that sponsorship benefit
virtually — even during each
participant’s run.

In addition to a post-event
packet that will include a medal
and T-shirt that feature sponsors’
names, the club’s use of an app
called RaceJoy helps keep their
support front and center. With
participants choosing their own
times and places to run, the app’s
GPS tracker offers information
on how fast and far the runner is
going — and occasional mentions
of sponsors.

“It can say, ‘Mile 1 is sponsored
by such-and-such sponsor,’”
Toomey says.

Beyond boundaries
As organization continued,
another benefit of virtual events
became apparent: Participants
didn’t have to be limited to the
club’s immediate area.
In place of the traditional one-day event, the Fort Myers Metro-McGregor club offered a range of days for participation — from December 24 to January 23. Beyond that, where and when participants completed the 5K was up to each of them.

“The great thing about a virtual race is that you can do it any day you want, any time, anywhere,” Toomey says. “I mean, my brother in Asheville, North Carolina, he’s going to do it — see what I mean?”

It means, for instance, that marketing wasn’t constrained by geography. Toomey used all the normal channels of communication — from local news releases to social media — but she also posted on group sites outside of southwest Florida.

For an event with a strong youth contingent, a wider reach has been especially important. “It’s been more difficult to get the youth running groups involved,” Toomey says. “Obviously those groups just aren’t active right now. But we’ve had some success reaching out to SLPs from the schools. And we’ve gotten sign-ups from a couple members of the Aktion Club we sponsor.”

Toomey has also broadened her contact with the Kiwanis family. For instance, she emailed all 26 of Florida’s division lieutenant governors, asking them to spread the word.

And the Kiwanis communication hasn’t stopped there.

After researching other Kiwanis clubs’ virtual races online, Toomey saw the medals that the Kiwanis Club of Columbus, Ohio, was giving its participants. “I reached out to get the name of their vendor,” she says. “We ended up getting our medals from (that vendor). We love ‘em.”

With all the new participants, new items and new schedule and format, one established form of communication took on new importance. The club’s Facebook event page, Toomey says, has been “especially important.”

Any updates, including the new T-shirts and medals, along with a chance to showcase sponsors and prominently show the event days, are available to everyone — wherever they are.

“Committees matter”

For Toomey, an event committee proved to be a great resource during the transformation to virtual.

“We got more people involved with the planning process because there were more moving pieces this year,” she says.

The usual in-person needs may have dropped away, for instance, but the new format brought new considerations. How to set up “pick-up days” for the medals-and-shirts packets, for example.

And how to handle insurance. The Fort Myers Track Club has helped conduct the event in years past, but they still required event insurance to help with the virtual run. And since they were supplying access to the app and a database of people to market to, it was important to keep the relationship intact.

“It’s good to have a group of members who can help make big decisions,” Toomey says. “Like the insurance — that’s not my forte. So it’s helpful to have discussions about it.”

Ultimately, the inclusion of other people — inside and outside the club — has been a positive experience.

“I think it’s opened up members’ perspectives,” Toomey says. “And it’s been fun for me to connect with other people. I met a woman in Pennsylvania who was...”
in Key Club, like I was. She was just looking for other races to run.

“It’s funny how the Kiwanis world is a kind of familiar, friendly place.”

**Natural fun**

Some Kiwanis clubs have long-standing fundraisers that have proved adaptable to the COVID era. That’s because certain things about the world don’t change — allowing for a measure of consistency that comes from tapping into the cycles of nature.

In Janesville, Wisconsin, the Kiwanis Black Hawk Golden “K” Club puts a truck on Traxler Park Lagoon each winter when the ice is thick enough. Of course, winter doesn’t last forever. Members of the community are welcomed to guess when the truck will break through, as recorded by a 24-hour camera.

The fundraiser is a partnership with the hospital: After the winning contestant is awarded $1,000, another $1,000 goes to a fund for patients who need to travel to other facilities for services. The club uses the remainder of the funds for its service to kids.

**Cashing the chips**

Kiwanis clubs have found other ways to benefit when nature takes its course. In Massachusetts, the Northampton Kiwanis Club held a “pig poop bingo” contest last August.

On a Saturday afternoon, a member’s two Vietnamese pot-bellied pigs were allowed to roam Agnes Fox Playground’s perimeter, which was divided into 163 two-meter squares. People could “bet” $25 per square (as many available squares as they wanted) for the chance to win one of the two $500 prizes. Net proceeds went to local veterans’ programs.

The club’s event is a version of “cow chip bingo,” a contest format that other Kiwanis clubs have used. For example, the Mecklenburg Kiwanis Club hosts the Famous Cow Chip Bingo Festival. The bingo is the centerpiece of a day of family fun, including music, a petting zoo and a bouncy house for kids — with proceeds going to the Pediatric Cancer Fund.

Ultimately, it’s another advantage that comes from the reliability of nature itself.
Every spring for 75 years, the Staunton Kiwanis Club in Virginia has run a youth baseball program. Every year, that is, until 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic brought the beloved tradition to a screeching halt.

“This is the first time we’ve canceled a season,” says Jenny Buchanan, the club’s immediate past president. “And we pushed it back. We just kept delaying it and delaying it and delaying, until we knew: We don’t have the money or the manpower to enforce (health precautions) and keep everybody safe.”

When the ballpark sat empty, so did the club’s concession stand, where young players and their family members purchased popcorn, hot dogs, candy and cold beverages. And that’s when the Staunton Kiwanians took inspiration from their sister club in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The Charlottesville Kiwanis Club formed a partnership with a local Walmart store to pick up donations of non-perishable items (clothing, small electronics, toys, school supplies, sports equipment, household items, lawn and garden supplies) from the retail giant and distribute the merchandise to area nonprofit organizations.

“It’s just a great way to get stuff that would have been discarded from Walmart in the hands of people in the community who need it,” Buchanan says.

One of the Staunton members had a contact at Martin’s, a grocery store chain. Soon, the club had arranged a partnership with a local Martin’s store and began receiving donated items on a weekly basis.
“Basically, they go through their inventory (for) stuff that’s nearing the sell-by date, or they’re changing display items or they’re discontinued items. They have it loaded up in the back of the store, and we load it up in a pickup truck, take it to our concession stand and sort through it,” Buchanexan explains.

Sorting is no small task. The club receives hundreds of pounds of donated merchandise each week, from pantry staples to popcorn, personal hygiene products to pet food. Once the (masked, socially distanced) members have inventoried the items, the haul is loaded back into the truck and delivered to area nonprofits, including the Salvation Army and the Augusta Regional Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

“This project is a great opportunity for members to still feel like they’re able to serve the community in a different way than we’ve ever done before,” Buchanexan says. “That’s just been awesome, that we’re able to do that.”

The club plans to continue the partnership with Martin’s post-pandemic, even after kids return to the ballfield. In fact, members want to expand their impact by pairing with another Martin’s location in a nearby town.

“We’re hopeful that for the next baseball season, we can inventory stuff for Martin’s on Wednesday mornings and sell hot dogs to our kids and our baseball program family members every evening.”

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The island life provides many joys — balmy weather, beautiful views and a certain air of tranquility. Amid the pleasures, though, are some obstacles. In Barbados, for example, only two hospitals serve the 166-square-mile island, which has a population of about 290,000.

One of those hospitals is private; the other, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, is public and serves the majority of Barbados’ residents. Though Barbados’ healthcare system is highly regarded, the added complication of a global pandemic led to some barriers to treatment.

After meeting with a corneal specialist from the hospital in June 2020, the Barbados Kiwanis Club realized Queen Elizabeth’s eye clinic had a great need for assistance.

“During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital was accessible for emergencies only,” says St. Clair Phillips, immediate past president of the Barbados South Kiwanis Club. “Persons who had appointments with the eye clinic were severely impacted by cancellations or a request to reschedule their appointments. This also created a backlog for patients to have their immediate needs met.”

Those eye appointments are crucial, especially for those who are more vulnerable or high risk and can benefit from early interventions. Vision loss can severely impact both independence and confidence. Eye tests are also important — and mandatory — for children in grade school.

Hospital staff ultimately developed a game plan to expand their eye care services via digital appointments held at ‘polyclinics’ throughout the island. To pull it off, they needed computers to digitize and transmit medical records to and from the hospital, as well as specialized retinal cameras.

Determined to help, club members raised money to fund two computers, which cost Bds$1,500 (US$750) each. They continue to raise additional donations to secure more computers and the costly retinal cameras.

Even beyond the pandemic, this equipment will prove monumentally helpful for all of the island’s residents. Having easier access to an eye clinic means more people will be tested and that important interventions will be made earlier before diseases can progress.

The campaign also is raising the club’s profile, already resulting in media coverage on Barbados television stations and in both electronic and print newspapers.

Says St. Clair Phillips, “This project provided much visibility for the Kiwanis movement in Barbados and, by extension, worldwide.”
Looking for items that will flatter every member of your club? Check out our unisex apparel and gear. From face masks and shirts to totes and hats, we’ve got something for everyone.

kiwanis.org/store
Weathering the storm

PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL KEY CLUB HELPS TEACHERS RETURN TO NORMAL AFTER VIOLENT WEATHER.
BY CINDY DASHNAW

Until August 10, 2020, Laurie Worden had never heard of a weather phenomenon known as a derecho. But on that day, a storm front 250 miles wide with winds gusting to 145 mph passed through Cedar Rapids, Iowa, for almost 90 minutes, leaving behind destruction that Worden describes as “dystopian. It was like a bomb had blown up in our neighborhood.”

She found a silver lining in that forbidding bank of clouds, though: the generous hearts of the Cedar Rapids Prairie High School Key Club, which she founded.

The storm uprooted 20-foot trees, bent steel structures and ripped down houses, coming up so fast it killed an unsuspecting cyclist. In the aftermath, families who couldn’t live in their homes and couldn’t go elsewhere because of COVID-19 moved into tents.

Those affected included teachers. Dr. Doug Wheeler, College Community Schools district superintendent, wanted to offer teachers and staff free day care at the high school for the first three weeks of school. But when volunteer coordinator and Cedar Park Kiwanian Kathy Waychoff looked for volunteers, “I hit a brick wall,” she says. “So I reached out to Laurie and Key Club and said, ‘Listen, I need help.’”

It should’ve been a tough sell. But it wasn’t.

“They were a shining light,” Waychoff says. “No hesitation.”

Twenty-one Key Club members volunteered 395 hours helping 71 children stay active and keep up with their homework. Worden wasn’t surprised at how quickly Key Club members built trust and relationships with their small charges. Projects like this give her teens a way to use what’s already in their hearts to help others, she says.

“Three years ago, they heard a speaker from the Thirst Project talk about building clean water wells in Africa. Our (Key Club) vice president had fire in her eyes and said, ‘We have to raise US$12,000 to fund a well.’ That’s a lot of money. But 18 months later, they’d done it, and we built a well at a Swaziland village high school.”
Get More from Your Medicare Coverage
See if “All in One” Medicare Advantage plans are available in your area

These “all in one” plans bundle your Medicare benefits together and may include extra benefits not covered by Original Medicare.

You may pay little or nothing for:

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- Hospital Stays
- Prescription Drugs
- Dental Care
- Eyeglasses and Contacts
- Telehealth Visits

Kiwanis has partnered with eHealth to help members find Medicare coverage that covers your prescriptions at the lowest possible cost.

Call eHealth’s Helpline for Kiwanis Members

Call: 855-917-0119 (TTY 711)

Calls are answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week between October 15 and December 7, 2020

Speak to a licensed insurance agent at eHealth or visit ehealthmedicare.com/kiwanis
Members of the Smithfield Kiwanis Club in Smithfield, North Carolina, made a dream come true for a local organization and its young clients.

In 2018, the nonprofit Johnston County Partnership for Children met a key goal when it opened the Partnership for Children Park and Miracle Field, an inclusive outdoor recreation area.

The staff’s next dream was to create a sensory herb garden — and Smithfield Kiwanians signed up to build it.

“Our idea with the garden was for the children and adults to be able to smell, touch, taste and stimulate all their senses,” says Nancy Hildreth, the club’s secretary and project leader.

“It started from a simple herb garden in a box to a rain barrel and learning about water conservation,” adds treasurer Terry Ellis.

Construction began in June 2020. Area businesses donated plants, dirt and compost, and club members planted basil, rosemary, thyme, fennel, kale and oregano.

By November, members had completed the 10-foot long, 3-foot-high raised herb garden. The height ensures easy access for children of all abilities, especially those in wheelchairs.

Gutters installed on a nearby building distribute rainwater to a rain barrel outfitted with a timed irrigation system and painted by a teenage artist.

It cost the Smithfield Kiwanis Club US$765 to build the garden. Funds came from the club’s 2019 pancake supper annual fundraiser.

Service didn’t end with the garden’s completion. The Kiwanians will maintain and tend the garden, and future plans include signage to encourage visitor interaction with the herbs. Members hope to engage Johnston County Community College faculty, local business owners and farmers to teach classes about agriculture and cooking.

The garden has the potential to expand further, but its impact is visible now. It already benefits children like Hildreth’s grandson, who has Down syndrome.

Hildreth encourages other Kiwanis clubs to “open up your mind to the possibilities of what you as a group can do together to benefit the children.”

Adds Ellis, “We stay young at heart by doing that.”

Send Key Club graduates off with more than a smile and good wishes. The Kiwanis Family Store has stoles, cords, medals, cards and more. Check them all out — and help grads celebrate all they’ve achieved.

kiwanis.org/store
Is it time for change?

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT KIWANIS AND YOUR CLUB SPECIFICALLY? WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE ABOUT YOUR CLUB OR THE ORGANIZATION?

Take some time during your next club meeting — in person or virtual — to brainstorm a little. Write down some of the things that come to mind about what you love most and what you would change. Share your ideas and thoughts with the rest of your club and use these ideas as a conversation starter during your meeting. Who knows? Something really great could come of having a conversation. Think big. Be open to change and see where it takes you, your members and your club. But the most important thing is to have fun!

**Things I love about my club:**

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________

**Things I love about the Kiwanis organization:**

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**Things I’d like to change about my club:**

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**Things I’d like to see changed about the organization:**

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Kids have to play differently right now — but their spirit is still part of Kiwanis service. And it will be part of the 2021 Kiwanis International Convention as well. Discover new ways to serve your community and develop leadership skills. Save the date for leadership, service project and fundraising training.

Join us in person or online. Details at kiwanis.org/convention.

106TH KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION    |   JUNE 23-26, 2021
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, plus added content, slideshows and video.
Visit kiwanismagazine.org to read about great Kiwanis projects, and then share those stories and photos via social media buttons for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram found right on the page. It's that easy.
When you read something you love, pass it on.
#kidsneedkiwanis #kiwanis