BOARD GAMES

FRENCH ARTISTS CREATE ONE-OF-A-KIND SKATEBOARDS FOR CHARITY

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AKTION CLUB IN THE MOVIES
KIDS AND STRESS: PART TWO
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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
JIM ROCHEFORD • KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

Our service leadership programs (SLP) are the best thing we do, bar none. In fact, if we did nothing other than sponsor SLPs, our purpose of serving the children of the world would be well-served. Though we do oh so much more, this is what we are known for throughout the service club world.

Las Vegas possibly has more Kiwanis clubs than anywhere in the world, but as of this past January, we only had six Kiwanis clubs mentoring those 41 Key Clubs. Kudos to the dedicated Kiwanians who keep up with the enormous responsibility of supporting them. At the same time, we must continue to open Kiwanis clubs, especially to take care of the best thing we do: SLPs. I’m proud to say we have now opened three clubs in Vegas.

I recently spoke at the Aurora, Illinois, Kiwanis club, which sponsors four Key Clubs, one Circle K and an Aktion Club. The Kiwanians had 10 guests, most of whom were area school administrators. I talked about the impact of our SLPs and encouraged all those in attendance to become a part of this awesome club.

That afternoon, I spent time with Key Club members and advisors.

EXECUTIVE PERSPECTIVE
STAN SODERSTROM • KIWANIS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TIME TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT KIWANIS

We have been eagerly anticipating this issue of Kiwanis magazine since we decided to commit pages to tell our story on iodine deficiency disorders (IDD) and maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT), and the role our Kiwanis Children’s Fund plays in both. It’s a story that does not get told enough.

To me, this is incredibly exciting stuff. It is millions of dollars from thousands of donors working in hundreds of countries saving, protecting and improving lives for children, mothers, families and communities, one by one by one. The outcome of our decades of work is amazing.

We’ll never know the stories of the families we’ve helped. We’ll never even know their names. And the children and parents who have benefited will never know us. But they will know that someone, somewhere, helped them. That’s what’s important.

We’re in good company here. In the past 30 years, Kiwanis, its peer service club organizations and several church denominations have stepped forward to save lives around the world. The threat of malaria is being minimized by work conducted by the Lutherans, United Methodists and Episcopalians. Rotary clubs and members finally have polio virtually eliminated. Lions, while working on the issues of sight and vision, also are combating measles. Together, we’re making a dramatic impact.

While Kiwanians are working in their local communities, we also are a part of a global force for good.

Just as our local service projects require ongoing participation, the same is true of these global health initiatives. Just because we met a fundraising goal for an initial campaign does not mean the job is done and the issue goes away. Global health is much like personal health: We must continue the work in order to maintain our investment in being healthy.

I invite you to read the story on pages 18-25, and share it with others. The next time someone asks you, “What does Kiwanis do?” you can tell them. We roll up our sleeves and we go to work. We donate money to support that work. We save lives. We protect children. We improve nutrition. We enable communities.

As I said, this is incredibly exciting stuff.

I am proud to be a Kiwanian. I hope you are too.
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We’re not just peanuts
Letters

Readers of <i>Kiwanis</i> magazine’s print version and blog respond to features from the January/February 2018 issue.

Join the conversations at <a href="kiwanismagazine.org">kiwanismagazine.org</a> or email <a href="magazine@kiwanis.org">magazine@kiwanis.org</a>.

**ENTER THE DRAGONS**

As one of the first participants in this program on the 2012 team, I get chills every time I read the success stories of the officer-and-student bonds that have developed. This program has thrived and is expanding, and I’m so excited to continue to see it grow. Some of the skills I gained on that boat I use daily. Learning to be selfless was the first thing I learned. You could be selfless and make it across the water, or you could be selfish and cause the boat to tip. We learned to trust and love one another, and for those skills, I will forever be grateful and appreciate my experience as a Dueling Dragon.

Turquoise McNabb

Totally awesome ... having retired from 28 years in law enforcement ... this event/program is truly making a difference.

Ron Smith

Kiwanis Club of Downtown Scottsdale Young Professionals, Arizona

**HARBOR HAPPENING**

First, I like that it is an aquatic event. The Tehachapi Kiwanis will be doing an aquatic event on a lake in 2019. Also, the idea of having child-friendly activities is very important. I mean, after all, the kids are what it’s all about, and kids love water activities.

**RON GAISER**

Kiwanis Club of Tehachapi, California

For many years I enjoyed being a National Guard member of the Watercraft Company 1118. We participated in this festival. Sadly, the landing craft that we gave tours on is gone. There are many other displays and presentations along with boats. I encourage people of all ages to attend.

**TERRY HURD**

DOWN ON THE FARM

Such a fabulous event! Kudos for offering an opportunity for all Sarnia-Lambton families to enjoy, regardless of their socio-economic level. Free events with transportation break down the barriers that low-income families face. Thanks to the Seaway Kiwanis for leveling the playing field.

Gayle Montgomery

Circles Canada, Sarnia, Ontario
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Martha Gambet
Photography for skateboard: Rémi Desclaux
Model: Martha Gambet
In November 2015, a giant 2.3-ton sphere appeared on the Eiffel Tower in Paris, suspended between the first and second floors. Titled “Earth Crisis,” the piece was the first three-dimensional public art installation permitted at the landmark site.

The man behind this display was Shepard Fairey, an internationally renowned street artist. But while many know Fairey’s work — his “Hope” campaign poster for former U.S. President Barack Obama has become a collector’s item — few would suspect the origin of his career: skateboard art. As a student, Fairey worked part-time in a skateboard shop and began using his drawings and resulting stickers on the boards.

This past year, the Kiwanis Club of Ciboure-Sud Pays Basque, France, experienced its own skateboard inspiration in the form of an innovative fundraiser to support its service projects for children. Members invited French artists in a variety of media to create original works that would be transferred to skateboards and sold to the public.
In November 2017, the club debuted an exhibit of one-of-a-kind boards, designed by artists whose specialties range from tattoos and body piercings to graphic art and fashion design. Not surprisingly, the works were as varied as the participants.

Online shop owner Cassandre Djebara (CASSOU) used the rockabilly clothes she sells and the colors of her store’s logo as inspiration. Rémi Pollotì (Polo) incorporated the bright, exaggerated, graffiti-like New School style he uses as a tattoo artist. The eerie world of filmmaker and “Twin Peaks” creator David Lynch prompted environmental artist Xavier Ride (Mister Ride) to create his design.

The relationship between each distinctive image and its creator reflects the golden age of skateboard art in the 1970s and ‘80s. That’s when time-intensive silkscreen visuals were associated with certain skaters for multiple years, says curator W. Todd Vaught of the greater Atlanta, Georgia, area. Vaught served as guest curator for a groundbreaking 2012 Museum of Design Atlanta exhibit called “Skate It or Hang It!?: The Evolution of Skateboard Art.”

“Graphics were meticulously designed by illustrators,” he says. “These guys were artists and did amazing illustrations, and they would really take their time to get the images right.”

Sadly for fans of funky art, by the late 1990s the pricey silkscreen images gave

Rémi Pollotì
Artist name: Polo
Tattoo artist

Cassandre Djebara
Artist name: CASSOU
Fashion designer
way to a less-expensive process called heat transfer.

“It saved a lot of time, saved a lot of money, and that speed allowed (manufacturers) to start changing up the graphics all the time,” Vaught explains. “You really lost that ability to create iconic images associated with a particular skater.

You didn’t have that longevity. … The true artists of skateboarding now kind of feel like these graphics are throwaways.”

A return to skateboarding’s designer roots proved successful for the Ciboure-Sud Pays Basque club. Sales launched with a silent auction and, at press time, the club had sold 15 of the boards for a total of EUR2,000. Remaining boards can be purchased through a second exhibit organized by the club. Best of all, says the club’s Marie-Laure Levrero, the resulting funds will help members “let a little light and cheerfulness into the heart of a child.”

Xavier Ride
Artist name: Mister Ride
Environmental artist

Mathieu Bilaye
Artist name: Bartohomew
Pop artist

Nicolas Bouney
Artist name: Bougne
Tattoo artist
Hamard
Company name: Ventu International
Piercing and tattoo artist

Caroline Viollier
Company name: Aïtana Design
Graphic designer

Rodolphe Lupano
Artist name: OHAZAR
Graphic artist

Rachid Yadaden
Artist name: Rash21
Artistic design
Letters from the field

In 2016, the nearly 80-year-old Kiwanis International Foundation took on a new name. Today, the “Kiwanis Children’s Fund” continues to connect the Kiwanis family to our ultimate purpose: serving children.

When people give to the Kiwanis Children’s Fund, they help change kids’ lives in their own hometowns and in communities around the world. Such wide-ranging impact requires focus and clarity. In the past year, the Children’s Fund has sharpened its vision by listening to members. As a result, Kiwanians’ gifts now support projects and initiatives that serve children through five specific causes:

- Service Leadership Programs
- Disaster relief
- Club and district service projects
- The Eliminate Project
- Iodine deficiency disorders

“In each of these areas, we turn your money into meaning,” says Kiwanis Children’s Fund President Chia Sing Hwang. “In fact, your generosity helps fulfill the new mission of the Children’s Fund: to develop resources that transform the goodwill and vision of Kiwanians into programs that serve the children of the world.”
“The difference in health and behavior between a nourished child and a hungry child is profound. We’re helping them avoid the devastating impact of poverty and hunger.”

JOHN BARTLETT, KIWANIS CLUB OF TICONDEROGA, NEW YORK

SERVICE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS
For one week in 2016, Key Club members from schools throughout North America participated in Key Club’s newest program, Breakthrough. The service-immersion program is supported by the Kiwanis Children’s Fund.

Meeting in Florida, the teens spent the week cleaning, washing and organizing at a homeless center. They worked at a training facility for adults with disabilities. They met officials from Miami City Hall to hear about the city’s Cuban history and educational needs. In other words, they received week-long lessons in leadership and voluntarism in a real-life laboratory.

The Kiwanis family includes members of all ages and abilities: Aktion Club for adults with disabilities, CKI for university students, Key Club for high school students, Builders Club for middle school students and K-Kids for elementary school students. These Service Leadership Programs are building a stronger generation of leaders and service volunteers.
Since 2012, more than 40 percent of the Kiwanis Children’s Fund’s unrestricted grants have gone directly to SLPs and their initiatives.

**DISASTER RELIEF**

When Hurricane Harvey hit Southeast Texas this past August, Kiwanians wasted no time offering help. Supported by a US$5,000 disaster relief grant from the Children’s Fund, the Texas-Oklahoma District focused on getting hygiene and comfort items to people living in emergency shelters.

When disaster strikes, the Kiwanis family responds, and the Children’s Fund ensures their efforts reach those in need. The application process makes it easy for clubs and districts to get relief funding promptly. That’s important because Kiwanians, who often are part of the afflicted community, are better able to assess and address the most urgent needs of the children and families affected. The Texas-Oklahoma District’s grant was sent within 36 hours of the request.

**CLUB/DISTRICT SERVICE PROJECTS**

In Ticonderoga, New York, more than 25 percent of area households live in poverty. Some kids rarely eat dinner. On weekends, many simply don’t eat.

Kiwanis Children’s Fund grant is helping the Ticonderoga Kiwanis club reach more kids with its backpack program. Every week during the school year, Kiwanians receive deliveries of nutritious food. They fill and discreetly deliver the backpacks to the children.

“The difference in health and behavior between a nourished child and a hungry child is profound,” says John Bartlett, the club’s project coordinator. “We’re helping them avoid the devastating impact of poverty and hunger.”

As with its Ticonderoga backpack program grant, the Kiwanis Children’s Fund helps clubs and districts fulfill the unmet needs of children in their communities, focusing on health, education and youth-leadership development.
“When I gave birth and I saw my beautiful baby in my hands, I was so happy because now I was a mother.”

AïSSATA DIABY, MOTHER IN TAMBAYAH, GUINEA

THE ELIMINATE PROJECT

“When I gave birth and I saw my beautiful baby in my hands,” Aïssata Diaby says, “I was so happy because I was now a mother, but also because it was a girl and I knew she was going to be my friend.”

Seven days later, her daughter died, convulsing in her arms during a three-and-one-half hour drive to a hospital in Conakry, Guinea. Cause of death: tetanus.

In 2010, Kiwanis and the Children’s Fund teamed with UNICEF to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus from the face of the Earth. At that time, MNT was considered a threat in 39 countries. Today, only 15 countries remain on that list. In 1987, more than 800,000 babies were dying of tetanus every year. By 2015, that number had been reduced to 34,000.

In recent months, a rush of nations have received MNT-elimination certification. Haiti’s certification meant MNT is gone from the entire Western hemisphere. Kenya and Chad are among the countries ready to make the last push toward certification — providing they receive financial support.

IODINE DEFICIENCY DISORDERS

Sorn Ratha was 13 years old when a UNICEF filmmaker, Bona Khoy, discovered her in Toul Monorum, a village in the Kratie province of northeast Cambodia. At the time, Ratha believed the swelling on her neck was due to eating hard seeds or working too much. She didn’t know it was a sign that her future children were at risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, impaired brain function and stunted intelligence.

About 15 years later, Khoy revisited Toul Monorum and found Ratha a happily married mother with two children. Her life — and her children’s health — had been transformed by Cambodia’s salt-iodization program.

But a 2011 earthquake/tsunami/radiation spill in Japan caused iodine prices to nearly triple. Compounded by limited enforcement of salt-iodization laws and a lack of commitment by the manufacturers to quality control, Cambodia’s once-successful salt-iodization program collapsed.

This past year, the Kiwanis Children’s Fund approved a $340,000 Kiwanis Children’s Fund grant to strengthen the nation’s monitoring and reporting systems, upgrade education and equipment and find a new source of iodine.

Through fundraising and contributions, Kiwanis has leveraged and provided nearly $140 million overall to protect children from IDD, the world’s leading cause of mental disability.

“Kiwanis’ involvement in the global effort against IDD was the serendipitous result of being in the right place at the right time,” says Jonathan Gorstein, executive director of the Iodine Global Network. “Kiwanis was growing into a truly international organization and looking for an effective way
“The Eliminate Project is not over. Our fight against IDD is not over.”

STAN SODERSTROM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KIWANIS CHILDREN’S FUND

to fulfill its new vision to serve people locally, just as the global efforts to fight hidden hunger — and IDD specifically — were ramping up.”

Teamed with UNICEF, Kiwanis soon joined the company of the International Committee for the Control of IDD, salt manufacturers and other NGOs, all of which shared an enthusiasm for universal salt iodization. Meanwhile, Kiwanians’ donations, club fundraisers and other contributions boosted the campaign well beyond its original $50 million goal. In addition, Kiwanis members actively engaged as iodization advocates. While in Russia to observe that nation’s iodization program, for example, a delegation of Kiwanis members urged — and won — customs’ release of much needed equipment.

An appearance of Kiwanis representatives before the U.S. Congress helped gain financial support from the United States Agency for International Development.

“We were seen as a legitimizer in the eye of governments and other organizations,” says Kiwanis International and Kiwanis Children’s Fund Executive Director Stan Soderstrom.

The results were impressive. Salt iodization had been around since the 1920s; yet, seven decades later, 113 countries were still iodine-deficient. Today, that number is down to 19.

UNICEF hailed the global efforts to eliminate IDD as one of the greatest public health triumphs of the 20th century. Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan singled out the universal salt iodization/IDD work as a model of public-private partnership for development.

The Children’s Fund continues to fight against IDD. In addition to supporting the Iodine Global Network’s publications, Kiwanis is represented on the IGN board of directors. Donors continue to contribute funds to sustain the gains made against IDD in the 1990s.

WHAT’S AHEAD

“We are not finished,” Soderstrom says. “The Eliminate Project is not over. Our fight against IDD is not over. We will continue to support our Service Leadership Programs, assist communities affected by disaster and support club and district projects. “When we make a commitment, we stay committed.”

For the future, the Kiwanis Children’s Fund aims to grow its assets so more funds can be made available for grants and scholarships. “By 2025, the Children’s Fund aims to raise $100 million in funds and documented commitments, largely through planned giving,” says Ann Updegraff Spleth, chief operating officer of the Kiwanis Children’s Fund. “If we can raise enough undesignated permanent funds to support our operations, then 100 percent of all funds donated annually can go to help children.”

April 24-30, Kiwanis joins UNICEF USA, LDS Charities, Rotary International, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and other organizations to support the World Health Organization’s World Immunization Week. Visit TheEliminateProject.org to learn more.
Pressure points
FROM MEDIA OVERLOAD TO PERFORMANCE ANXIETY, TODAY’S KIDS ARE TOO STRESSED.
Words JULIE SAETRE

This is the second in a series of articles exploring stress among today’s kids. The first story, “Stress Test,” appeared in the March 2018 issue of Kiwanis magazine and explored how stress impacts a young person’s brain. It can be found online at kiwanismagazine.org.

Katie Hurley knows the routine. Every fall, as a new school year begins, so do the calls: parents seeking help for their stressed-out kids.

“Within a month, my phone is ringing off the hook,” says the child and adolescent psychotherapist from Los Angeles, California, and the author of “The Happy Kid Handbook.” “And it’s not just high schoolers who are experiencing stress. Elementary school students are experiencing high levels of stress.”

It’s a trend that has increased markedly over the past few decades. The Royal Society for Public Health in London, England, reports that rates of anxiety and depression in young people have risen 70 percent in the past 25 years — a development that often leaves adults puzzled. What, they wonder, could be so stressful about growing up today?

“One thing I hear over and over from this generation of parents is, ‘I dealt with it. I got over it. I turned out fine,’” Hurley says. “They’re not taking into account that life was very different in 1975 or 1985.”

Why is modern life making our kids so anxious — and, just as importantly, what can we do to help?

It turns out the answers to both questions are rooted deeply in childhood. While stressors indeed start early, so does one effective antidote: play.

Not surprisingly, today’s youth get stressed over some of the same things we do: pressure to succeed, crazy-busy schedules and the stranglehold of technology. The difference is that we didn’t face these aggressors as early as preschool. That’s when today’s kids start getting the message that you’re either all-in or all-out.

“It’s become this pressure cooker for very young kids, where they learn that the way to succeed in life is to be high achievers,” Hurley says. “And they’re suffering.”

Parents expect their offspring to be reading by preschool graduation. A kindergarten class is followed by tutoring sessions to advance reading and math skills. And by grade school?

“It’s not unusual for us to see children who are in grades three, four, five worried about whether they’re getting the grades they need to get into college and university,” says Michele Kambolis, a child and family therapist from Vancouver, British
“Twenty years ago, our kids weren’t privy to every single thing that happens on the news.”

KATIE HURLEY, ADOLESCENT PSYCHOTHERAPIST, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Columbia, and author of “Generation Stressed.”

To up their chances, kids take on more and more responsibilities: music lessons, sports training, art classes, study sessions.

“They’re stacked with activities,” says Hurley. “I don’t have a single kid in my practice who has one day where they have nothing (scheduled).”

Should a quiet moment emerge amidst all that rushing around, technology steps in to fill the gap. But while a quick browse of Instagram can be fun, seeing all those photos of friends raising trophies, winning recitals and scoring game-winning goals only feeds the constant pressure to achieve.

“The minute something happens, we know, and we take on those emotions,” says Hurley. “Twenty years ago, our kids weren’t privy to every single thing that happens on the news. Today they are. The landscape of fear has changed.”

That’s leading to a new wave of separation anxiety among youth. Two decades ago, Hurley would see one or two kids a year who refused to go to school. Today, it’s a constant issue.

“People think that separation anxiety is this thing that happens to babies, and they grow out of it. But separation anxiety disorder is different,” Hurley says. “When you ask a kid with separation anxiety disorder what they’re afraid of, they’re afraid that mom or dad is going to die on their way to work. Or they’re afraid that they’re going to die while they’re in school. It’s a very real fear of death and loss.”

Technology also has led to a more insidious form of torment. The “mean girl” dynamic no longer stops when the school day ends. Online bullying follows the student home via social media, email and texts. The Royal Society for Public Health study found that seven out of 10 young people have experienced cyberbullying.

“If a child is being bullied online or through social media, it’s so public and reaches so many other youth that it can be emotionally devastating,” Kambolis says. “The soft signs of bullying also come up through social media — seeing their friends together when they haven’t been invited. It reinforces a sense of inadequacy.”

But what about the positive side? Getting lots of likes on a Twitter or Instagram post makes someone happy, right? Well, yes, but …

“Technology generally can be highly addictive,” explains Kambolis. “When we put out information and get an immediate
(favorable) response, it increases the neurochemicals in the (brain’s) reward center. We now have kids who are then highly distracted. Technology is crowding out activities that are really critical to holistic development — face-to-face connections, time outside, physical activity — and interferes with our ability to function.”

Fighting back against the stress trifecta of achievement anxiety, over-scheduling and technological difficulties is a tall order. One key lies in what used to be a cornerstone of childhood: play. And no, that doesn’t mean sitting in front of a gaming console.

At Vancouver’s Harbourside Family Counseling Centre, where Kambolis serves as clinical director, the playroom is well-stocked with kid-friendly finds: clothes for playing dress-up, art supplies, puppets. But when a young patient walks into her practice for the first time, the question Kambolis usually hears is, “Do you have any video games?”

“When they find out I don’t, they really struggle to figure out what to do with the material,” she says. “It’s almost like I have to re-teach children how to play. That worries me a lot.”

That’s because old-fashioned, unstructured play is essential to a child’s well-being.

“It’s fundamental to good development and, ultimately, a more resilient and ‘handling stress better’ kind of life,” says Dr. Stuart Brown, founder of The National Institute of Play in Carmel Valley, California.

The not-for-profit Institute serves as a clearinghouse for research on play, a topic Brown first began to explore through a study of young men who had committed homicide, including Charles Whitman.
known as the Texas Tower Sniper for his role in a 1966 mass killing.

“The play histories of the murderers and those who were matched (in a control group) were vastly different,” Brown says. “Most of the homicidal individuals were isolated, abused, impoverished — there were a lot of variables. But when you sum them up, the accessibility of enrichment through play was missing. What little kids do, if they’re given the opportunity and they’re halfway well-fed and not stressed, they play. And if they don’t, there appears to be some real difficulty in socialization and oftentimes in their coordination and bodily function.”

While Brown studied extreme cases, every child — even those with loving parents and a stable, secure life — needs the benefit of play, say the experts.

“If a child were to go through their day with a lack of play time, that would be a child who could not thrive,” Kambolis says. “It’s truly a basic requirement of a healthy childhood.”

“Free, unfettered, unstructured play is actually the best opportunity for kids to work things through, like conflict resolution and worries and fears,” adds Hurley. “They’ll use play to really work through something that scares them or something that upsets them.”

For example, a child who frequently needs attention for an ongoing medical issue might re-create a physician’s office or emergency room and use dolls to process her experiences. Or a child facing difficulty at home might grab stuffed animals to model interaction between a mother and son.

“(Unstructured play) helps children to use their imagination in ways where they’re expressing and exploring their sense of self,” Kambolis says. “It allows them a way to metabolize stressors and strong emotion. Not only that, but play is empowering. Play is an environment where children can be in control in a world where most of what they’re doing is being controlled by others.”

Play can take many different forms, depending on a child’s needs and temperament, say the experts. Some children benefit best from a free-spirited romp outside with other kids, whether at the playground, the park or their own backyard. Others thrive on more quiet, thoughtful activities — writing stories, drawing pictures or building models.

A one-size-fits-all approach doesn’t fly, and play shouldn’t end when the tween and teen years begin, Brown adds.

“Not everybody plays the same way, whether you’re in elementary school or older. Getting into a ‘state of play’ is really fundamental, however a kid does that. The more you play in general, the higher performing you are, the more engaged you are, the more persevering you’ll be. And the more fulfilled, the less irritable.”

Unless, that is, the play involves video games, Kambolis cautions.

“Video games activate the stress response in our children. They’re actually stressing our children’s organ systems.”

MICHELE KAMBOLIS, CHILD AND FAMILY THERAPIST, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Continued on page 42
Accidental STAR

A PENNSYLVANIA AKTION CLUB MEMBER IS THE STAR OF AN AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARY.

Words KASEY JACKSON • Pictures KASEY JACKSON and courtesy ORCHARD STUDIOS

Dina

Buno will tell you she’s sassy. She has opinions she isn’t afraid to tell you either. She is talkative, which is obvious as she launches into the story of her life. But she’s also a study in contrasts.

As the star of the award-winning documentary “Dina,” which also features her now-husband Scott Levin, she shows another side — often overly cautious, a tad nervous and quick to admit she needs some extra loving care and, sometimes, a little bit of help.

In other words, she’s exactly like every one of us.
And she has a long Kiwanis story.

Dina met Ed Sickles, a member of the Kiwanis Club of Glenside, Pennsylvania, when she was a student and he was her teacher. He became her mentor. Her friend. And when he and fellow Kiwanis member Darlene Anderson started the Abington Aktion Club, a service club for adults with disabilities in the Philadelphia area, Ed invited Dina to join.

Dina says Ed was always there for her, offering life lessons, friendship and advice. She recalls the time, decades ago, that she came home crying about a job she had and hated, and how Ed had a suggestion for her.

“Ed said, ‘Why don’t you quit this job and work for me and take care of my son,’” Dina says. “The rest is history.”

Dina says she watched Ed’s son, Dan, “grow up into a wonderful child, teen and young man” and that they’ve “been friends ever since.”

That same Dan Sickles also grew up to become a filmmaker — and he would put his friend Dina’s name in lights.

“I knew Dan would be destined for great things,” Dina says. “I knew this young man was going places.”

Where she might not have guessed he’d end up going is right where the two of them find themselves today: together in the spotlight and on red carpets around the world. “Dina” the movie has won several major film awards, including the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival, the Peek Award and the International Documentary Association’s award for top feature of 2017.

“I’m ecstatic,” she says. “I’m so excited. I’m also thrilled for the people who made it.”

Director Dan Sickles says he and fellow director Antonio Santini set out to make a film honoring Ed, who passed away in 2014. They wanted to show Ed’s life through the eyes of the Aktion Club members. So Dan and Antonio visited the Aktion Club to gather footage. And Dina stole the show.

Now they had their storyline. They would follow Dina and Scott as they lived out their lives as what they call a “neurodiverse” couple. (Dina is developmentally disabled, autistic, has Asperger’s syndrome, anxiety issues and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Scott also has Asperger’s.) They’d focus on Dina and Scott and how they navigate their days. We see their friends, most of them members of the Abington Aktion Club, plan an engagement party for the couple. We see their wedding and Scott moving into Dina’s apartment. We see Scott go to work and Dina keep up with their home. The audience gets drawn into this unique view on life, cameras seemingly hidden from view yet capturing everything from the couple cooking together to intimate discussions about sex. It’s real and it’s raw.
Maybe most importantly, “Dina” forces viewers to think about how we treat one another and how well we communicate our needs and desires. It reminds us that no matter how different we are, we’re all the same. And it makes us think about the community we surround ourselves with, and how our relationships shape and change us.

“Ed taught me how to be strong and how to not let things get in my way when things are still going to get in my way,” Dina says. “He taught me how to stay focused, how to stay confident, how to be tenacious. He taught me the meaning of love and friendship. He taught me that you stick behind your friends no matter what. You can be mad at somebody and still love them. He told me not to be jealous. He also taught me about serving man, how to serve people without expecting anything in return.

“Sometimes on a cold snowy night on a Tuesday when you’re making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and you have a cold and your joints are aching, but you go and you do it anyways because you’re helping other people. Ed taught me all of that. I want to be like Ed.”

Dina says Dan has a lot of qualities found in his late father. “Even in his teen years, Dan knew how to give,” she says. “Dan taught me the meaning of giving but he also taught me how to be strong and make peace with the void after Ed was gone. Dan is a reminder that Ed is still in my heart and there is still a Sickles there. Dan let me follow my dreams and he said to me, ‘I’ve been rooting for you.’ And he just kept cheering me on.”

And he’s still cheering her on. As director, he gave her space and allowed her story to shine.

“This was Dina’s stage,” he says. “We didn’t script anything. We just let it go.”

“\[I knew Dan would be destined for great things. I knew this young man was going places.\]” DINA BUNO

Dina Buno will be the keynote speaker at the Aktion Club TLC in Las Vegas on June 28 at 1 p.m. She’ll also tell her story on stage at the Kiwanis International convention in Las Vegas that same evening.
On Aktion Club

“It has changed my life. I became a leader, and that’s the most important thing. I want to show my leadership skills, and it makes me feel good that I show up. Being part of a community like this, sometimes you get frustrated when things are hard, but it’s about teamwork and it’s about loving your fellow members no matter what happens. I’ve made so many friends through Aktion Club, from all over the world. I plan on being in Aktion Club forever. This is my family.”

Dina Buno

“The importance of Kiwanis and Aktion Club is evident as soon as you spend time at a club meeting or spend time with the members. As far as I’m concerned, when both my parents died, I found myself going to the Aktion Club for me. I knew they were also going to miss my dad and that he had left a big void in their lives. I would go to the meetings because I knew this was a group of people that is really good at paying attention to each other’s needs in any given moment and the second I showed up, they knew what I needed. And they’ve been consistent. They’re the only group of people who I know that consistently remembers my birthday. Every single year, I get a video from the Aktion Club from their meeting, singing ‘Happy Birthday.’”

Dan Sickles

On being part of “Dina”

“I think both Dan and Antonio and the whole crew are just special people. The cameramen and the editor, every single person who worked on this film came with an open heart filled with love and adopted all of the Aktion Club members. They took us under their wing and really treated everyone with respect.”

Darlene Anderson

“I’m not the star. Dina is.”

Scott Levin

On lasting impressions

“I want people to see that it’s nice to have your independence when you’re different. It’s nice to have a partner and get married. The movie shows that people with learning disabilities or special needs can work and they can volunteer and they can get married. That’s what I want people to see, that you know people who are different. Scott’s more quiet and regimented, and I’m more sassy and spunky, but two people who are very different can also love each other. You can come away from the movie that we’re just like everybody else. We have wants and needs. We want to love. That’s it.”

Dina Buno

“This movie is about all of us. It shows how we negotiate with the people we love and how to love each other better. It shows how we wrestle with this and how we navigate it together. And it’s not just about marriage. It’s about friendship.”

Dan Sickles

On their proudest moments

“I’m most excited watching from the sidelines with Dina and Scott and Darlene being around … sort of coming into these spaces where people are interested to talk to them and get to know them. And for Scott and Dina, it’s given them respect and dignity and real space that they aren’t usually lent. People are asking for photos with them and asking for autographs. The film is really about establishing connections, so to see that in real time is everything.”

Scott Levin

“For me, I think, like a lot of people, I grew up always hiding my eccentricities. I had a photo project and I brought it to school and I was scared of people seeing it. My friends wanted me to show them, and I remember it being so hard to show that layer of myself. It was so hard to express myself. Meeting Dina and Scott and the club members, having Darlene in my life, all of that kind of gave me a new space to feel welcome in. The first time we went to the Aktion Club, the way that everyone was so open to us so instantly, I thought, OK, I can never walk into a room where everyone is this genuinely interested in getting to know me and welcome me. It was such an open, free space.”

Antonio Santini
It’s tempting to say that, thanks to the city’s annual Kiwanis-sponsored Pet Parade, downtown Los Altos, California, is going to the dogs, but that would ignore the many cats, birds, fish, chickens, snakes, snails, llamas and even a pet tarantula that have taken part.

The Kiwanis Club of Los Altos has held its Pet Parade each year since 1948 on the Saturday following Mother’s Day. Counting this past May 19, that’s 71 years (497 in dog years). The parade, which attracts hundreds of kids and their pets, has become such a much-loved feature of the Los Alto community that the city has designated it a Heritage Event.

Corralling a veritable Noah’s Ark of critters for the parade’s annual march down State and Main streets can be challenging for Kiwanis committee members and parade organizers Anjali Agrawal and Peter Bergsman.

“Especially the llamas,” says Martha McClatchie, the club’s president. “(They) are there every year and insist on moving right ahead, making it impossible to monitor the pace of the parade, unless you put them right behind one of the marching bands.”

In addition to its many pets and student musicians, the parade features well-known area bands,
floats, classic antique cars (including one club member’s vintage 1948 Ford Thunderbird) and even a celebrity or two, such as the Los Altos chief of police, members of the school board and chamber of commerce members and dignitaries from the Kiwanis California-Nevada-Hawaii District.

Spectators lucky enough to sit close to the parade’s reviewing stand hear town historian Laura Bajuk’s humorous commentary about the parade and its many participants.

“Laura seems to have an encyclopedic knowledge of nearly everyone in the parade,” says McClatchie, laughing.

McClatchie particularly remembers what has become known as the “Year of the Doggie Wedding.”

“We had three dogs show up at the reviewing stand,” she recalls, “dressed as a bride, a groom and a preacher. All of the dignitaries at the stand seamlessly got into the spirit and gracefully undertook the solemn responsibility of celebrating the lifelong union between these two blessed quadrupeds.”
A cheerful group of volunteers drowned out the sounds of gymnasts in action at the Georgia Special Olympics Winter Games. Enthusiastic laughter, high-fives and cheers soared over the noise of each footfall and mat squeak.

Among the volunteer group was Victoria Turney, a member of the Marietta Kiwanis club. For years, Turney had wanted to start an Aktion Club, something she had discussed with Ron Davis, a member of the Kiwanis Club of Jonquil City in Smyrna, Georgia.

“I asked Ron if he would help me ... get an Aktion Club started, with the understanding that he would be their Kiwanis liaison, their Kiwanis advisor. He agreed.”

At the Winter Games event, Turney saw her opportunity. She introduced herself to parents of the Special Olympians and expressed her goal of starting an Aktion Club. The rest is history.

The Chattooga Aktion Club, sponsored by the Jonquil City Kiwanis club, formed this past January. The first Aktion Club in the Georgia District’s Division 15, it is based at the Chattooga School of Gymnastics and Dance. The school has provided training to children and adults of all ages and abilities since 1976. Chattooga’s inclusive teams of athletes perform high-energy rhythmic gymnastics and dance routines around the world.

Collaborating with Kiwanis was an easy decision for the school’s Cindy Bickman, who teaches dance and gymnastics and serves as a Special Olympics coach. Bickman stepped up as the new Aktion Club’s community advisor and coach.

“It so fit in with our philosophy and everything that we do,” says Bickman, who started the school with her parents. “We don’t believe that people with disabilities should only be the recipient of charity. They have a lot to give. … For the past 30 years, we’ve been on a mission to show the abilities of people with disabilities.”

The Chattooga Aktion Club, comprised of athletes ages 19 to 49, is certainly no exception. This past year, the 35-member team performed for the king of Norway at the World Gym for Life Challenge in Vestfold and competed at the U.S.A. Gymnastics for All Nationals and GymFest in Cincinnati, Ohio.

“It is awesome and great because other people can see what special-needs people can do,” says Stephanie Rios, the Aktion Club’s vice president.

Aktion Club President Paulette Harrison adds, “Our coach helped us turn our disabilities into abilities, and that has given us so much pride in ourselves. We hope they enjoy our performances as much as we do performing them.”
REACH OUT
BY REACHING
INSIDE.

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
After school, groups of kindergarten students gather around tables of open books to read, listen and laugh with their peers and families in Sincelejo, Colombia. Some students wear colorful masks or costumes to embody the characters in the stories.

Reading is My Story, a daily activity, encourages students to read, write and think creatively. It is a collaboration between the Sincelejo Kiwanis club and Colombia’s Ministry of National Education.

This project promotes the development of oral and written language, allowing students the opportunity to express themselves creatively and communicate effectively from a young age. And it’s no passive reading group, says Berenice Larios de Rodríguez, past president of the Sincelejo Kiwanis club. The program uses diverse strategies such as art, games, real-world exploration and direct contact with books and illustrations to engage participants.

“The children (in this program) have had the opportunity to fearlessly enter the exciting world of words, and through this, let their imagination run wild, acting out stories, taking on the characters and, above all, understanding the content,” Larios de Rodríguez says.

Through singing, dancing, clapping and shouting, students experience the stories in a more holistic way. To promote participation, Reading is My Story encourages parents to get involved as well. On weekends, parents bring home a story or fable to read with their children, dramatizing the tales that reinforce the week’s theme. Once a month, parents join their children to read a story with the group. They also participate in a Language Day ceremony with the students.

Larios de Rodríguez believes that involving parents has made reading a family activity, encouraging the students to continue learning outside of the classroom. The project also has strengthened the relationship between the school and parents, who have seen the impact of their involvement on the students.

“It fills us with joy, the children’s enthusiasm and the satisfaction of the parents, who have taken the project as their own,” Larios de Rodríguez says.

The project also has reduced conflict and aggression among the students, who enjoy working together to act out the stories.

“The learning has been reciprocal,” Larios de Rodríguez says. “The members of Kiwanis Club of Sincelejo have learned so much, and above all, we have had the opportunity to work with these fantastic children.”
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
They’re actually stressing our children’s organ systems. When we’re not incredibly cautious about how we use technology, it can actually interfere with development.”

Beyond that restriction, though, play can be as elaborate or as simple as a child wants to make it. And parents don’t need to break the budget by buying out the town’s supply of educational toys or the latest best-selling sensation.

“You can buy all the fancy toys you want and you can have the perfect playroom full of stuff, but the things that kids like most of all are cardboard boxes and tape,” Hurley says. “They like to make their own things. They like to build their own blocks and build their own castles and make their own stuff out of nothing.”

And, as difficult as it might be, adults need to resist the urge to guide play in a particular direction. Let kids test their own limits and boundaries, advises Hurley. Eliminating all risks now actually contributes to more stress down the road.

“We all need to know what we’re made of and what we’re capable of,” she says. “We’ve been raising a generation of kids who look adults in the eye and say, ‘I don’t know if I can do that. Do you think I can do that?’ Twenty years ago, they just went for it. Now we have risk-adverse kids. It’s never really a mystery when a college sophomore ends up on my doorstep because he can’t cope anymore. All along, somebody paved a perfectly smooth path, where he never got hurt, never failed, never struggled. And everything was easy, until he got out on his own.”

“Pressure points” continued from page 31
Prostate problems are no laughing matter.

Seriously, we know.

One of the signs of an aging prostate is an increase in the need to urinate, often many times per day. That’s where The Prostate Formula can help. For over 20 years, Real Health’s Prostate Formula has helped men support:

- 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.
van Nemenzo is an attorney. His wife, Nelia, is a psychologist and works for an insurance company. They chose their careers because of their interest in the well-being of others. That’s also why they are members of Kiwanis.

“Our desire as a couple to share our time, talent and treasure is to make our world a better place to live by helping others,” Ivan says.

Yet, their commitment goes beyond service. The couple has a passion for inviting others to experience Kiwanis. Together, they are a primary reason that the Philippine South District is a leader this year in opening new clubs.

“As a litigation lawyer, I meet various personalities, which widens my access to various sectors of society,” he says. “My wife’s experience is more on people skills and acquaintances. As a team, I am the think tank, and she is the heart of whatever we do.”

The Nemenzos believe the same traits of selflessness and unity that make marriages work also can make husband-and-wife teams adept at adding Kiwanis members.

“We are always one team,” he says of their recruiting success. “We have one mission, one vision to serve as one. Just like what we promised in our wedding vows.”

Visit kiwanis.org/roar to learn more about the Nemenzos.

IVAN AND NELIA NEMENZO
PHILIPPINE SOUTH DISTRICT

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

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TOP 5 DISTRICTS FOR MEMBERS ADDED

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TOP 5 INDIVIDUAL CLUB OPENERS

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TOP 5 INDIVIDUAL NEW-MEMBER SPONSORS

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* Numbers current as of February 12, 2018

THE FORMULA:
Request a club coach
Club coaches can be an invaluable resource for your club. They are typically past officers who have learned from experience and want to offer their knowledge and expertise to clubs that need help with membership, service, fundraising and more. Your club can request a club coach at kiwanis.org/clubcoach.

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.
What’s happening

LIMITED SPOTS LEFT

What are you doing before and after the Kiwanis convention? Are you up for a little adventure?

Discover the unsurpassed beauty of Lake Tahoe (US$1,595 per person) before the convention and soak up 6 billion years of history while admiring the plunging depths and multi-hued magnificence of the Grand Canyon ($1,595 per person) afterward. Better yet, book both for $3,095 per person, saving nearly $100!

Learn more at kiwanis.org/2018tours.

AKTION CLUB TLC

Does your Kiwanis club sponsor an Aktion Club?

Then don’t miss the Aktion Club TLC!

The Aktion Club Training and Leadership Conference will be held in conjunction with the Kiwanis International convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. Registration is now open, and rates go up after April 6.

To learn more and to register, visit aktionclub.org/tlc.

BY THE NUMBERS

Kiwanis International, Kiwanis Children’s Fund, Circle K International and Key Club International annual reports will be available in early April. Review where we’ve been and see where we’re headed at kiwanis.org/annualreport.
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.

TheEliminateProject.org/give
LEGACY OF PLAY DEADLINES
Mark your calendars for April 12! Kiwanis-family clubs are invited to submit their proposals for the Legacy of Play contest, sponsored by Kiwanis partner Landscape Structures. The winning club will receive US$25,000 in playground equipment.

Other deadlines to note:
- May 10: Last day to enter projects
- May 14: Voting begins
- May 31: Voting ends

Check out kiwanis.org/legacyofplay for all the details.

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT
Kiwanis International has partnered with IdentityForce to provide you with best-in-class identity-theft protection at a discounted rate of 20 percent off the retail price. Learn more at identityforce.com/kiwanis.

IMPORTANT CONVENTION DATES
- April 6: Registration fee increases
- April 30: Delegate submission deadline

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT
Kiwanis International has partnered with IdentityForce to provide you with best-in-class identity-theft protection at a discounted rate of 20 percent off the retail price. Learn more at identityforce.com/kiwanis.

UP FOR A VOTE
Here are the amendments and resolutions up for vote during the 103rd Annual Kiwanis International Convention in Las Vegas. Delegates will vote during the business session on Friday, June 29.

Amendment: To clarify district endorsement of candidates for the Kiwanis International Board. Proposed by the Kiwanis International Board.

Amendment: To require that Kiwanis International trustee candidates complete their term as immediate past governor prior to formally announcing candidacy to Kiwanis International. Proposed by the Kiwanis International Board.

Amendment: To adopt a new family membership status that allows a 50 percent Kiwanis International dues discount for qualifying members. Proposed by the Pacific Northwest District, USA.

Administrative Resolution: To revise funding of the Kiwanis International convention by reducing the registration fee and establishing an annual convention assessment for each member; to segregate convention income and expenses in a separate account; to have selected convention functions livestreamed and archived online. Proposed by the Kiwanis Club of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. If this resolution is adopted in Las Vegas, the Kiwanis International Board then would be required to propose the necessary bylaw amendments for consideration by delegates at the 2019 convention, and these concepts would not be implemented unless adopted then.
Las Vegas means color and light and all that pizzazz. But there's beauty beyond. The manmade majesty of Hoover Dam. The ancient splendor of Red Rock Canyon. The cool-blue fun of Lake Mead. And much more—right outside the city.

Discover the grandeur beyond the glamour.
kiwanis.org/convention
1. **Shape the future of Kiwanis**
   Become a delegate. Vote in elections and on important amendments and resolutions. The future depends on members like you who want to have a voice in how the organization looks and operates in years to come.

2. **Dance to the music**
   Celebrate nearly five decades of hits with legendary rockers Three Dog Night. Did you know Three Dog Night had 21 consecutive Top 40 hits and performed at two Super Bowls? The band performs during the Celebrate! Gala on June 30.

3. **Learn something**
   This year we've expanded the educational opportunities offered at the convention. Every member can learn new and effective ways to support membership events in their district and invite new members into their club. Come hear from other Kiwanians who increased their membership on a local and global level.

4. **Get inspired**
   Daniel Eugene Ruettiger is one of the most popular motivational speakers in the United States. You know him as “Rudy,” the young man who overcame many obstacles to play football for the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame. Rudy will speak at the Opening Session on Thursday, June 28.

   Dina Buno is the breakout star of the award-winning documentary, “Dina.” During the Opening Session, she will tell her story about love, overcoming adversity and how Aktion Club has changed her life. (See “Accidental Star,” page 32.)

5. **Be adventurous**
   It’s Vegas, baby! Get out there! The hotels alone are worth exploring, but there’s more than hotels and casinos in Las Vegas. Up for some thrills? Ride the High Roller, the world’s tallest observation wheel, for some spectacular views. Learn more about what to see and do at kiwanis.org/convention/news.
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