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The world’s vanishing resource.

Page 12
After a rather stressful phone call, I found myself distracted, somewhat discouraged and intensely thoughtful as I walked into our elementary school and waited for our K-Kids meeting to start. The first student to arrive was one of the sixth-graders. He said, “Whoa, Mrs. E, what’s up?” When I greeted him, he stopped and faced me saying, “Now I’ve known you for over a quarter of my life (he’s only 12 years old, I reflected), and I’ve never seen you look like this. Are you OK?” “Uh, yes, why do you ask?” I replied. “Well, because you never greet us without a smile.”

Before I could respond, one of the fourth-grade boys wrapped his arms around me and said, “You look like you need a hug.” Yes, he was right. They were both right. I needed a hug and a gentle reminder that life is great and I need to be an active member. I need to show up for every day for every event.

To show up in body, mind and spirit means I am there, on-site and fully present. My mind is actively engaged in the here and now of whatever event I’m participating in, and my spirit and attitude is positive and engaged. Life is to be lived fully every day. It’s much more effective and fun when you show up—totally.

Show up for Kiwanis at your service projects. Show up by inviting others to join us. Show up by helping open a new club. Show up to keep Kiwanis resilient, growing and alive for our kids and communities.

At the end of the meeting I high-fived all the students as they left. As that same sixth-grader high-fived me, he smiled and said, “Thanks for showing up today.” I smiled wide and thought, out of the mouths of babes.

Are you showing up for life today?

This past March, Kiwanis magazine posed the question “What if Kiwanis didn’t exist?” Our intention was to share some brutal facts with our members. Our North American membership has been on a gradual decline for the past two decades. And, too many communities have lost their Kiwanis clubs.

I’m happy to report the majority of responses to that story have been positive. A few are shared on page 6. We also received numerous requests for extra copies, which caused us to reprint the story.

I’m also happy that our new-club opening numbers are up significantly over the previous years. Since March 1, we’ve issued 32 new club charters, which is more than double for March in any of the past six years. More new clubs means more communities served.

The other essential ingredient to our membership health is inviting new members to join our existing clubs. I was shocked recently to learn that fewer than one in 10 Kiwanians sponsors a new member every year. Yet we all know friends, co-workers and neighbors who would make great Kiwanians.

When inviting someone to your club, tell them how your club impacts your community. Tell them why you love helping kids. Show them why you love Kiwanis service. Loving it, sharing it and living it is our formula for success as an organization.

I encourage you to think about the scary question: “What if Kiwanis didn’t exist in my community?” What great service programs might disappear? Then consider our formula for your club’s membership success (kiwanis.org/theformula). If you care about your Kiwanis club, you’ll be glad you did.
Considering a service project to support troops in the U.S. or overseas?

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WORTH SHARING

I just wanted to comment on the impressive and powerful cover of the March magazine. Brilliant!

This will be the first magazine that is part of our club’s membership initiative. Once members have read their magazine, they bring it to the next meeting. I black out and cover the label with a sticker, which is printed with information about our club. Then we place them strategically in high-volume, age-appropriate waiting rooms, such as our Par 3 car wash where everyone sits for at least a half hour reading whatever is available.

Kathryn Doddrige, secretary
Kiwanis Club of the Sandhills, Moore County, North Carolina

I always enjoy reading and learning of our organization through Kiwanis magazine. Typically, I read the magazine, maybe clip an article and then recycle the rest.

I was thinking, though, that I am now going to take my copy of the magazine and request permission to place it in my doctor’s office. I think our organization will score additional publicity and maybe even an expansion of interest in our membership.

Expanding my thought: If each member of the Kiwanis family were to do the same in their doctors’ offices, libraries, etc., we could collectively expand our circulation of the magazine and spread the good news of Kiwanis. Maybe even pick up some members.

Bruce J. White
Kiwanis Club of Ewing Township, New Jersey

I find the March 2017 issue of Kiwanis to be an excellent new-member recruiting tool. Its message is profound, extensive and compelling.

Carlos Jones
Kiwanis Club of San Antonio-Bexar, Texas

WRONG REDMOND

I opened with excitement the April /May 2017 Kiwanis magazine and found a very nice article about the Redmond, Washington, Kiwanis Club. Unfortunately, you used a photo of the downtown arch of Redmond, Oregon. We are a proud Kiwanis club as well! The two Redmond communities get confused occasionally, but are more than happy to support the Kiwanis cause in Washington … even by providing a photo of our beautiful Oregon community.

Peter S. Ribble
Kiwanis Club of Redmond, Oregon
NO FLOATIES

I just read “In the Swim of Things” (Showcase, June/July 2016) about the Kiwanis Club of St. Martinville, Louisiana’s, support of a learn-to-swim program. Although that in itself is admirable, the use of inflatable “floaties” on the kids arms—as shown in the photos—is not.

I have been a certified Red Cross water safety instructor for many years, and that use alarms me. The Red Cross warns of their use, and they are banned from all public pools and beaches around here. As these arm bands are blown up, they can deflate if rubbed against the pool side or punctured somehow. They give parents and kids a false sense of security and thus are very dangerous.

Barbara Holzkamp
Kiwanis Club of Glen Head, New York

A PERFECT FIT

Excellent article about what Kiwanis contributes to the betterment of the world.

Barry M. Shaw, president
Kiwanis Club of Island Park, New York, about the kiwanismagazine.org article “Best Foot Forward” (Showcase, April/May 2017).
WHAT’S HAPPENING
TRENDS, TIPS, FACTS AND FIGURES FROM KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

KIWANIS-BSA AWARD
Congratulations to the Kiwanis clubs of Ada, Oklahoma; Painted Post, New York and Springfield, Ohio, for being the first to submit nominations for the Kiwanis International-BSA Community Organization Award. This award honors Kiwanians who are registered Boy Scouts of America leaders or adults in a unit chartered by a Kiwanis club. Questions? Contact Marcos Nava at Marcos.Nava@scouting.org.

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT
Kiwanis International brings Protect America to its Kiwanis Marketplace offerings. With more than 25 years of home security experience, protecting homes and families is at the heart of the organization. It specializes in bundled packages—including doorbell cameras—all backed by an extensive warranty program and a guided installation process. Learn more at protectamerica.com/kiwanis.

NEW LOOK AT KIWANIS.ORG
Kiwanis.org looks fresh and new. The updated website makes it easier to find the material you need. But, most importantly, it’s optimized for all devices. Users can use the website whether they prefer computers, phones or tablets. Learn more at kiwanis.org/2017newlook.
THIRST PROJECT AWARD

Key Club International President Devin Sun and Vice President Mary Grace Lewis accept the Vision Award from Thirst Project Founder Seth Maxwell (left). The award recognizes outstanding leadership in raising money and awareness in the fight to end the global water crisis. Key Club members participated in a Thirst Project campaign called Thirsty 30, in which clubs raised money over a monthlong period. Two other Key Club members from Hershey, Pennsylvania, received Power of Youth Awards. Learn more about Key Club partner Thirst Project at thirstproject.org.

STANDARD OF TRUST

Fewer than 1,500 US-based charities have met all 20 of the Better Business Bureau’s standards for charity accountability. The Kiwanis Children’s Fund is now one of them. The BBB Wise Giving Alliance is an online reference site that helps donors make informed giving decisions and promotes high standards of conduct among charitable organizations. For more, visit kiwanis.org/2017BBB.

ARMY SPEAKERS BUREAU A HIT

Key Clubbers attending the Pacific Northwest District Conference in Portland, Oregon, this past April learned about service leadership from two people who practice it daily. U.S. Army First Sergeant Robert Judge and Captain Kip Briggs stressed the value of service, leadership and education and talked about Army scholarships. Want to host a presentation for Kiwanians? Email ewarren@kiwanis.org.

STOCK UP ON SUPPLIES

Get the school supplies you need for your service projects from Kiwanis Warehouse. Whether you need backpacks, notebooks, pens, binders, arts and craft supplies or anything else, they have it with more than 260,000 high-value products—and with free shipping for Kiwanis clubs. Visit kiwanis.dollardays.com/promo/back_to_school_store.

DISTRICT MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM

Want to receive matching funds for sharing your love of Kiwanis? The Formula matching grants are open to any North American district and will support club-opening or club-coaching events. The grant application must be approved by the district board and signed by The Formula district chair, district governor and governor-elect. It also must include a proposed event budget. Info: kiwanis.org/districtgrants.
“Kiwanis has been a wonderful avenue for us to get involved firsthand with service projects that involve our kids.”
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In 2010, the United Nations formally recognized the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as an “essential” human right. At that time, according to the UN, more than 800 million people lacked access to safe drinking water, more than 2.6 billion did not have access to basic sanitation and 1.5 million children under the age of 5 died every year as the result of water- and sanitation-related diseases.

In the United States and other developed nations, water problems often go unnoticed, until they are hit hard with something like the 2016 tragedy in Flint, Michigan. But according to a recent study by Michigan State University Professor Elizabeth Mack, not only do we need to be concerned about maintaining a safe and adequate water supply, we’re looking at a future where millions of people may not be able to afford what water we do have.

Mack, an assistant professor of geography, recently published a study as part of a National Science Foundation grant. In it, she estimates that about 11.9 percent of U.S. households (13.8 million people) may find water bills unaffordable. And given historic water price trends (including a 41 percent increase in water rates since 2010) and income issues in many areas across the country, 2022 may see that number rise to 35.6 percent of American households. That’s more than 40 million people.

How do you know if you’re spending too much on water? In the U.S., the Environmental Protection Agency calculates that water and wastewater spending should make up no more than 4.5 percent of a household budget. Mack calculates that a household must earn at least US$32,000 a year to be able to afford water at current rates without having to dip into money set aside for food and medical care. (Poverty level for...
YOU’VE LIKELY NOT HAD TO THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT WHERE YOUR WATER COMES FROM IF YOU LIVE IN NORTH AMERICA. BUT THE PLANET’S MOST PLENTIFUL RESOURCE IS IN DANGER OF BECOMING UNSAFE AND UNAFFORDABLE—EVEN FOR YOU.

STORY BY LANCE FRAZER

a four-person household is figured at about $24,000 annually, and according to 2015 United States Census Bureau figures, 43.1 million people lived at or below that level). “People (in the U.S.) look at the number of households impacted by water access and affordability issues and say ‘no way, not in this country,’ but the truth is very different,” says Jason Hubbart, director of the Institute of Water Security at West Virginia University.

As the Flint tragedy unfolded, the state of the country’s water infrastructure was brought front and center again. It will cost, according to estimates, $1 trillion to repair and renovate the nation’s system, and another $36 billion to buffer these systems against the impact of a changing climate.

Hubbart lives in the heart of one of the regions hit hardest by both water affordability and availability, and he agrees the country is facing pressure on several fronts. “Projections indicate it will get drier in the West, wetter and warmer in the Midwest,” he says. “But water is also being hit by increasing population pressures. We’re seeing many areas across the country where economic and other pressures are forcing people to relocate, leaving those behind who cannot afford to move, or don’t want to leave the areas where their families began, to bear more of the burden of cost. The country’s infrastructure is a huge issue, because many of these systems haven’t been renovated since they were built in the post-World War II era.”
Katherine Garvey, a specialist in environmental law and environmental justice at the West Virginia University School of Law, has spent a lot of time in places like McDowell County, and has seen firsthand the impact of water issues on local families.

“These are the coalfields, where a lot of people are out of work,” she says. “We’ve also seen a lot of water problems resulting from acid mine drainage and other pollutants impacting both the cost and the availability of water. Many of these systems draw water from abandoned mines, which can be huge reservoirs of water that, while not perfect, is a lot better than what can be drawn from many of the rivers and streams around here.”

Christina Hemphill Fuller, assistant professor in Environmental Health at Georgia State University, points out that these and other issues tend to affect minority and low-income populations disproportionately, whether talking about inner-city or rural areas.

In California, a state with 1 million of the nation’s 20 million living on untreated water, Pacific Research Institute Senior Research Associate Laura Feinstein points out, “Our studies have shown that when water becomes unaffordable, families will skimp on other things to be able to afford water.”

WATER AND HEALTH
Not only is water becoming less affordable, in some areas, it has become more likely to make us sick. An analysis of Medicare records by Tufts University researchers found that between 1991 and 2006, more than 600,000 hospitalizations related to three pathogens commonly found in plumbing systems resulted in Medicare payments of about $600 million annually, a cost that researchers estimate may now exceed $2 billion annually. Researchers indicated that an aging infrastructure and typically unregulated premise plumbing systems were largely responsible for these infections. The concern is that costs will rise as antibiotic-resistant strains develop.

Jeffrey Griffiths is one of the study’s authors and a former chair of the Drinking Water Committee for the E.P.A.’s Science Advisory Board.

“The presumption has been that water treated with a residual disinfectant would kill any worrisome bacteria or viruses,” he says. “Thus, the vast majority of regulation has focused on the treatment plant. At the household level, the regulatory environment has focused on pipe integrity, not microbial safety. Plus, there are places, like Flint, where the residual disinfectant that was added was too little. For federal action, more studies are needed across the country.”

In Wisconsin, Florida State University Assistant Professor of Geography Chris Uejio, along
with the Wisconsin Department of Health and Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, looked at the impact of climate change on untreated groundwater sources and the chance of a future rise in gastrointestinal illnesses affecting children under 5. Wisconsin, where about one-quarter of the population gets its water from private wells, is projected to see dramatically increased levels of rainfall as climate change proceeds, which could increase the level of pathogens washed into the area’s groundwater supply.

The study looked at five northern Wisconsin municipalities with minimally-treated drinking water and found that, if climate change proceeds as currently projected without additional facilities for groundwater treatment, it could lead to an increase of childhood gastrointestinal infection from 1.5 percent to 6 percent.

For many years, Uejio says, it was thought that groundwater supplies were cleaner and safer than surface supplies, “but about 15 years ago, testing enabled us to quickly and easily test for pathogens in groundwater. Some tests showed us that around 27 percent of the country’s groundwater supplies contained viruses that could cause illness in humans.

“Many of these rural communities are seeing problems common to the rest of the country, and to be honest, regulation has lagged behind the state of testing science and the mitigation of contaminants. Our analysis showed a consistent relationship between rainfall and disease outbreaks in children, but we also have a fair level of confidence that the entire community is at risk.”

The time has come to address effects of climate change on our water resources, says Chris Uejio. “Ninety-seven percent of the scientists in the field state that it (climate change) is a reality, and that humans are causing the rapid increase in the change,” says Chris Uejio. “The climate is changing, and we need to be able to adapt to it.”

West Virginia University’s Hubbart agrees. “I think, and it might be controversial to say this, that we sometimes get too wrapped up in how much climate change is

“We should be looking at how we’re going to adapt to an uncertain climate future.”
naturally-occurring and how much is human-caused,” says Hubbart. “The climate is changing, and it’s changing at a more and more rapid rate, and we should be looking at how we’re going to adapt to an uncertain climate future.”

Feinstein says climate change already is pushing the limits of the infrastructure.

“This is a system that was designed for another climate, with more snow and less rain, and we can’t maintain that system,” she says. “Now we’re seeing the opposite, and it’s only going to get worse, and more expensive, the longer we wait.”

Mack says the study could be impacted by the effects of climate change.

“Research indicates we’ll see an increased incidence of higher-intensity storms, with increased flooding in many areas,” Mack says. “We didn’t design this study as an activist piece, but I would honestly say we were actually conservative in many of our estimates, and unaddressed, it’s likely the situation could be worse than this study indicates.”

What do we do, and who can help?

In its 2016 budget, Canada announced a long-term infrastructure plan which included the CAD$2 billion Clean Water and Wastewater Fund, which resource authorities say, “focuses on meeting the immediate water needs of communities and lays the foundation for longer-term strategic investments.” They add that the 2017 budget proposes to provide $21.9 billion over 11 years for investments in green infrastructure, including $9.2 billion to support projects to deliver clean water, safely manage wastewater and help communities prepare for challenges resulting from climate change. In the U.S., federal infrastructure investment dropped from 1 percent of the gross domestic product in 1977 to .5 percent in 2012, even as GDP rose from US$6.59 trillion to $16.80 trillion.

“We’ve been told how bad things are and how much it’s going to cost to fix them,” says Hubbart. “But we get told things like that when we’re hit between the eyes with tragedies like in Flint. Those moments make news for a while, then something else is in the headlines, while politicians pass along the responsibility and hope someone else will come up with a solution. What we forget is that there are people going

“Research indicates we will see an increased incidence of higher-intensity storms, with increased flooding in many areas.”
through those same things—and worse—every day, in places all across the country, and their lives don’t make the headlines.”

California, Feinstein says, has passed a number of water bonds to address some of the issues. “And we’ve begun to talk about a public goods tax,” she says, “where water users would pay a fee on their bill to help with things like infrastructure repair and to help fund assistance programs for those unable to afford water.”

According to Hubbart, there’s talk of progress in his state as well. “Our new governor seems to recognize that to move forward, West Virginia needs to recognize these issues and at least begin to deal with them,” he says. “There’s been talk of raising taxes to help fund this work, which I think would be a good idea.”

Hemphill Fuller at Georgia State University thinks the next five years will be very challenging. “I think it’s going to come down to people working harder within their own state to ensure that their right to clean air and water is upheld,” she says.

Mack, author of the study, says there are many issues to consider and that the study was the first in a long series. “It’s going to take a holistic approach, with cooperation between state, local and the federal government,” she says.

Griffiths thinks water infrastructure projects “should be substantively funded by the federal government, just as they substantively fund or contribute to large infrastructure projects such as highways and bridges.”

But Alan Roberson, executive director of the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators, says we shouldn’t look to the federal level for funding. “Especially given the political situation now, I’d be skeptical about looking to the feds for any solution,” he says. “I do think they need to be a part of the solution, perhaps with low-income assistance programs for families unable to afford water.

“I think we need to start by targeting the areas in the most dire need, and also work to get a handle on the social and political issues in those regions. I’d also like to see more of an effort to recruit and train bright young minds to design and operate what are technically difficult treatment systems. But I do know the affordability problem is growing and has passed the crisis level in many communities. We didn’t learn from Milwaukee in 1993, we didn’t learn from Flint, and we continue to let things fly under the radar. That has to stop.”
José Víctor Espinoza Barcia stood disheartened. Before him, what once was a family’s four-story home was a pile of rubble. But there he stood, with his work crew, preparing to dig through the debris on a grim search for survivors. How could anyone live through such destruction?

But deep within the house, days-old Danna Chancay lay in darkness and dust, alive. This would not be the last time Espinoza and Danna would meet.

On April 17, 2016, the northwestern coast of Ecuador was rocked with a 7.8-magnitude earthquake. Nearly 700 people died. More than 16,000 were injured. Widespread destruction was reported.

As an employee of the EPAM (Public Water Company of Manta), Espinoza realized the quake may have compromised the city’s water system. He and other employees met at EPAM’s Santa Martha Station, which the water company had used as a center of operations during previous disasters.

“We initially met to evaluate the
damage to our drinkable water system and sewage system,” Espinoza says. “After analyzing the area, we realized there were other, higher priorities to be considered.

“We went to the field to help the rescue teams.”

RESCUED

The EPAM crew didn’t need to go far. About a quarter of a mile from the station, a police officer requested help for a trapped family.

“It was a heartbreaking scene,” Espinoza remembers. “It was hard to believe that where there was debris there had been a building before.”

A rescue team formed, made up of the family’s relatives, neighbors and friends, along with the EPAM crew. A backhoe tenderly scraped away broken boards and busted blocks. But when a body was located, the equipment backed off and rescuers began the difficult job of hand-tunneling to the victim.

After about an hour, Jose left to assist another rescue, but co-worker Edmundo Aveiga kept him informed of news from the Chancay home.

“During the early hours of the next day, he called me each time they found someone,” Espinoza says.

Sadly, four family members died in the house. Five survived, including Danna.

“It was such a happy moment,” Espinoza says of the child’s rescue.
RESTORED

Immediately after the earthquake, then-Ecuador District in Formation Governor Atenaida Macias de Espinoza began receiving calls for help. At the same time, she also began receiving donations from her Kiwanis friends. One of the contributions was US$2,670 from Kiwanis friends in Panama. (This past January, the Kiwanis Children’s Fund provided a grant to pay for victims’ basic necessities.)

One of the calls for help was from a neighborhood association. “They were asking for bamboo to build a shelter for a family that had lost everything, including family members,” Macias says. “I wanted to do more than just give them the bamboo. I wanted to help them build a little house.”

Ecuadorean Kiwanis members rallied around their governor. Santa Rita Kiwanian Ramon Figueroa Vera and his family lost most of their possessions in the disaster, but provided the bamboo and wood needed for construction.

On September 16—almost exactly six months after the disaster—Ecuador Kiwanians welcomed the family into their new home. Constructed of bamboo and wood with a zinc roof, the house has a family room, dining room, one bathroom, two bedrooms and a deck. Kiwanians donated plants for a garden.

On hand for the ceremony was Macias’ son and fellow Manta Kiwanis Club member José Espinoza, who had helped harvest bamboo for the project. He soon learned exactly who he was helping—once again. “When the family realized I worked for EPAM, they asked if I could help them install a water system,” Espinoza recalls from the day of the ribbon-cutting. “I was talking with the wife and realized that the baby we found in rubble in April was her baby. I couldn’t believe it! I was so excited.

“I showed them photos and videos of the rescue. We cried as we remembered those difficult moments. It was hard, because they had lost four of their family members, but they were joyful because their baby had been rescued. And now they have a new home.”

One relative expressed the family’s feelings to Macias, saying, “An angel came down from heaven, Dr. Atenaida. If Kiwanis had not helped us, we wouldn’t have a home now.”
With every new beginning, there is a bit of uneasiness. A fear of the unknown. Hannah Kiburz was a bit hesitant when she was invited to join a new Key Club leadership experience called Breakthrough. A two-year member of the Greeley Central (Colorado) High School Key Club, she thought she already knew a lot about conducting successful service projects.

But as her week in Miami Beach, Florida, ended, she had a different take.

“Breakthrough,” Kiburz now says, “deeply influenced my worldly perspective and revitalized my passion for service.”

Breakthrough mixes the adventure of a camping experience with the learning potential of a full-scale immersion into service. Like Kiwanis International’s Key Leader program, there are elements of leadership development and community involvement, but Breakthrough’s focus is fixed on service.

Matthew Nance, leadership development specialist at Kiwanis International, says Breakthrough literally is a breakthrough experience. “This is an opportunity for more Key Club members to experience Key Club beyond their club,” Nance says. “We look for campers from among members who haven’t been involved at the district and international level. It’s an intense week of civic engagement, character building, caring and inclusiveness. It breaks through..."
“Service can be my career,” says Gabi Lirio of the Colquitt County High School Key Club in Moultrie, Georgia.

After each service-site visit, the students returned to the Morningstar Renewal Center to reflect and discuss big ideas:

• Be humble in your approach.
• Listen to the community.
• Get to the root of the problem instead of opting for a quick fix.

Some of the camp’s concepts were hard to dissect, such as privilege and motivations to serve. Hands-on teachable moments helped participants realize that engaging with a community, doing a community assessment and talking with nonprofits and government leaders takes courage and commitment.

“The Breakthrough program was designed to be a chance for Key Club members to see first-hand how a major city handles community challenges,” says John Shertzer, chief programs officer at Kiwanis International.

“We believe Key Club members are the future of community
Leadership all over the world, and experiences like this will prepare them for that responsibility.”

Experiences like working side-by-side with Aktion Club members at the WOW Center and laughing while playing Bingo with senior citizens. Experiences like visiting the Chapman Partnership homeless center to clean, organize, prepare food, serve and play with the children.

The success of each project, says Nance, depended on Kiwanians in key positions in the Miami community.

“Every service site was a relationship with a Kiwanian who was already established,” he says. “And to build that relationship with people in the nonprofit sector was huge.”

How did the participants feel?

“I was inspired to become someone I never thought I could be,” says Jennifer Fan, a member of the Colonel By Secondary School Key Club in Ottawa, Ontario.

“I saw growth within myself,” says Alexis Warren of the Lindenhurst Senior High School Key Club in Lindenhurst, New York. “I feel renewed and ready to serve home, school and community with a whole new capacity.”

At the end of a momentous week, there was singing, laughing and some crying among new friends. Just a week earlier, these were 19 strangers unsure of what was to come. And they departed for their own towns, cities and countries with new perspectives, experiences and lessons about service leadership.

One California camper, Olivia Fu, sums it up.

“Breakthrough was an opportunity for community service, in-depth learning, exclusive networking and unparalleled mentorship,” says Fu, a member of Sacramento’s St. Francis High School.


KEEP ON LEADING

Breakthrough is made possible through a Key Club Youth Opportunities Fund grant from the Kiwanis Children’s Fund. For more information, visit keyclub.org/breakthrough.
Happy birthday—again—to Kiwanis! This July, clubs throughout the Latin American region celebrate a half century of uninterrupted existence, service and fellowship.

On July 7, 1967, the Kiwanis Club of Bucaramanga, Colombia, organized. It was not the first club to form in the region, but it is the first Latin American club to reach its 50th year, setting off a birthday party that stretches from the Baja California peninsula in Mexico to the Paraguay River in South America.

Today, the area counts more than 1,750 Kiwanis members in more than 100 clubs in six nations. In El Salvador, children with disabilities receive wheelchairs. In Colombia, children from disadvantaged families enjoy tours of Villavicencio’s Christmas lights. On page 18 of this issue of Kiwanis magazine, you’ll find the story of Ecuadorian Kiwanians building a house for a family who lost four relatives, their home and all their possessions in an April 2016 earthquake.

With these and other activities, Latin American Kiwanians continue to record a rich history of community-building, child-prioritizing service.

So, feliz cumpleaños, feliz aniversario and happy birthday, Kiwanis Latin America.
In the beginning

A RICH HISTORY AND UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES DEFINE THE EARLY YEARS OF KIWANIS IN LATIN AMERICA.

Fifteen U.S. surgeons—Kiwanians every one of them but no two from the same community—gathered in an Argentine hotel and declared themselves a Kiwanis club. The date was March 16, 1923. The South American club, of course, was a tongue-in-cheek jest, a bit of fun among the doctors while they cruised the subcontinent to study the region’s surgical practices. One month later, their journey ended, and the Kiwanis Club of Buenos Aires disbanded.

Nearly four decades later, Kiwanis established itself—in earnest—in Latin America. The Kiwanis Club of Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico, organized on April 17, 1962, and became the first real Kiwanis club outside the founding nations of Canada and the United States. The club quickly became a vibrant contributor to its community. In 1968, an average of 25 women per week visited the club’s cancer-detection clinic. Sadly, on October 3, 2009—only three years from its 50th anniversary—the Tijuana, Baja club closed.

Kiwanis returned to the community, however, four years later with the formation on November 12, 2013, of the Kiwanis Club of Tijuana, Mexico.
SHOWCASE

“...come on scholarship because they cannot afford to pay for it on their own.”

HAPPY CAMPERS
CAMP NEJEDA GIVES CHILDREN WITH DIABETES A CHANCE TO BE FREE.

STORY BY WENDY ROSE GOULD • PHOTOS COURTESY CAMP NEJEDA FOUNDATION

It was a serendipitous sequence of events that led to the extraordinary relationship between the Kiwanis Club of Greater Parsippany, New Jersey, and Camp Nejeda, a sleep-away summer camp for children with Type 1 diabetes. On a morning when the club was hosting its regular meeting at a local diner, the camp’s executive director, Bill Vierbuchen, was scheduled to meet with someone else in the same location.

When that person didn’t show, Vierbuchen introduced himself to the club and explained Camp Nejeda’s mission to enhance the lives of children through one- and two-week-long sessions.

“Going to Camp Nejeda is the first time many of these children have been away from their parents,” explains Kiwanian Michael Mulhaul, who works closely with the camp. “The children are monitored and have nurses on staff at all times, and the camp knows how to keep them safe and healthy while still giving them the camp experience.”

Imagine the freedom campers enjoy when they don’t have to explain things like blood-sugar levels, finger pricks, carb counting, insulin injections and ketones. Instead, they interact with other children who already understand. Plus, they’re mentored by camp counselors who often are former Nejeda campers themselves.

Since that fateful meeting, the club has donated approximately US$35,000 to Camp Nejeda through the annual Grand Tasting event, a wine-, liquor- and beer-tasting extravaganza eagerly anticipated by the community. Camp Nejeda’s staff and parents sell tickets, donate items for silent and live auctions and set up a booth to raise awareness. In return, the club donates $10,000 of event proceeds to funnel into the camp’s scholarship fund.

“A third of our kids who come to camp come on scholarship because they cannot afford to pay for it on their own,” notes Vierbuchen.

The camp charges $1,050 weekly per child, though the actual cost is about $1,800. Expenses are higher compared to other overnight camps due to specialized needs, such as the 75,000 finger pricks given every summer at a cost of $1 each.

In addition to fundraising, Kiwanians stop by the camp to visit.

“The camp’s impact has been incredible,” Vierbuchen says. “Our kids have learned a lot from the Kiwanians. ... They see the joy of giving back.”
DIY MEALS
FOOD TASTES BETTER WHEN YOU FIX IT YOURSELF.
STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACK BROCKLEY

It’s one of those days when the clouds are clearly winning the game of hide-and-seek against the sun. Yet, children are determined to have fun, rushing into Toshimaen Amusement Park in Nerima, Japan. Toddlers climb aboard Thomas the Tank Engine for a quick ride. Boys and girls pose to please parents in Pokemon’s garden. And families look for the best pig, horse or carriage on the 110-year-old German-made El Dorado Carousel.

One group of children, however, has a different destination in mind. They’re headed for a cooking class with the Kiwanis family.

“For many years, the Tokyo Kiwanis Club has been known for its generous contributions,” says Yuji Suzuki. “Lately, there’s been an interest among members to do more service.”

As the club’s 2015-16 project committee chair, Suzuki learned that there is a growing number of children eating at home alone, due to rising divorce rates, more mothers working away from home and other situations. With this information, he proposed a cooking class for kids. So on this cloudy Sunday morning, 35 boys and girls strap on Kiwanis aprons at the 2nd annual Kiwanis cooking class. Toshimaen Chef Oiwa is on hand to teach the proper way to prepare ginger pork and miso soup. He’s assisted by Past Secretary Shoichi Kano along with other Tokyo Kiwanians, Circle K members from Musashino University and prospective recruits for a prospective CKI club at Rikkyo University.

As pork slices sizzle in pans, the Kiwanis-family volunteers lend advice, suggesting a more comfortable way to hold tongs, expressing a warning to turn the meat and doling out words of praise. Afterward, everyone sits down to enjoy the pork and miso soup of their labors.

“One boy, asked about his experience, drains a bowl of soup and says he enjoyed it very much, especially eating together. Asked about his favorite food of the day, he replies, “Miso soup.” Three empty bowls stacked in front of him confirm his answer.

“All the kids are smiling, and they obviously enjoy eating the dishes they fixed.”
ALL ABOARD
CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES GAIN EQUAL ACCESS TO BIKING FUN, THANKS TO A STATEWIDE KIWANIS PROJECT.
STORY BY LORI ROBERTS

For most children, riding a bicycle is a rite of passage. For children with developmental disabilities, riding may not even be an option.

This past year, Ohio District Kiwanis clubs donated almost 100 specially designed bicycles and tricycles to children, adults and schools around the state. The tricycles, known as AmTrykes, allow riders to pedal using their arms, legs or both, depending on what’s needed.

“Because the AmTryke stimulates the whole body—it’s not just leg muscles or arm muscles, it’s the whole body working together—you see overall progress,” says 2015-16 Ohio District Governor Amy Zimmerman.

Zimmerman drew from her family’s volunteer background when she proposed the project to district clubs. Both of her parents were involved with the GreeneBucs, a Dayton, Ohio, chapter of the National AMBUCS organization. AMBUCS, which works to create mobility and independence for people with disabilities, owns and works with trike-builder AmTryke.

Zimmerman figured her Kiwanis district might generate enough funds to donate about 26 AmTrykes, which would represent one per division. Instead, clubs are closing in on 100 donations. Adults benefit too, like an injured veteran who received a grown-up version.

The trikes are a big hit. Over the past couple of years, the Kiwanis Club of Lima, Ohio, donated one each to three area elementary schools. Arden Ruen, a physical therapist assistant with Lima City Schools, moves the AmTrykes between schools as needed. They’ve been especially popular with those who have limited use of their legs.

“For these students, the AmTrykes are very useful to pedal with their hands to assist with the leg pedal movement. Each student has demonstrated improved distance as they are able to pedal throughout the school on their own,” Ruen says.

Thanks to the trikes, students with developmental disabilities are now the ones in the driver’s seat.

“The AmTryke has given my students the opportunity to participate with peers,” Ruen says, “(and) gain balance, confidence, coordination, endurance and strength.”
FOR A BETTER TOMORROW
WE PLAY TODAY

We don't just manufacture playgrounds at Landscape Structures. What we do here is shape kids' lives by teaching them about persistence, leadership, competition, bravery, support and empathy through play. For more than 45 years, we've invested our hearts and souls into creating amazing playgrounds for communities because for a better tomorrow, we play today. Watch our video at shapedbyplay.com and share how you're shaping lives in your community using #shapedbyplay.
IT’S ABOUT TIME
KIWANIANS IN ITALY PROVIDE LIFE-SAVING LESSONS.
STORY BY JULIE SAETRE

Anyone who has needed to summon an ambulance for a loved one, a friend—even a stranger—knows the feeling. Seconds seem like minutes as anxiety and helplessness rise: Will the vehicle arrive in time to save the patient?

Members of the Kiwanis Club of Panormo, Italy, decided to replace fear with action by addressing two common types of emergency situations: choking incidents (especially among children) and heart attacks. Club President C. Alessandro Mauceria says that more than 50 percent of choking deaths occur among children under age 5. To save a life, help must come quickly. “The effectiveness of relief is linked to timing—sometimes less than five minutes from the event,” he explains. “Beyond this threshold, the ability to survive is reduced by 10 percent every minute. And often, even if you manage to avoid death, the damage becomes irreversible due to prolonged lack of oxygen to the brain.”

Immediate attention also is critical for heart attacks, which claim about 70,000 lives in Italy each year, Mauceria adds. “Studies say half of them could be saved if experts can (intervene) within two minutes or less.”

So this past October, Panormo club members signed an agreement with a national group that includes doctors and instructors and began teaching the Heimlich maneuver to help choking victims and cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for heart attack victims. Almost every week, the Kiwanians visit schools, churches, athletic sites and other public locations to demonstrate life-saving techniques geared toward adults, children and infants. Specialized operators also demonstrate how to use a defibrillator, the device used to restart a patient’s heart by administering an electric shock.

For some Panormo club members, however, providing information wasn’t enough, so they became certified in Basic Life Support-Defibrillation (BLS-D), a requirement in Italy to use a defibrillator.

“It is important to save lives,” Mauceria stresses. “We want to be ready to do so. Anytime.”
When you love what you do, it shows. It shines in everything you accomplish. It rings out in everything you say. It’s the kind of passion that people want to share. So make your love for Kiwanis an inspiration to fellow club members and a reason for nonmembers to join. It all starts with what’s in your heart.

Kiwanis love shines. Make it your club’s beacon.

kiwanis.org/theformula
TRAIL BLAZERS
VISUALLY IMPAIRED KIDS DISCOVER THE JOY
OF CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING.
STORY BY JULIE SAETRE • PHOTOS BY GREG WOHLFORD

At first glance, it looks like just another winter day on the ski trails at the Wilderness Lodge in Erie, Pennsylvania. A group of eight children and young adults, enrolled in the Wilderness Wildcats cross-country skiing program, work with adult instructors to learn the basics of a new-to-them sport.

There’s a lot to take in. They need to learn how to wear boots and skis. How to work with poles. How to fall and get back up again. And finally, how to navigate a trail.

But this particular group of students differs from other Wildcats classes in one key category: These participants are either blind or visually impaired. And thanks to this four-week pilot program—supported by the Erie Kiwanis Club—they are gaining access to a once inaccessible experience.

“Typically, kids with visual impairment don’t have a lot of opportunity,” explains Shannon Wohlford of The Sight Center of Northwest Pennsylvania, which created the program. “When you think about school teams and sporting clubs that are run through communities ... a lot of them don’t have anyone who can adapt or modify to include a child who is blind or severely visually impaired.”

Ned Reade, a Sight Center board member and avid cross-country skier, introduced the idea. Reade, visually impaired himself, enlisted the help of husband-and-wife team Dave and Dorothy Seth. Dorothy, who is blind, medaled in skiing in the Special Olympics. Bill Sapone, president of the Erie Kiwanis Club, and his board agreed to support the program with a donation. He wanted the kids to discover a sport he loves.

“It can be 15 degrees out, and after 10 minutes, you’re warm. It’s quiet. It’s just beautiful.”

The new Wildcats agreed.

“They took to it right away,” Wohlford says. “Everyone had a great time. They didn’t want to leave.”
PREPARE AND PROTECT
SELF-DEFENSE CLASS TEACHES WOMEN AND GIRLS TO STAY SAFE.

STORY BY JULIE SAETRE

Roger and Kathy Kemp of Kansas faced every parent’s worst nightmare in 2002, when their 19-year-old daughter, Ali, was murdered. After the killer’s arrest, the Kemps fought back through the development of a not-for-profit organization, The Ali Kemp Educational Foundation (T.A.K.E), which provides free self-defense classes for women and girls ages 12 and up.

Members of the St. Joseph, Missouri, Kiwanis Club learned about the foundation and launched their first annual T.A.K.E. self-defense session in 2015. To date, some 300 women and girls have completed the club-sponsored class.

While the class is free, attendees can choose to donate US$20. Funds support T.A.K.E., as well as the St. Joseph club’s Coats for Kids initiative, which provides warm winter clothing to area children at schools and a women’s shelter.

Jill and Bob Leiker, a husband-and-wife team of judo experts and former Marines, lead participants through a two-hour, hands-on session. Participants learn how to stay safe at home, in the community, online and during travel.

As Roger Kemp tells T.A.K.E. Defense participants, “If we can save one life out there, I don’t care what it costs; this whole program will be worth it.”
Laura Shaske is crying.

Shaske, a teacher at Tabb Middle School in Yorktown, Virginia, is reflecting on what happened after she became the school’s Builders Club advisor in 2011. The first thing she did: challenge its members to define the club’s future.

“What if we actually built something?” one student asked. “Like a school?”

A less visionary advisor might have nixed the idea, but not Shaske. Under her guidance, the club discovered Free the Children (now renamed We Charity) and its Adopt a Village (We Villages) program, which provides education, clean water, food, income opportunities and health care to third-world villages.

The students decided to work with Free the Children to build a school in Sierra Leone, where the Civil War of the 1990s had forced thousands of children into combat. “What happened to the children of Sierra Leone,” Shaske says, “touched the students’ hearts.”

To fund construction of the school, students needed to raise US$10,000, a long-term effort that would outlast their time in Builders Club. But Shaske promised them she would see it to completion.

During the next five years, 64 students came through the Tabb Middle School Builders Club. Guided by Shaske and supported by the Tabb Kiwanis Club, every one of them worked toward the same $10,000 goal. In early 2016, all of the car washes, candygrams and other fundraisers finally paid off. They met their goal. The school would be built.

Shaske invited all 64 members—the oldest of whom were now high school seniors—to a celebration. Two representatives of We Foundation attended via Skype. “It was an emotional day,” Shaske says.

Today, construction on the school is underway, but Shaske still chokes up when she recounts the celebration. “Seeing the students meet that goal was such a beautiful thing. I hope other clubs can take something away from this. If you let students fall in love with a project and see it through to the end, you can empower them to make a difference in the world.”
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EVERY DROP COUNTS
WHY YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT THE WATER CRISIS

WATER. Most of us take it for granted that we have access to clean water. We jump in the shower and think nothing of the gallons of water running over our bodies and down the drain. When we need a cold drink, we go to the sink to pour a glass, enjoy some from a fancy filtered jug or grab a plastic bottle from the fridge. When we injure ourselves, we rinse the cut with clean water from the tap. The farm located down the street uses clean, accessible water for its livestock and land—meaning we have access to a reliable food source. Most of us don’t have to walk miles to collect water for our families—meaning that time can be spent working or in school.

But these scenarios paint a picture that isn’t the case for everyone, everywhere. And it’s not often that we stop to think about the statistics:

663 million people lack access to safe, clean drinking water.

4,100 children under the age of 5 die every day from water-related illnesses.

0 is the amount of sustainable agriculture production that’s attainable without a close, safe water supply.

88 percent is how much disease rates could drop just by providing safe drinking water.

THIRST PROJECT is doing something about the global water crisis by motivating young people to raise money to bring a community safe water. Over the past seven years, Thirst Project has raised more than US$8 million and provided more than 280,000 people with safe, clean water through the construction of wells. While the water crisis is indeed a global one, Thirst Project focuses its efforts in areas affected the most. Thirst Project has funded well projects in 13 countries, and currently is active in the following seven: Swaziland, Uganda, India, Ethiopia, El Salvador, Kenya and Colombia.

To learn more about Key Club’s partner, Thirst Project, visit thirstproject.org.

Photo and stats courtesy of Thirst Project
Reach out to our partners. And reach more children.

Your club changes children’s lives. When you partner with organizations that have similar missions, you make a difference in even more lives. So reach out to a Kiwanis partner. Create a new bond. Increase your visibility. And enhance your club’s next signature project. Go to kiwanis.org/SPtoolkit.

Have suggestions for other Kiwanis partners? Let us know at partners@kiwanis.org.
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.

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