Kindness

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AMERICA’S NEIGHBOR FRED ROGERS

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ON THE COVER: Fred Rogers • Photo courtesy of The Fred Rogers Company

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
POLY LAT • KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

Pursuing greatness

If you do not know where you are going, don’t be surprised if you get lost!

I believe much of your personal and professional success comes from how well you have prepared. You can’t always see what’s ahead, so mental preparation and attitude can help achieve positive outcomes.

The theme of my year as president is Growing Kiwanis from Good to Great. This is based on preparation and the principles of Jim Collins’ book “Good to Great.” In the October/November 2018 issue of Kiwanis magazine, I used the acronym G.R.E.A.T. to offer guidance in planning for clubs, divisions and districts to be the best they can be.

The principles are really very simple. We have an amazing organization with selfless, talented people. Recognize and use their strengths to get the right people in the right roles in your club where they can be most effective.

When you see things that can be improved upon in your area, face the facts and get to work. Kiwanis is all about teamwork. That takes discipline and accountability, and with a supportive environment, you can share a sense of accomplishment.

Clubs grow stronger bonds by working on one big thing they do well. Collins identifies this as the Hedgehog Concept, or in Kiwanis language, a club’s signature project. Get people involved in a fun event or activity that can become a highlight of your community.

G.R.E.A.T. strategies align with the Kiwanis Strategic Plan of membership and engagement, community impact, our Kiwanis image and financial viability. The 2018-19 year focuses on creating great clubs by following the strategic plan, which you can read at kiwanis.org/strategicplan.

As we look forward to 2019, I wish you peace, happiness and good health. To continue being one of the world’s leading service organizations, we must focus on continuity from leader to leader and year to year. Let’s not settle for good when we can be great. Every member has the responsibility to grow Kiwanis in his or her community. Take pride in it, and we can celebrate that we are helping more children by giving them more opportunities.

In case you haven’t heard

I write about membership quite a bit in this column. That’s because it is important that our organization always look for new members to join existing Kiwanis clubs, as well as members for new clubs in new communities.

Conventional wisdom of the day is that service clubs no longer are relevant, that they’re dying everywhere. And the brutal truth is that the past couple decades have been very difficult ones for all service clubs, especially in North America.

However, just in case you haven’t heard, we believe we are turning the corner on this challenge.

Our losses have been slowly disappearing over the past few years. Our focus on introducing new communities to Kiwanis, through the focused membership campaign we called The Formula, seems to be working. For the year ended September 30, 2018, we had a sizeable growth total to celebrate.

In fact, we finished our best club-opening year in modern Kiwanis times and the second best in our 104-year history.

During the past year, we organized dozens of new-club blitzes, where some of our leaders traveled to communities worldwide with the goal of opening two or three clubs at each stop. They were joined by local members who had conducted a community analysis, identified one or more needs for service and provided the club-opening experts with introductions to the mayor, school superintendent, chamber of commerce and other business leaders. One new member usually led to a recommendation for another leader who also was invited to join.

Over the period of a few days, dozens of meetings were held, invitations extended and new Kiwanians identified. Often, a new Key Club, Builders Club or K-Kids club was also born.

And a community gets the benefit of a new Kiwanis club.

In this issue of Kiwanis magazine (page 40), we celebrate a growing Kiwanis International, and we recognize some key players who helped make it happen.

We challenge every Kiwanian to read about our accomplishments during 2017-18.

And we challenge every Kiwanis member everywhere to join in for the current 2018-19 year!
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Paul Fredrick
Letters

READERS OF KIWANIS MAGAZINE’S PRINT VERSION AND BLOG RESPOND TO FEATURES FROM THE AUGUST, SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2018 ISSUES. JOIN THE CONVERSATIONS AT KIWANISMAGAZINE.ORG OR EMAIL MAGAZINE@KIWANIS.ORG.

Cover Issue

I need to tell you our experience with the most recent Kiwanis magazine. I automatically added the magazine with Marvel's pile of advertising, because I did not recognize it as anything else.

Later, Marvel brought the magazine to me after she had almost thrown it in the recycling bin and asked if I had recognized it as the Kiwanis magazine. Nope, I hadn’t.

The logo being gray in color (and being on the side rather than the top) blended in with the photo and neither of us knew it was our Kiwanis magazine.

Having worked as a writer and editor of magazines for about 40 years, I know that things look different once they are in print — and often not as good as the “plan.” However, our rule was always to make sure the reader immediately recognized our magazine name.

I still cringe each time I see “KIWANIS” going up the side of my issue rather than at the top.

Bob Dunaway
Kiwanis Club of Urbandale, Iowa

Rust Never Sleeps

Of all the press we have gotten over the past four years, I thought your article (September 2018) did the best job of capturing the essence of the effort and its significance. Thank you.

Tom Thagard
Kiwanis Club of Birmingham, Alabama

Teaching Tech

The proliferation and general acceptance of texting offer an obvious parallel to Gresham’s law. Just as bad money drives out good, the brief, off-the-cuff messages that constitute the bulk of such communication supplant thoughtful, better reasoned and more completely expressed sharing of ideas, emotion and information that is possible in a well-written letter. A text message, of course, could be both eloquent and meaningful, and a letter could be poorly written. On balance, however, the truncated words, dubious grammar and shallowness of content that constitute the bulk of texting have become a sort of inflation in our verbal currency. I would guess that some individuals will send more texts in a single week than the number of letters they would write in a lifetime. Each digital vowel and consonant, every emoji and acronym and every description of the oatmeal one had for breakfast dilute the value of the correspondence. Can “OMG” convey the awe inspired by the sight of a distant glacier? Does “LOL” describe the wit of an Oscar Wilde play?

Many collections have been published containing the “world’s greatest correspondence,” as assessed by editors and scholars of disparate taste and applying varied criteria. I will not hold my breath while waiting for publication of “OMG — A Collection of the World’s Greatest Text Messages.”

Don Reid
Kiwanis Club of Ellensburg, Washington

A couple of Key Club kids taught me how to use a couple of functions on my then-new smartphone at a conference.

Tom Ontis
Kiwanis Club of East Sacramento, California

Planted Love

This is certainly, without doubt, an excellent project (September 2018). Nothing but good can result, and I thank John Howell for passing along the idea. I hope many clubs are attracted to this idea and do likewise. What a wonderful world.

Dudley Ball
Kiwanis Club of Kingston, Jamaica

Thank you, Kiwanis Club of Capilano, West Vancouver, for growing trees, communities and most importantly young citizens. Having personally planted Kiwanis trees in the Philippines, Germany and Tanzania, I know firsthand how glorious that project can be. You are preparing the environment and our young leaders for generations to come.

Thank you!

Jane Erickson
2016-17 Kiwanis International president
Kid Friendly
I received my October/November 2018 Kiwanis magazine today and am thrilled with your article “Kid Friendly.” You did a good job guiding and advising mentors, advisors and Kiwanians. Pat yourself on the back for a job well done.

Mary Bowen
Kiwanis advisor, Fridley Senior High School Key Club, Minnesota

Play Ball
The feature “Play Ball” (August 2018) omitted a prominent connection between youth baseball and Kiwanis. PONY Baseball and Softball — now an international organization with programs for boys and girls from ages 5 through 18 — began in 1951, in Washington, Pennsylvania. Kiwanians Lew Hays and Paul Shearn worked with local youth leaders to create an opportunity for boys who had outgrown Little League to continue playing in a six-team league for 13- and 14-year-olds.

PONY Baseball and Softball (pony.org) now has leagues in 50 countries. Every year, the PONY League World Series is held at Lew Hays Field in Washington. Years ago, Kiwanis constructed the Paul Shearn Kiwanis Pavilion in the adjacent Washington Park. For the past several years, we serve a picnic lunch to the 10 participating teams from around the world in that pavilion. We have been joined by other local service clubs in that annual event on the first day of the PONY League World Series.

Willard C. White
Kiwanis Club of Washington, Pennsylvania

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:

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What’s happening
TRENDS, TIPS, FACTS AND FIGURES FROM KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

Tickets to the kingdom
Mixing business with pleasure is easy when the 2018 Kiwanis International convention is at Walt Disney World Resort, Florida, June 27-30. Make the most of your free time with special Disney theme park tickets. Advance purchase lets you skip the lines at the ticket windows, save money and customize your free time to suit your individual interests. Learn more by calling +1-407-566-5600.

45,807 Terrific Kids bumper stickers sold by the Kiwanis Store in 2017-18.
kiwanis.org/store
Replenish school supplies

With every equation and mistake, pencils and erasers wear down. In fact, teachers will tell you that school supplies are needed all year. Find out how you can support local classroom needs with assistance from Kiwanis Warehouse. Shop online at kiwanis.org/warehouse.

Kiwanis superstars

The New York District sent more than 300 cases of goods to relieve victims of Hurricane Florence in Lumberton, North Carolina. The New Yorkers remember the help they received from fellow Kiwanians in 2012 when Superstorm Sandy devastated their communities. Read more at kiwanis.org/2019florence.

The gift of reading

All too often, children are forced to stand in the reading line instead of the purchasing line at book fairs. Why? Because they can’t afford new books. Help build a child’s home library by purchasing Scholastic Books reading certificates. Talk with your school’s counselor to find out how you can help. kiwanis.org/readingcerts
TIME TO VOLUNTEER

How many hours do you volunteer a year? Compare yourself to the U.S. average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Median Annual Hours of Volunteering</th>
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<td>35 and younger</td>
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Avoid online scams
IdentityForce provides an early warning system to notify you when your personal information is at risk. Alerts are sent to your smartphone, tablet or desktop computer, so you have the power to act before damage is done. Kiwanians get a 20 percent discount. Learn more at kiwanis.org/identityforce.

Stay safe
As the holidays approach, homes are filled with valuables of every kind. This is the perfect time to protect your home with 20-percent discounted packages from Kiwanis partner Protect America. Stay safe this holiday season and beyond. protectamerica.com/kiwanis

‘Burn Notice’ gets noticed
Every year, Folio’s Eddie & Ozzie awards recognize publishing excellence. This past October, Kiwanis magazine received best-single-article honors among nonprofit associations for the August 2017 feature “Burn Notice” about wildfires that ravaged Tennessee (kiwanis.org/2017burn).

In addition, the publication earned honorable mentions for design excellence for the entire December 2017 issue and for the issue’s feature, “Use This” (kiwanis.org/2017usethis).
Tips and tools
If you’re working with elementary school students, you’ll find all the K-Kids, BUG and Terrific Kids tools you need at the refreshed kkids.org website. If you’re a faithful patron of terrifickids.org and bringupgrades.org, these web pages will continue to serve as an alternative path to the same materials.

Policy changes
This past October, the Kiwanis International Board revised policies to:
• agree with the bylaws amendment adopted at the 2018 Kiwanis International convention providing that a person cannot be endorsed as a candidate for Kiwanis International trustee until they are immediate past governor.
• provide that the members of the Kiwanis International Board shall also be the members of the Kiwanis Youth Programs Board.

The board also adopted a new interpretation of the Kiwanis International bylaws to clarify that the term “shall have served” means serving more than one-half of the term.

For more details, visit kiwanis.org/oct2018policies.

NEW CLUB PRESIDENT OR SECRETARY?
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In some of the world’s most dangerous areas, this is the crucial moment. Don’t rest now. Help eliminate MNT from the face of the Earth.
kiwanis.org/TheEliminateProject

ELIMINATE
maternal/neonatal tetanus
Kiwanis | unicef
Sometimes the world feels like a heavy place. Threats of war. Fights over science. Racism. Sexism. Feuding politicians. Inequality. Enraged citizens. Lost children. Disease. Climate concerns. Bullying. The list goes on and on. While some experts report the world is actually better off than in any time in the past (according to Our World in Data, the world is better in terms of poverty, literacy, health, freedom and education), it can be hard to believe when television, radio and social media scream negative news on a constant basis. Many of us go to bed angry and wake up angry because we are inundated with negativity. We worry that if we talk about it, we might set off a heated debate with friends or family. People are being mean to one another. We’re saying things we know aren’t kind. It seems we need a reminder of how to treat one another. Maybe it’s time to turn to an old friend: Mister Rogers.

“It’s not an exaggeration to say that millions of people of all ages and backgrounds (mostly in the United States and Canada) remember something specific about the iconic television character Mister Rogers from “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood.” Red sweater. Blue shoes. Songs. Fish. Trolley. Puppets. Neighbors. “Human kindness was probably the single most important thing to Fred Rogers.” — Maxwell King
He took us on fabulous, curious adventures to learn how pretzels and crayons are made. He introduced us to musicians. We met his neighbor who wore lampshades on her head.

But what many of us remember most about Mister Rogers is the way he made us feel. He spoke directly to us, like a friend. He was gentle. Soft-spoken. Honest. Kind.

Would the world be a better place if it were made up of real people with qualities like the character Mister Rogers? Definitely. But people like this are few and far between, right?

Well, Fred Rogers was exactly like his character, according to those who knew him.

Inside the office of The Pittsburgh Foundation in May 2018, President and CEO Maxwell King shared stories he learned while serving as director of the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children’s Media at Saint Vincent College in Rogers’ hometown of Latrobe, Pennsylvania, and while researching and writing the biography, “The Good Neighbor: The Life and Work of Fred Rogers.” King explains that at his core, Rogers really did embody his character.

“Human kindness was probably the single most important thing to Fred Rogers,” King says. “People think of him as a television innovator, as an early childhood education expert, as a musician, as a scriptwriter, as a songwriter, as a performer, as a puppeteer. But what he cared about more than any of that is human kindness.

“You know how athletes or speakers will sometimes do a visioning exercise to think about what’s coming up and how they are going to play the game or do the speech or conduct the class they’re teaching? Fred Rogers would do that for the day he was about to enter into. But you know what he was doing it about? He was thinking about who he would see at work. Who he would see at lunch. Who he’d see at a meeting that afternoon. And how was he going to be prepared to be as thoughtful and kind as he could be? This is what he did. Because he really viewed his important role that he played in life as being an exemplar of human kindness.”

Rogers’ background in television, religion (he was a Presbyterian minister) and early childhood education studies gave him a unique perspective and the opportunity to reach millions of children to spread his message of love and kindness and acceptance. Every word of his messages was carefully chosen and crafted. He spoke into the camera, giving children the sense that he was their friend, their neighbor. Someone they could trust.
“There are three ways to ultimate success: The first way is to be kind. The second way is to be kind. The third way is to be kind.”

— Fred Rogers
“When someone does something for you when you’re a child, something that really feeds and nourishes your soul, you don’t forget it.”

— Brad Montague
“I think there’s a part of us that doesn’t want to believe that he was real,” says Brad Montague. “That he may—be wasn’t as kind as he seemed. That he fought in wars. That he had a bunch of tattoos. Because we can’t wrap our heads around gentleness and kindness. But I think those are the boldest things you can do. I think he gave me as a child and is still giving me as a grown man an image of gentleness as boldness. He’s fiercely kind. Relentlessly kind. And that makes a dent.”

You likely wouldn’t recognize Brad Montague if he walked past you on the street. He might not be as popular as Fred Rogers — yet — but his work has quite a following. He’s the creator of Kid President, videos featuring that spunky kid who has given a pep talk to more than 40 million viewers (so far) on YouTube.

It’s September in Nashville, Tennessee, and Montague has just finished another Wonder Workshop, where he motivates, inspires and encourages people to “joyfully rebel against how things are to create the world as it should be.” Workshop attendees are lining up to personally thank him, pose for selfies, share project ideas. He spends more than 30 minutes chatting, smiling, laughing, offering advice. Giving hug after hug after hug. He spends time with every person in the line. He sits down for a few questions after he finishes, instantly apologetic that he took so long. When told it’s exactly what Fred Rogers was known to do with his fans — to give each and every one of them a moment to make them feel special — Montague sits back and looks at the ceiling. He pauses, smiles shyly and almost in a whisper says, “Thank you. Thank you.”

If you follow Montague’s work at all you’ll see he’s a big fan of Fred Rogers. He shares his quotes on social media and mentions him in his workshops. Montague works closely with young children. He gives them an opportunity to be heard. Much like Rogers did in work and in life. In fact, Montague has been called “the 21st century version of Mister Rogers.” It’s a comparison he calls a “massive compliment,” but also one he struggles with.

“I don’t think Fred would want there to be another Fred Rogers,” he says. “In the same way he wouldn’t want there to be another me. I think I take that as a compliment of the highest order because he embodies what it means to be a

“Fred spread kindness a variety of ways through his program. Influencing children to understand and appreciate kindness. Influencing their parents to understand what children needed from them.”

— Maxwell King
“Fred was very clear that the role of technology in a child’s life is secondary. He was adamant that a computer or a TV are never to replace the importance of face-to-face interaction.” — Junlei Li

Photo by Anne M. O’Neill

Fred was very clear that the role of technology in a child’s life is secondary. He was adamant that a computer or a TV are never to replace the importance of face-to-face interaction. So when the Fred Rogers Center reached out and talked about how (our Kid President videos) show empathy and kindness, I thought ‘Well, maybe we are at least scratching the surface and attempting to be a fraction of what that show was to me as a child.’

This year marked the 50th anniversary of “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood.” There have been documentaries, King’s book and a movie with actor Tom Hanks playing the role of Rogers is in production. So, yes, it’s an anniversary celebration of one of the most popular children’s programs of all time. But why all the fuss about Fred Rogers? Why do so many people have such fond memories of him?

The answer could be science. Brooke Jones is vice president of the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation. She says science plays a role in how kindness, like that shown by Fred Rogers, affects our brains and our bodies.

“I call it the ‘trifecta’ effect,” she says. “We all know that when we commit an act of kindness or receive one, we feel good. There is an increase in oxytocin, serotonin and dopamine as well as a decrease in cortisol. But what most people don’t know is that the person who witnesses an act of kindness has the same physiological response in their body with the same increases and decreases in those chemicals. Oxytocin, serotonin and dopamine are ‘feel good’ chemicals that aid in lowering blood pressure, improving overall heart health and help us feel calmer and less depressed. Cortisol is the ‘stress’ hormone that has been found to decrease in the bloodstream when people regularly participate in kind acts.”

So if science proves kindness can make us feel better (in addition to being better), is there a way to learn how to be more kind? Can we change the emotional well-being of the world with kindness? Jones says “absolutely.” And in fact, that’s what staff at Random Acts of Kindness strive for every day with free kindness curriculum for students. Globally, the RAK curriculum reaches more than 2 million students a year.

“We know it can be taught,” she says. “One of the resources we offer is an evidence-based curriculum rooted in kindness. It has a full year of lesson plans covering concepts like compassion, respect, responsibility, integrity and gratitude. When we practice kindness and begin to embody it, we are naturally teaching others why it’s important.”

Montague has a similar, yet different, take on kindness and how we can affect one another’s lives.

“I think we remember when someone is kind because it jolts us into realizing who we are and who we are capable of being,” he says. “I interviewed a bunch of children and I asked them, ‘What can I do to be a better grownup?’ and over-
whelmingly they want grownups to show up. They just want you to be there. Junlei Li at the Fred Rogers Center is doing the same research and finding just like Fred Rogers said, you don’t have to do anything spectacular, you just need to be there. Just you tying their shoe, looking them in the eyes, is the most important thing you could do — if you do that in love, as the caregiver to the child.”

Li is a senior fellow and former director of the Fred Rogers Center. He says that indeed, “what makes the ultimate difference in people’s resilience in the face of adversity is the presence of at least one caring, trusted and supportive person.” Like Montague says: Show up.

Li calls it the ‘at least one’ principle.

“Each of us needs ‘at least one’ person like that as we are growing up,” he says. “Each of us has the opportunity to be ‘at least one’ for someone else at some point of our lives.

“Fred Rogers has a classic quote about the ‘at least one’ idea: ‘Anyone who has ever been able to sustain good work has had at least one person — and often many — who have believed in him or her. We just don’t get to be competent human beings without a lot of different investments from others.’”

Call those others family, friends, your tribe or complete strangers with a do-good heart. They were all neighbors to Fred Rogers. You were his neighbor too.

“Fred created a rich model of what a neighborhood is like, and what each of us can do, with all of our own uniqueness, to be a neighbor to others — to honor and respect the uniqueness of our neighbors,” Li says. “His audience may have been children, but his message is for the entire world to hear.

“In the last public speech Fred gave, he said each and every one of us longs to know that there’s something about us that’s worth giving. By that he meant worth giving to our neighbors, our family, our community, our society. He felt that, ‘What if the greatest service we can offer to another human being, a neighbor or even a stranger, is to help that person know that he or she has some-

“Kindness starts with one. That’s the beauty of kindness. It doesn’t need an army of well-organized people to change the world.” — Brooke Jones

Random Acts of Kindness offers many free kindness resources, such as posters. See the Back Page (page 50) for examples. For more tips, visit randomactsofkindness.org.

Learn how the Fred Rogers Center is working for and with children at fredrogerscenter.org.

Become a “Joy Rebel” at montagueworkshop.com.

Read more about “The Good Neighbor” at abramsbooks.com/goodneighbor.

Spread kindness to all living things

• Laugh often.
• Foster a pet.
• Plant a tree.
• Hang clothes to dry.
• High-five a stranger.
• Say thank you.
• Pick up trash around town.
• Write a handwritten letter.
• Leave a generous tip.
• Give a friend a ride.
• Compliment someone.
• Befriend the new kid.

DECEMBER 2018 19
Amazon prime

KIWANIANS FROM TWO DIFFERENT CONTINENTS BRING SEASONAL JOY TO COLOMBIAN CHILDREN IN NEED.

Story by Jack Brockley
Photos by Joaquin Sarmiento • Archivolatino

On the indigenous reservations in the most remote regions of Colombia, Christmas is a day much like every other day. Toddlers, living in the northeastern peninsula of Guajira, for example, join their families on hours-long walks to find food. At the nation’s southernmost tip, the boys and girls of the Amazonas District play games with objects made of twigs and plants.

December 23, 2017, however, was a Christmas unlike any other. For the first time, these children played with balloons, ate bread, opened presents and met a kindly strange man named Papá Noel. On that day, the Kiwanis Club of Nativos hosted Christmas parties in two locations that are more than 950 miles apart — a massive undertaking for a club only one month old. But that’s exactly why the club formed.

“These are the most forgotten children of Colombian society,” says Olga Eby, a member of the Nativos club as well as the Kiwanis Club of Upper Keys, Key Largo, Florida. “The Nativos
“THESE ARE THE MOST FORGOTTEN CHILDREN OF COLOMBIAN SOCIETY.”
The club wants to reach the remote places where poverty and lack of support abounds.”

The Nativos club organized in November 2017 with one purpose: serve the nation’s indigenous people. Its roster, comprising Colombian and Florida Kiwanians, also includes members located within the reservation communities. These satellites coordinate Kiwanis activities at the reservations. Such members proved invaluable as on-site resources for planning and conducting the Kiwanis Christmas parties.

Long before the Nativos club officially organized and many, many months before Christmas, Kiwanians across Colombia and abroad, notably in Florida, began collecting gifts, sorting them according to age and gender, packaging them and storing them in readiness for delivery to the reservations. Those who would travel to the parties provisioned tents and hammocks for sleeping arrangements. They hired security guards for their journeys.

Eby recalls her itinerary, which began with a flight into Valledupar to meet other Colombian Kiwanis members. From there, the caravan drove seven hours to Cabo de la Vela. The next day, after another five-hour ride, they arrived at Punta Gallinas to embark on a 45-minute boat ride by sea to the reservation.

The fatigue of long-distance travel and the complications of logistical challenges were well rewarded. On the day of the party,
Nativos Kiwanis club President Moises Ramirez recalls the scene in the Amazonas community of Miriti Paraña, where 105 children gathered in a room prepared by the Kiwanians.

“It was decorated with simple things like balloons,” Ramirez says. “They’d never seen balloons before! We wanted to prepare a meal, but something different for them. We made a chicken rice with bread. They had never eaten bread!”

In both locations, the families entertained their visitors with cultural shows, wearing costumes of the regions and dancing. In La Guajira, where 2,000 children were gathered, they and their families welcomed their Kiwanis guests with Christmas carols. One song opened:

“Let the children sing, let them raise their voices.

“With a boat on the seashore and fisherman sitting nearby, Santa came walking along the sand. Many children followed him. They didn’t know if they should help him.”
“Make the world listen
That they join their voices and
reach the sun.
“In them is the truth.”

The performance, with the children holding one another’s hands, remains an enduring, endearing memory for Olga Eby. As does Santa’s arrival.

“With a boat on the seashore and fisherman sitting nearby, Santa came walking along the sand,” she says. “Many children followed him. They didn’t know if they should help him.”

It soon became evident that Santa was carrying packages. Gifts! There were soccer balls, shoes, dolls, diapers, toy cars, hygienic items and clothes, each received with a hug, a smile and a “muchas gracias” or “pala pilichaka nula.”

“The bicycles were cheered the most loudly,” Eby recalls. “They are means of transportation. For some, it is the only way to get to school.”

The next day, Ramirez watched as children continued to show off and share their presents.

“They didn’t care if something were blue or yellow or pink. They were happy. For me, this was a very different Christmas.”
Joy in July

AN EARLY HOLIDAY CELEBRATION HELPS HOMELESS CHILDREN GEAR UP FOR SCHOOL.

Story by Cindy Conover Dashnaw • Photos by Logan Newell

Collier County on Florida’s Gulf Coast is one of the wealthiest areas in America, yet hundreds of children there are homeless. But not forgotten.

For the third consecutive year, nine clubs of the Florida District hosted Christmas in July for the children. The event originated in 2001, when the Collier County Public School System identified 589 homeless children.

“In 2016, we raised US$11,000. We were able to get backpacks, school supplies, toiletries and size-specific sneakers, pants, shirts and underclothes for 150 of the 589 kids,” says Bill Ricigliano, a Northside Naples Kiwanis Club member who helped organize the original July party. “We knew we could do better.”

The next year, the Kiwanians calculated that a backpack cost $89 to fill, so the campaign offered donors the chance to “sponsor an angel” for $89. People responded generously, donating $107,000 to provide a full backpack plus a meal for 1,060 children either homeless or at risk.

In the aftermath of 2017’s Hurricane Irma, the demand for supplies more than doubled.

“We now have over 1,300 children deemed homeless, plus 1,200 more at risk,” Ricigliano said as the clubs prepared for the 2017 event. “A lot of (donors) are burned out from all the hurricanes, so the backpacks may not be as stuffed as they were last year, but we’ve made sure every child is prepared and proud to go to school.”

Ricigliano credits partners and foundations for part of the project’s success. JCPenney offered discounted clothing, Bikes for Tykes gave every youngster a bicycle and Meals of Hope fed families. Santa and Mrs. Claus handed out backpacks inside a holiday-decorated Florida Sports Park facility. Then families selected whatever school supplies they needed.

“We have close to 270 Kiwanians in our division,” Ricigliano says, “and I’d say 80 percent of them get involved. It’s a great community.”
YOU’VE MADE YOUR HOUSE YOUR HOME. AND NOW IT’S EASIER THAN EVER TO STAY IN IT YOUR ENTIRE LIFE.

Story by Julie Saetre

When you hear the words “aging in place,” what pops into your mind? If you’re like many people, it’s thoughts of institutional-style grab bars glaring from the walls of an otherwise fashionable bathroom or a wheelchair ramp rising toward a home’s front door.

“The term,” says Dan DiClerico, smart home strategist and home expert for HomeAdvisor, “doesn’t really resonate with homeowners. From the very beginning, (it) has had a little bit of a PR problem.”

That’s unfortunate, experts say, because aging in place doesn’t focus only on accessibility issues for seniors using walkers or wheelchairs. Statistics show that, once we find the perfect home in a community we love, we intend to stay there. And anyone who plans to remain in a certain house for the long term should be thinking about making that space more convenient, comfortable and safe, regardless of residents’ ages and mobility.

The Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies reports that in 2035, for the first time in American history, one in five people will be older than 65. And AARP studies have found that 90 percent of those people plan to remain in their homes as they age. That paradigm shift means that the time to start making our homes livable...
in the long term is now, stresses Rodney Harrell, director of Livability Thought Leadership for the AARP Public Policy Institute.

“We really need to get people to start thinking about their future,” he stresses. “We need to create the homes that will work for us regardless of what circumstance we find ourselves.”

It’s a concept called “universal design” by builders, architects and other home experts, and when implemented well, it’s anything but institutional.

“People don’t realize that we can do aging in place and universal design so seamlessly that they realize that the house is more comfortable, but they don’t know why,” says Joanne Chappell-Theunissen, who chairs the (US) National Association of Home Builders Remodelers Council. “People have that fear, that they’re going to make their house ugly. But you can make your house even more attractive.”

People have that fear, that they’re going to make their house ugly. But you can make your house even more attractive.

It also will make your home more welcoming to family and friends, a concept the pros call “visitability.” Chappell-Theunissen, who has more than 17 years of experience in home design and building, says that her 92-year-old aunt can still climb the flight of stairs in her two-story home. But because her house includes a bathroom that incorporates universal design elements, she finds herself getting much-welcome company.

“She’s got grandchildren who are all heavily involved in sports. Every time one of them gets hurt, they end up living with grandma for a while, because grandma’s got that bathroom that works so well for them.”

Starting now to make your home more livable also enables you to spread out the costs over time. HomeAdvisor’s 2017 Aging in Place Report includes a “planning pyramid” that begins at a base with basic maintenance projects and continues upward through low-cost improvements, ease-of-living features and safety elements to the final additions of widening doorways, adding ramps and shifting to a first-floor master bedroom.

“As we continue up the pyramid, the projects become more complicated and, as a result, more expensive,” DiClerico says. “That’s another reason for a holistic approach and early planning and doing this work in phases. It doesn’t have to be prohibitively expensive if you’re smart about it.”

One way to approach the process wisely: Consult with a specialist. The NAHB reports that 80 percent of remodeling companies are doing aging-in-place projects, up from 68 percent five years ago. But hiring a random handyman
or remodeler here and there can create problems down the road.

“I’ve had clients come to me after they’ve had a couple of things done to the house, and as we progress, we have to undo things to get to that next stage,” Chappell-Theunissen cautions. “And so they’re spending money (on earlier projects) that they end up having to throw away.”

The NAHB and AARP collaborated with Home Innovation Research Labs to develop the Certified Aging-In-Place Specialist program. Construction and design professionals who become CAPS certified undergo training focused on building or remodeling homes so they accommodate all stages of residents’ lives.

“It puts someone in your life who can step back, take a realistic view of it all and develop a plan for you,” Chappell-Theunissen says.

What might that plan encompass? Plenty, starting with the most basic of all elements. “A lot of people neglect to think about lighting,” says Harrell. “But our eyes need more light as we get older (to see clearly).”

The more natural light, the better, pros say, so choose window coverings that let the sun in during the day while still providing privacy at night. After dark, LED motion-sensor lights in bathrooms and hallways offer a soft glow to guide your steps. And in the kitchen, under-cabinet lighting helps illuminate your meal prep.

“With traditional lighting in a kitchen, you’re often working in your shadow,” Chappell-Theunissen explains.

If that kitchen follows a one-note color scheme — think white on white — add a contrasting hue to countertop edges.

“It seems like a design aesthetic,” says Chappell-Theunissen, “when in fact it’s really a very sensible issue with regards to limited sight. As we get older, the eye receptor changes, and so we don’t see contrasts as well. So you’re constantly running your hip into that (countertop) corner when you never did before.”

While you’re in the kitchen, consider adding adjustable-height countertops and reorganizing your pantry and cabinets by adding pullout shelves and lazy Susans to bring hard-to-reach items closer. Arrange frequently used items on open shelving for easy access.

“When it comes to storage throughout the home, a helpful phrase in the industry is ‘remember the nose-to-knee rule,’” DiClerico explains. “The goal is to organize your cabinet, your closet, other storage areas in the home so that nothing heavy or large or awkward is above your nose or below the knees.”

Also consider adding the luxury of a convection cooktop. Through a nifty heating process, electricity warms a coil, causing a magnetic field to form under the cooktop surface. When used with compatible cookware, currents cause the pan — not the surface — to heat instantly. Cooking is faster...

“A lot of people neglect to think about lighting. But our eyes need more light as we get older to see clearly.”
and more even, while the cooktop stays blissfully cool.

“Induction cooking is great — the power, the precision, the performance,” DiClerico says. “It’s a great solution in the kitchen, and it’s also great for aging in place because it really reduces the risk of burns.”

Next up: Get grounded by reevaluating your floor surfaces. Area rugs and high-pile carpeting need to go: They commonly cause slips, trips and falls, which combined are the leading cause of nonfatal and fatal injuries among older adults, DiClerico says. Any high-shine slick surfaces should be reconsidered as well. Replace them with low-pile carpets or satiny-finished floorings that are smooth to the touch but aren’t slippery.

“There are so many more products and materials that are geared toward this,” DiClerico says. “Slip-resistant flooring that looks great and porcelain tiles that look exactly like wood but that meet the highest threshold for slip resistance are examples of that.”

Adds Chappell-Theunissen, “Manufacturers have really embraced the idea of universal design and aging in place. They have put on the market a whole plethora of materials that are well suited to what we’re trying to do and that aesthetically are just very pretty.”

But don’t just think about physical changes. Today’s tech products not only help you outfit a home for the long term, but they’re also convenient — and fun — for today. And making your domain “smart” is easier than you think.

“There really are so many applications that are going to improve the accessibility, the safety, the convenience around the home for all homeowners, but especially for that aging-in-place crowd,” says DiClerico.

Start with a virtual voice assistant, such as Amazon Echo, Apple HomePod or Google Home. These devices recognize human speech and respond to your commands, whether you want to know the day’s weather forecast, traffic conditions or sports scores. They also can be used to make a hands-free phone call, send a text, schedule appointments or receive medication reminders.

“Start with a virtual voice assistant. These devices recognize human speech and respond to your commands.”
A 2017 study by the Front Porch Center for Innovation and Wellbeing provided residents of a continuing-care retirement community in California with an Amazon Echo for six months. At the study’s conclusion, all users said the devices made their lives easier, with 75 percent reporting using them daily.

A virtual voice assistant also can help you control other smart home devices. A smart thermostat works in conjunction with your home’s heating and cooling systems, allowing you to control the temperature even when you’re on the go. Some models remember your preferred settings and automatically adjust to current conditions. They also can send you maintenance reminders and energy-use reports.

Similar technology is used in smart faucets for your sinks and shower. Set the temperature you prefer for hand-washing and bathing, and you’ll get that exact level every time you turn on the faucet.

“It’s a wonderful safety feature,” says Chappell-Theunissen. “(Water) doesn’t accidentally get too hot. You figure out what’s comfortable for you, set that, and you actually have a visual (display) of it. So you’re not trying to work a handle and remember about where it goes.”

Another smart feature to consider: locks for your home’s entrances. A smart lock eliminates fumbling for keys and trying to manipulate them into locks. Some use a key pad or your smart phone to enter a code; others automatically unlock when your key fob is near the door. Depending on the model you choose, a smart lock also can coordinate with your smart thermostat, automatically lowering the home’s temperature when you leave, for example, and raising it when you enter. If a friend or neighbor needs to drop something off when you’re not home or take care of pets or plants while you’re traveling, you can assign them a temporary access code that expires when no longer necessary.

As you develop your plan for a safer, more convenient, more livable home for the long term,

Learn how Kiwanis partner HomeAdvisor can help you with your home project needs at kiwanis.org/homeadvisor.
Suicide has no boundaries. Sure, some people are more susceptible, but it cuts across all groups, leaving an aftermath like a psychological hurricane. Stigma — and the complication of finding ways to help — have made it challenging to combat the rising number of suicide deaths.

I was reminded of how quickly a sunny day can turn dark as I relaxed recently with a magazine in my backyard. I received a message from a longtime friend that her brother had died by suicide. Life once again was disrupted by the news of yet another person ending his life.

She reached out to me because I’d been there. Twenty-five years earlier, my younger sister, Denise, ended her life just three weeks before her 18th birthday. I was 21 at the time, in the thick of working on a journalism degree and looking forward to the writing career I had wanted since I was 6 years old.

Instead, I found myself spending the remainder of my undergraduate college years repeatedly asking, “Why?” I didn’t understand why my sister ended her life, especially when she was about to head off to college, a time when, I believed, the world becomes one’s oyster. But she was plagued with depression, bulimia and a date rape I didn’t know about until after she died.

I was left to pick up the pieces and find my way forward again without the girl with whom I shared a room for 10 years — the girl who knew more about me than anyone else. After taking several years to adjust to life without her, the road in front of me began to clear and,
among other things, I found myself writing books on coping with suicide. I also was elected president of the American Association of Suicidology.

For my friend, part of my sadness came because I knew she was now on a road I’d faced years ago. I have traveled to many corners of the world, including Australia’s South Pacific beaches, New Mexico’s Indian reservations and the pueblos where I now live, and done extensive media interviews worldwide to teach people about suicide and its aftermath. But I know the facts are grim: suicide rates continue to climb.

THE NUMBERS
According to the American Association of Suicide, in the United States in 2016, the most recent year data is available, 44,965 people died by suicide. Of these, 34,727 were men and 16,196 were middle-aged (45 to 64 years old). That’s an average of one person every 11.7 minutes, compared to data from 2011 that shows 39,518 people died by suicide — one about every 13.3 minutes.

According to the World Health Organization, approximately 800,000 people die by suicide a year; roughly someone every 40 seconds. Globally, suicide is the second-leading cause of death for 15- to 29-year-olds.

As the rates continue to climb in the wrong direction, the answer to “why?” is complicated — because suicide is complicated — and there is no one way to bring a decline to the number of deaths.

“I, like many, am really at a loss regarding why suicide is increasing,” says John McIntosh, professor emeritus of psychology at Indiana University South Bend. “It would be easy to attribute it to politics and pessimism, stress, uncertainty, but the increase has been happening since the late 1990s, so it is not just immediate time related. There are likely generational group issues, economic, social and other factors that are at play that provide a complex, multi-determined picture.”

Peter Gutierrez, professor in the department of psychiatry at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, believes the change needs to come from focusing on it as a public health problem rather than a mental health problem.

“The recent (Centers for Disease Control) report documents that slightly under half of people who die by suicide had a mental health problem,” he says. “So I think we need to be focusing our attention on both public health interventions which seek to identify and address the precursors to suicide risk at a population level (e.g., income inequality, lack of social connection) to prevent...
people from reaching the point where suicide is a serious concern in the first place."

There have been numerous high-profile suicide deaths in the news in past years. Facts show that suicide rates are high among veterans. And it’s heart-wrenching to hear when a young person dies by suicide because of bullying. Because of this, more people are talking about suicide. But more talk doesn’t seem to be doing much for the numbers.

“I don’t believe there has ever been a time when a topic has received more attention,” McIntosh says, “and efforts for prevention, intervention and postvention have been provided and expanded, but rather than going down, the rates and numbers continue to go up.”

However, we can’t lose hope. Robert Gebbia, the executive director of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, believes the numbers eventually will start to drop because of exposure to the topic.

“There is more awareness, more advocacy and more science,” he says.

It’s also important to understand the myths around suicide. One of those is the common misconception that suicides increase in December during the holidays. The opposite is actually true. According to the CDC, November and December are the months with the fewest suicides.

McIntosh points out that statistics show suicide deaths peak in the spring, not the winter, as most people believe. It’s possible that more people get stressed or even depressed during the winter months and holidays, but that depression doesn’t spike the suicide numbers.

“There are several issues involved with depression and when it occurs — rises or diminishes — that are obviously not as distinct as the time of one’s suicide,” he says. “Other social and even psychological factors can and likely are involved with the seasons as well.”

YOU HAVE A ROLE IN THIS
It’s not just about dispelling myths; learning about suicide is like learning about CPR. People should know the warning signs and what to do if they are worried about someone they care about. The best thing you can do is be direct: Ask the person if he or she is feeling suicidal.

“Everyone can do small things every day to increase a sense of connection with others, like routinely asking people how they are doing and listening to their responses,” says Gutierrez. “When people say they aren’t doing well, are struggling with problems or provide other indicators that something’s wrong, we need to be able to hear that and respond with empathy and concern.”

That means there are many roles that Kiwanis clubs can play to help prevent suicide. While everyone can donate to a suicide-related organization (funds are always needed for prevention, research and support), clubs also can reach

“EVERYONE CAN DO SMALL THINGS EVERY DAY TO INCREASE A SENSE OF CONNECTION WITH OTHERS.”
out to local suicide prevention organizations and arrange educational events to dispel the myths around suicide, teach people the warning signs and show where to get support if someone is worried about a loved one.

“They can help awareness about this topic that used to be taboo,” Gebbia suggests. “They can have groups talk about it, which is very powerful and a way to reduce stigma.”

It’s not just about educating people about how to prevent suicide and where to go for help. It’s also about supporting the survivors — those who have attempted suicide and lived and the bereaved, the people left behind after a suicide — to ensure they don’t become suicide statistics too.

Heidi Bryan, a suicide prevention advocate who once attempted suicide, talks about her own experience, hoping to help others who want to end their lives as she once did.

“I hated myself with every fiber of my being and had been thinking about dying or killing myself for about as long as I could remember,” she says. “It would fluctuate, but it was always in the back of my mind: ‘If things get too bad, I can always kill myself.’ I was disabled from Lyme disease, my marriage hit a rough spot, I was depressed and waiting for the right opportunity to kill myself.”

### WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE

- Threatening to or talking about hurting or killing oneself
- Looking for ways to kill oneself by seeking access to firearms, available pills or other means
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide
- Increased substance (alcohol or drug) use
- Expressing a lack of reason to live or sense of purpose
- Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep or sleeping all of the time
- Expressions of hopelessness or feeling trapped
- Withdrawal from friends, family and society
- Rage, uncontrolled anger, desire for revenge
- Impulsively engaging in reckless or risky behaviors
- Dramatic mood changes

If observed, seek help as soon as possible by contacting a mental health professional or calling 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for a referral. (In Canada, visit suicideprevention.ca/need-help for contact information.)

**Source:** American Association of Suicidology

### RESOURCES

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention offers a variety of training opportunities related to suicide. While some are specific to mental health, a basic introduction to suicide prevention workshop is also offered. Find out more at afsp.org.
When her older brother killed himself, she was stung that suicide no longer was an option for her. She had to make life work. Today she credits her husband and her dogs for helping her move past stressful situations. Bryan also works hard to stay emotionally and physically healthy.

“I take the attitude of my chronic suicidality as being a chronic illness, so I try to maintain my health,” she says.

Most of the bereaved never find the answers they seek. There’s a journey in looking for answers while grieving the loss of a loved one and reconciling the life one lived with how that life ended. Often they need to tell the story over and over again until they realize the answer they seek probably will never emerge. A mark forward in one’s grief journey is separating the end of the life from the life one lived.

After a suicide, working with children — who often in the past were not told of a loved one’s suicide because of the fear they either would not understand or might end their lives too — has its own set of guidelines.

“It is important to tell children the truth about suicide in a way that is age-appropriate, and you can add details as they ask or as they get older,” says Julie Cerel, president of the American Association of Suicidology and professor at the University of Kentucky College of Social Work.

While there are many ways to help prevent suicide and support attempters, their loved ones and the bereaved, the late Edwin Shneidman, who founded the field of suicidology, said it comes down to two questions: “Where do you hurt, and how can I help?”

That’s something all of us can practice daily.

Michelle L. Rusk, formerly Michelle Linn-Gust, is a writer whose first book, “Do They Have Bad Days in Heaven? Surviving the Suicide Loss of a Sibling,” launched an international career of writing and speaking following her younger sister’s death by suicide. Today she lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico, focusing on writing fiction and her lifestyle brand, Chelle Summer, choosing to inspire people through a life of creativity. Read more about Michelle at chellesummer.com.
GROWING AGAIN

1,504

Built upon the The Formula’s five-year membership initiative and bolstered by a renewed focus on organizing new clubs, Kiwanis closed the 2017-18 year with 191,439 members worldwide — an increase of 1,504 women and men who now are wearing the “K” as they serve the children of the world. It is the first year of growth since 2005-06.

“There are many Kiwanis leaders who worked very hard to maintain and improve our efforts around the world,” says Executive Director Stan D. Soderstrom. “Congratulations to 2017-18 President Jim Rochford, his Eye of the Tiger team and district Formula leaders everywhere for their dedication and hard work.”

Over the past year, Eye of the Tiger specialists opened clubs with swift results — often in just two days. In the following pages, we help Rochford recognize members of the Eye of the Tiger team who led by example and helped open a new generation of clubs.

“The Eye of the Tiger means not wanting to be denied,” Rochford says. “It means having the perseverance to overcome any hurdle that’s put in front of you and moving forward to achieve success. That’s what we’ve been doing in Kiwanis.

“At the beginning of the year, I could count on one hand the number of people who could go out and open a club within two days in a community they’ve never been in. Today, there are more than 25 — and growing all the time.”

To capitalize on the growing number of club-opening experts and Kiwanis’ 2017-18 membership success, Soderstrom issues a challenge:

“We must remember that membership is not a spectator sport. Every member must be involved.”
Las Vegas, Nevada, has one of the world’s largest Key Club populations with more than 3,000 high school students. Yet lately, there has been only five Kiwanis clubs in the area. This past year, three more were added.

Vegas’ strong Service Leadership Programs were a primary reason 2017-18 Kiwanis International President Jim Rochford selected the city for a club-opening blitz. It is a scenario that was a hallmark of his term as president. His Eye of the Tiger club-opening specialists swooped into Chicago, Denver, Kuala Lumpur and elsewhere to visit educators, mayors, business executives and other community leaders to sell the need for new Kiwanis clubs. In Vegas, they aimed to open three clubs, seeding each with dual members from existing clubs as coaches.

Val Brown-Klingelhoefer was one of the Tiger team members sent early into Vegas to prepare for the blitz.

“Las Vegas is so huge and growing so fast,” Brown-Klingelhoefer says. “But it’s segmented into distinct areas; so we needed to assess these different communities and identify the best locations to open new clubs.”

That meant driving through the city, visiting chambers of commerce, becoming familiar with the business centers and schools and conducting preliminary interviews. It also involved seeking support from existing clubs, as well as prospect referrals. Local members joined the blitz and learned Eye of the Tiger methods for inviting members and opening clubs.

This past January 19-21, the Eye of the Tiger team, accompanied by half of North America’s district governors, arrived in Vegas. They were led by Rochford and Past California-Nevada-Hawaii District Governor Alan Guire. The group split up to canvass the three communities that had been identified by the preliminary legwork. Squads of two or three recruiters set out for prearranged appointments with key prospects. They talked about Kiwanis’ priority of serving children. They discussed the need to support and grow the area’s SLPs. They extended invitations to join new Kiwanis clubs. And they asked for names of other potential members. By the end of the weekend, the nuclei of three clubs had formed.

“In Centennial Hills, three officers are former SLP members,” Rochford says. “Three babies in strollers attended the organization meeting with their parents who are now Kiwanis members.”

The Southwest Las Vegas and Summerlin clubs were formed in areas booming with development. Southwest Kiwanians already have opened a Builders Club and are working on K-Kids clubs.

“I love what we do. My ability to open Kiwanis clubs is the biggest gift I can give to a community.”
— Val Brown-Klingelhoefer
It’s an impressive number for a new club’s charter. Yet, the Kiwanis Club of Ridgewood, NY 3-2-1 was just getting started when its organization papers were approved on April 4, 2018, with 75 charter members. These new Kiwanians already have much greater aspirations.

“We haven’t even started recruiting yet,” says member Bob Monahan.

As of this past September, there were more than 125 Ridgewood 3-2-1 Kiwanians.

Kiwanis had a long-standing tradition in the community, opening a club there in 1927. After six decades of service, it closed in the late 1980s. Efforts to build a new club failed.

For another attempt, Past New York District Governor Joe Eppolito teamed the Kiwanis Club of Middle Village with the Kiwanis Club of Glendale. Monahan, a 35-year member of the Glendale club and The Formula club opener, had a strong interest in Ridgewood. As president of the Greater Ridgewood Youth Council, he was well aware that the council and Kiwanis shared a common interest: children.

“We quickly had 25 to 30 members from the council, and we began to wrap everything around that solid core of service-minded, child-focused people,” he says.

With a 38-year history in the community, the council has a reputation for providing educational, counseling, job preparation and other services to area youth. Monahan and his staff have strong connections to other child-serving agencies, and the Kiwanis club quickly became a magnet for clergy, police, parent coordinators and representatives of other children-serving programs.

True to its “3-2-1” name — a ratio of three parts service, two parts social and one part meeting — the club went straight to work.

When a young man was chased and killed in a nearby community because of mistaken identity, Ridgewood President Liz Fitzgerald proposed to re-establish a network of “Safe Havens” where youth and seniors can find security and emergency assistance.

Early editions of the club’s newsletter report about other activities: a food pantry collection; participation in a street fair and a 104th Precinct Night Out Against Crime; serving a meal at the Ronald McDonald House; donating backpacks of supplies to area schools; opening K-Kids, Builders Clubs and Key Clubs.

“We expect we’ll soon be the largest club in the New York District,” Monahan says. “But it’s not about the numbers. We want to do service, and people want to join us because they want to serve too.”
Three months into the 2017-18 Kiwanis year, Emilia stepped in as the Eye of the Tiger leader in Latin America, and she hit the ground running. She guided efforts to open more than half of the 26 clubs opened in Latin America this past year.

Emilia already had established a pattern of excellence in the Florida District, leading by example on The Eliminate Project and supporting Service Leadership Programs.

“But nothing has compared to the success in which she turned around three areas in Latin America, especially Colombia,” says 2017-18 Kiwanis International President Jim Rochford. “These clubs and their passionate members are doing great things to help children in areas where there is much need.

“Kiwanis has its own Wonder Woman, and her name is Emilia Gugliuzza,” Rochford adds, noting that, as of this past September, Emilia personally participated in opening 20 clubs. “She’s on the path to 25.”

**EMILIA GUGLIUZZA**
**KEY LARGO, FLORIDA, U.S.A.**

Jim worked on opening his first few clubs with Rochford and took off running, earning the position as The Formula chair in the Illinois-Eastern Iowa District. This past year, he took on the role as chair of The Formula’s Americas Area, helping achieve a record-setting year. “Jim has an awesome voice, a great sense of humor and is a tremendous philanthropist,” says Rochford.

**JIM DOOLEY**
**PEORIA, ILLINOIS, U.S.A.**

Katrina helped the Georgia District as its Formula chair, but she also has been active on an area level. Due to her sales ability and her people skills, she was asked to join the Eye of the Tiger team. This past June, she was elected as a trustee to the Kiwanis International Board. “She continued to refine her skills throughout this year to become a top tiger,” says Rochford.

**KATRINA BARANKO**
**ALBANY, GEORGIA, U.S.A.**

Moving her address and her Kiwanis membership from Georgia to Ohio and now to Washington, Kathleen has helped the three different districts grow. She also has been a strong supporter of Service Leadership Programs. “No matter where she hangs her hat, opening new clubs is her passion,” says Rochford. “She’s generous to a fault and supportive and protective of her teammates. She’ll continue on the Eye of the Tiger team in a leadership capacity.”

**KATHLEEN MOYLAN**
**LYNNWOOD, WASHINGTON, U.S.A.**

“Larry was a member of the May 2015 Chicago blitz, and he has grown tremendously in expertise since then,” says Rochford. “He’s a mainstay of the Michigan District’s membership team and continues to hone his skills as an Eye of the Tiger leader. He’s a great team leader.” Larry currently is serving as governor of the Michigan District.

**LARRY MEMMER**
**CHELSEA, MICHIGAN, U.S.A.**
Lee Kuan Yong  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

As the Asia-Pacific chair for the Eye of the Tiger team, Lee worked with Rochford in 2017-18 to help Malaysia set its all-time new-club-opening record. “His keen intellect has allowed him to change his approach toward the Eye of the Tiger club-opening model,” Rochford says.

Anna Wu  
Hacienda Heights, California, U.S.A.

“Anna is another one of those rising stars whom we so desperately need in leadership roles in Kiwanis,” says Rochford. “She opened the very first new club of the 2017-18 year and has never stopped. I’ve challenged her to recruit 1 million members herself. No doubt about it, if anybody can do it, Anna can.” She opened six clubs in her district as well as helping numerous other districts. She recently became involved in efforts to open clubs in China.

Val Brown-Klingelhofer  
Greenfield, California, U.S.A.

The Formula chair for the California-Nevada-Hawaii District in 2017-18, Val helped open clubs in her home district and beyond. “She’s totally committed to membership at all times,” says Rochford. “This PhD-holder has been the right prescription for helping to turn the numbers around in both the Cal-Nev-Ha District and Kiwanis International.”

Terry Cunefare  
Groveland, Illinois, U.S.A.

Terry served as the Illinois-Eastern Iowa District’s New Club Opening chair the same year — 2001-02 — Rochford was district governor. Together, they helped set the district’s all-time club-opening record. After the 2018 district convention, Terry and Jim went back on the road and continued to open clubs. “Terry opened the second most clubs in the history of our I-I District as our 2017-18 governor,” says Rochford. “He’s a real doer.”

Alan Guire  
Strathmore, California, U.S.A.

Alan was governor of the California-Nevada-Hawaii District in 2014-15 when he first encountered Rochford, who was assigned as the Kiwanis International Board counselor to the district. Together, he and Jim opened two clubs in the district that year, and they were partners again that year for the first mega-membership blitz in Chicago, Illinois. Alan returned home, where he helped open nine clubs before the Kiwanis year ended.

This past year, he did double duty as Eye of the Tiger chair and The Formula chair for the Western USA Area. He also accompanied Jim to Malaysia to open two new clubs there. “He has quickly risen to be one of the most consistent new-club openers in the Kiwanis world,” says Rochford. Alan was Jim’s coordinator of incentives for top 2017-18 governors, openers and recruiters. And he and his wife, Melissa, were co-chairs for the 2018 Kiwanis International convention in Las Vegas. “Truly,” Rochford says, “Alan Guire is everywhere. He’s everywhere! And Kiwanis is much better off for it.”
Jim Rochford describes Barb as cerebral, in part because she was assistant superintendent of the largest school district in St. Louis.

“Over the course of our association, she has grown tremendously as a club opener to be one of the best,” Rochford says. “She’s very detail-oriented and capable of opening the majority of her sites within two days. She has overcome broken ribs and bloody noses, and she continued to be a rock of support on the Eye of the Tiger team.

“She also has continued to help open clubs in her Missouri-Arkansas District.”

Besides traveling the world opening clubs, Barb served as vice chair of the Eye of the Tiger team.

BARB THOMPSON  ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, U.S.A.

JUANITA EDWARDS  DALTON, GEORGIA, U.S.A.

At the start of the 2017-18 Kiwanis year, Juanita wasn’t on the charts of club-opening leaders. But after moving into the 99th position, she continued to improve all year long. “She has tremendous leadership skills and was involved in a great Georgia District team,” says Rochford. “By the end of the year, she was sharing her talents with other districts as well.”

MARY JO BRUBAKER  BANNER ELK, NORTH CAROLINA, U.S.A.

A former school principal, Mary Jo’s organizational skills impressed Rochford during lieutenant governor training in 2011. “She made a huge difference in membership numbers for the Carolinas District with her intensity and attention to details,” he says. She helped develop a club-opening team in the Carolinas and participated with Jim on the first club opened in the district this past year.

ALEC MACAULAY  CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA, U.S.A.

Alec has been a Key Club member, 2006-07 CKI president, a Kiwanis employee and is a 2018-19 Carolinas District lieutenant governor. “Alec is an awesome presenter,” notes Rochford. “He helped on many club-opening sites with the paperwork and clearly has a bright future ahead of him in our organization.”

JAN MAXWELL  TOPEKA, KANSAS, U.S.A.

Another Eye of the Tiger team member who leads by example, Jan used her organizational and interpersonal skills as Eye of the Tiger lead in the Central USA Area this past year. “Jan is a huge supporter of the Kiwanis Children’s Fund, and she and her husband, Robert, make a winning team,” says Rochford.

RO WOODS-MITCHELL  PASCAGOULA, MISSISSIPPI, U.S.A.

“Rogena became a star when the Eye of the Tiger team opened three clubs in three days in her division,” recalls Rochford. “She followed with an additional three clubs.” She also opened clubs in the Rocky Mountain, New York and Southwest districts. “Her enthusiasm is contagious, and she’s capable of closing any sale,” Rochford adds.

ÖSKAR GUDJÓNSSON  KÖPAVÓGI, ICELAND

The 2017-18 Eye of the Tiger leader in the Europe area, Óskar is now serving as 2018-19 Kiwanis International-European Federation president. “He always has a smile on his face and is very positive and supportive of others,” says Rochford. “He helped Europe exceed its new-club goal for the 2017-18 year, supported by his sidekick, Konnie.”
Prior to the 2017-18 year, Jim helped assemble and trained the Eye of the Tiger leadership team. Leading by example, he has been responsible for opening more than 250 new clubs in more than 30 districts. Jim was a sales leader and company owner/manager of a sales operation before becoming a lawyer. He built an Amateur Athletic Union basketball program and coached more than 100 future college players and some future NBA players. In addition to his success as a litigator, he identifies teaching and management as his most valuable skills, both of which he applied as leader of the Eye of the Tiger team.

"This is a team of tireless workers who frequently will skip meals and go 12 to 16 hours during a day of recruiting, motivating and leading by example at all times," he says.

Because of his expertise, Gary produced Jim’s ‘On the Road’ webinar series. "He’s a real doer," says Rochford. "Some people have even seen Gary wearing a cape. Maybe he’s Superman.”

Kendra was assigned to Rochford’s team in May 2015 on a mega-opening in Chicago. A dental hygienist by trade, she has become one of the top salespeople in the Kiwanis world.

“She’s highly motivated and extremely competitive,” says Rochford. “She truly has been my right hand in the field. She’s a tireless worker. She does whatever it takes — setting appointments, submitting paperwork and coordinating pre-work — and she does it all with a smile on her face.”

Kendra made her mark after being on Jim’s team in the first three mega-openings by returning home and opening clubs in the Kentucky-Tennessee District, where she was elected governor for the 2019-20 year.

Kendra credits Jim with helping develop her sales skills, but he points out her tremendous drive to excel.

“She literally has helped open clubs throughout the entire Kiwanis world,” he says.

Gary wasn’t even on Jim Rochford’s radar screen as a potential top opener at the start of the 2017-18 year.

“His membership claim to fame was that he was The Formula chair in the Eastern Canada and Caribbean District for three years, competing each year for the top spot among the Americas’ club openers with the Illinois-Eastern Iowa District,” says Rochford.

Jim now sees Gary as one of the best closers throughout the Kiwanis world, consistently opening clubs in two days on sites where he has served as the captain. Early in the 2017-18 Kiwanis year, he began working in the field on numerous sites.

“Gary’s upbeat personality lifts his entire team,” Rochford says. “He served as membership chair for the Kiwanis International Board and had positive direction to spur membership growth.”

Because of his expertise, Gary produced Jim’s ‘On the Road’ webinar series.

"He’s a real doer," says Rochford. "Some people have even seen Gary wearing a cape. Maybe he’s Superman.”
### The Numbers

411 clubs opened, exceeding 400 for only the third time in Kiwanis history
45 new clubs organized within the first week of 2018-19
38,287,800 children served by our global 191,439 members

During the 2017-18 Kiwanis year, each issue of Kiwanis magazine listed top club openers and member sponsors. Here are the year’s final results.

#### Top 5 Districts for Clubs Opened

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Philippine Luzon</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Philippine South</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>California-Nevada-Hawaii</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>17</td>
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#### Top 5 Districts for Members Added

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>3,222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>California-Nevada-Hawaii</td>
<td>2,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Philippine Luzon</td>
<td>1,842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>1,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Philippine South</td>
<td>1,208</td>
</tr>
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</table>

#### Top 5 Individual Club Openers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jim Rochford</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Val Brown-Klingelhofer</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Tied)</td>
<td>Katrina Baranko</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kendra Skidmore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Alan Guire</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Top 5 Individual New-Member Sponsors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>New members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jim Rochford</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Anna Wu</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lolita Salazar</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kendra Skidmore</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Barbara Thompson</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SHOWCASE

BIRTHDAYS

The following Kiwanis clubs celebrate their 100th, 50th and 25th anniversaries in January 2019.

100TH—1919
Pottsville, Pennsylvania, January 13
Windsor, Ontario, January 13
Vancouver, British Columbia, January 21
Omaha, Nebraska, January 23
Huntington, West Virginia, January 27
Houston, Texas, January 29

50TH—1969
Graz, Austria, January 23

25TH—1994
Cahokia Area, Illinois, January 4
Sterling Heights High Noon, Michigan, January 5
Keila, Estonia, January 6

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation
(All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)
1. Publication Title: Kiwanis
2. Publication No.: 011130
3. Filing Date: August 21, 2018
5. No. of Issues Published Annually: 8
6. Annual Subscription Price: $8.00
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication:
   3636 Woodview Tr., Indianapolis, IN 46268-3196
   Contact Person: Jack Brockley
   Telephone: 317-217-6170
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher:
   3636 Woodview Tr., Indianapolis, IN 46268-3196
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor.
   Publisher, Jack Brockley; Editor, Stan D. Soderstrom; Managing Editor, Kasey Jackson, all
   at 3636 Woodview Tr., Indianapolis, IN 46268-3196
10. Owner: Kiwanis International, 3636 Woodview Tr., Indianapolis, IN 46268-3196
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1
    Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None
12. Tax Status: Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
13. Publication Title: Kiwanis
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: September 2018
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation
   a. Total Number of Copies: 124,646/125,557.
   b. Paid Circulation
      (1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541: 117,607/118,455.
      (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541: 0/0.
      (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers,
          Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®: 6,082/6,160.
      (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS: 0/0.
   c. Total Paid Distribution: 123,689/124,615.
   d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution
      (1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside County Copies included on PS Form 3541: 0/0.
      (2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies included on PS Form 3541: 0/0.
      (3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS: 22/0.
      (4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail: 230/207.
   e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution: 252/207.
   g. Copies not Distributed: 706/735.
   h. Total: 124,647/125,557.
   i. Percent Paid: 99.80%/99.83%
16. Electronic Copy Circulation
   a. Paid Electronic Copies: 0/0.
   b. Total Paid Print Copies: 123,689/124,615.
   c. Total Print Distribution: 123,940/124,822.
   d. Percent Paid: 99.80%/99.83%.
   I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a
   nominal price.
17. Publication of Statement of Ownership will be printed in the December 2017 issue of this
    publication.

Signature and Title: Jack Brockley, Publisher. Date: September 26, 2018. I certify that
all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone
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kiwanischildrensfund.org
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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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