A PROGRESSIVE SCHOOL IN TURKEY USES DRAMA, ART AND MUSIC TO HELP CHILDREN LEARN

SONG AND DANCE: THEATER IN CALIFORNIA
BUILDING A GER: HOUSING HELP IN MONGOLIA
HOLIDAY LIGHTS: CHRISTMAS HOME TOUR IN KENTUCKY
We’ve saved so many lives already. Now, the crucial part: reaching mothers and babies in some of the world’s most dangerous areas. Don’t rest — this is the critical moment. Help eliminate MNT from the face of the Earth.

Kiwanis.org/TheEliminateProject
KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

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

2019–20 OFFICERS, KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

PRESIDENT Daniel Vigenor, Honolulu, Luxembourg

PRESIDENT-ELECT Arthur N. “Art” Riley, Westminster, Maryland, USA

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT James M. Rochford, Peoria, Illinois, USA

VICE PRESIDENT Peter J. Marcuccio, North-Belmont, New York, USA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Stan D. Soderstrom, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

TRUSTEES Katrina J. Baranko, Albany, Georgia, USA; Gregg Beaud, Alexandria, Louisiana, USA; Gunnettineh Bjornsson, Sauderollski, Iceland; Chou Chiu-Chang “George” Toochang City, Taipei, Taiwan; Gay “Coop” Cooper, Naplesville, North Carolina, USA; George D. Deitrick, Westfield, Massachusetts, USA; Elo Garza, Catane, Italy; Charles R. “Chuck” Gaylich, Homestead, Florida, USA; Tony Gorn, Mandurah, Victoria, Australia; David W. Harembert, Kansas City, Kansas, USA; Richard G. “Dick” Olmstead Jr., Lancaster, California, USA; Erwin Schmid, Enzfeld, Austria; Sam Selkirk, Sandy Hook, Manitoba, Canada; Ronald E. “Ron” Smith, Fountain Hills, Arizona, USA; Chien-Kung “C.K.” Yang, Hsinchu City, Taiwan; Ben “Osterhout, Mount Joy, Pennsylvania, USA; James M. Rochford, Peoria, Illinois, USA; Ann Updegraff Spleth, Westminster, Maryland, USA; Arthur N. “Art” Riley, Westminster, Maryland, USA; Benjamin R. Beard, Catania, Italy; Elio Garozzo, Charles R. “Chuck” Gaylich, Homestead, Florida, USA; Tony Gorn, Mandurah, Victoria, Australia; David W. Harembert, Kansas City, Kansas, USA; Richard G. “Dick” Olmstead Jr., Lancaster, California, USA; Erwin Schmid, Enzfeld, Austria; Sam Selkirk, Sandy Hook, Manitoba, Canada; Ronald E. “Ron” Smith, Fountain Hills, Arizona, USA; Chien-Kung “C.K.” Yang, Hsinchu City, Taiwan; Amy Zimmerman, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

2019–20 OFFICERS, KIWANIS CHILDREN’S FUND

PRESIDENT Ann Wilkins, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, USA

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT George E. H. Cadman, Q.C., North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

TREASURER Robert M. “Bub” Garretson, Fort Collins, Colorado, USA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Stan D. Soderstrom, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER Ann Updegraff Spleth, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

TRUSTEES Patricia “Patti” Barsotti, Concord, California, USA; Matthew Cantrell, Lakeland, Florida, USA; Filip Delanote, Aalst, Belgium; Peter J. Marcuccio, North-Belmont, New York, USA; Robert S. Maxwell, Tippah, Kansas, USA; Benjamin R. Beard, Catania, Italy; Elio Garozzo, Charles R. “Chuck” Gaylich, Homestead, Florida, USA; Tony Gorn, Mandurah, Victoria, Australia; David W. Harembert, Kansas City, Kansas, USA; Richard G. “Dick” Olmstead Jr., Lancaster, California, USA; Erwin Schmid, Enzfeld, Austria; Sam Selkirk, Sandy Hook, Manitoba, Canada; Ronald E. “Ron” Smith, Fountain Hills, Arizona, USA; Chien-Kung “C.K.” Yang, Hsinchu City, Taiwan; Amy Zimmerman, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

MAGAZINE STAFF

EDITOR Stan D. Soderstrom

CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER Ben Hendricks

PUBLISHER/CIRCULATION MANAGER Jack Brockley

MANAGING EDITOR Kenny Jackson

ASSISTANT EDITORS Curtis Billue, Julie Saetre

ART DIRECTOR Andy Austin

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR Tony Knedler

KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

3636 Woodview Trace, Indianapolis, IN 46268-3196
800-KIWANIS (in US/Canada), 317-875-8755
Fax: 317-879-0204
Email: magazine@kiwanis.org
Website: kiwanismagazine.org
Magazine website: kiwanismagazine.org

ADVERTISEMENT SALES

Fox Associates Inc., 116 West Kinzie Street, Chicago, IL 60654-4655
800-440-0231 (US/Canada), 317-644-3888
Fax: 317-644-8718
Email: ads@kiwanismagazine.com

FUTURE CONVENTIONS

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, June 17–20, 2020
Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, June 23–26, 2021
Manchester, Phöben, June 22–24, 2022
Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA, June 21–24, 2023

KIWANIS ISSN 0162-5270 is published monthly except February, May, July and November by Kiwanis International. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Kiwanis, 3636 Woodview Tr, Indianapolis, IN 46268-3196. Periodicals postage paid at Indianapolis, IN and additional mailing offices. (USPS Pub Agreement 440305101) Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Kiwanis, 2835 Kiew Drive, Windsor, ON N8T 3B7. Member’s annual subscription is in US$. Nonmembers may subscribe for US$12 per year.

The information in this magazine is for illustrative and discussion purposes only. It is intended to provide general information about the subject matter covered and is provided with the understanding that Kiwanis is not rendering legal, accounting or tax advice. You should consult with appropriate counsel or other advisors on all matters pertaining to legal, tax or accounting obligations and requirements.

Copyright © 2019 by Kiwanis International

Contents

DECEMBER 2019 • VOLUME 104, NUMBER 8

FEATURES

12 CHARACTER STUDY
A progressive school in Turkey uses drama and art to help children learn.

22 CHRISTMAS QUEUE
For more than 35 years, Florida Kiwanians have helped thousands of migrant workers and their families enjoy the holidays.

30 SONG AND DANCE
It’s nearly showtime at Imagination Theater, where the dreams of young and old are about to unfold in a musical holiday show.

36 LETS GO BUILD A GER
Mongolian educators are special in and out of school.

DEPARTMENTS

4 VOICES
President’s Message; Executive Perspective; Letters

10 NEWS
President Poly Lat dies; Rochford back on board; 434 new clubs; Nepal is newest Kiwanis district; 1984-85 President Lansford believed Kiwanis inspires action

42 SHOWCASE
Homes for the holiday; painting by numbers; road warrior; tall in the saddle; birthdays

50 BACK PAGE
Dangerous toys

Cover photo by Serra Akcan/Narphotos

DECEMBER 2019 3

p002-003_KIM_1219_TOC.indd   3 11/1/19   10:40 AM
Let teens be your teachers

My work with Kiwanis allows me the good fortune to travel all over the world. Meeting new people and taking in new experiences are very enjoyable to me. Early on in my Kiwanis presidency, I had the opportunity to get involved with a special group in Kansas in the middle of the U.S.

I joined a weekend Key Leader event at Rock Springs Ranch in Junction City. The Kansas District takes great pride in this ranch. The district helped to raise US$250,000 over five years to remodel the Heritage Hall center on the campus. It now has modern facilities and technology for campers, along with the natural beauty of the wooded camp’s lake and many outdoor activities.

Key Leader camps are weekend retreats for teens, a time to put their phones and school aside and get out of their comfort zone. They work in groups to learn about teamwork and leadership skills. It’s also a time for personal growth. During this time, students discover more about themselves as individuals and how to act and respond in different situations.

I talked to the group about what it was like for me as a boy growing up in Africa and my time as a Boy Scout. It was nothing like the opportunities youth have today! This generation is much more sophisticated. They seem to more easily mix with people who have different personalities and come from different backgrounds.

Key Leader offers activities to teach young people how to be community-minded, listen well, take action and be persuasive in the most positive ways. I was impressed by the level of respect shown not only to me, but to the teenagers’ advisors and chaperones. And the respect was mutual.

It is always energizing to spend time with enthusiastic, bright young people. Watching these teens interact and learn in such a short period of time motivates me to encourage my Kiwanis colleagues to take a greater role in mentoring members of Key Club and CKI. They have much they can teach us about sharing new ideas, and resiliency when things don’t go as planned. This kind of thinking can invigorate our members and elevate our clubs and districts.

EXECUTIVE PERSPECTIVE

How big is big?

Growth has been a major priority for Kiwanis International for the past several years. Responding to years of decline in the numbers of members and new clubs, we saw warning signs for our future and addressed them.

The good news: The Kiwanis family is showing a turnaround in membership and new-club numbers. In fact, a record 434 new Kiwanis clubs were added during the 2018-19 year.

The bad news? Well, I don’t think there is bad news when we’re seeing improvement.

But our growth has led some members to ask questions about the effect of membership on individual clubs. For example, is there such a thing as a club that’s too big? Is there a point at which membership outpaces effectiveness?

The biggest clubs in the Kiwanis family — including Key Club and Circle K International as well as Kiwanis clubs — indicate that any sizable club with good leaders and a stable culture can sail ahead even as the ship takes on members. Consider the 10 biggest Kiwanis clubs in the organization:

- Birmingham, Alabama: 562
- Cheyenne, Wyoming: 290
- Montgomery, Alabama: 244
- Atlanta, Georgia: 241
- Raleigh, North Carolina: 227
- Marietta, Georgia: 226
- Dawn Busters, Metairie, Louisiana: 205
- Augusta, Georgia: 201
- Wooster, Ohio: 182
- Glendale, California: 180

In Key Club and Circle K International, some clubs have similarly large membership counts. Each of the top 10 Key Clubs has more than 300 members. And the three largest have more than 500. The top CKI club has about 400.

This doesn’t mean your club must be that big. But I know that the idea of a “right” size can seem like a mystery for many Kiwanians. I’ve heard leaders from a club with more than 60 members worry about being too small — while another club with fewer than 40 worried about being too big.

At Kiwanis International, some research weighed factors such as the hours of service and money raised per member. It indicated that many Kiwanis clubs thrive with 38 to 40 members. And the three largest have more than 500. The top CKI club has about 400.

This doesn’t mean your club must be that big. But I know that the idea of a “right” size can seem like a mystery for many Kiwanians. I’ve heard leaders from a club with more than 60 members worry about being too small — while another club with fewer than 40 worried about being too big.

At Kiwanis International, some research weighed factors such as the hours of service and money raised per member. It indicated that many Kiwanis clubs thrive with 38 to 40 members. And the three largest have more than 500. The top CKI club has about 400.

This doesn’t mean your club must be that big. But I know that the idea of a “right” size can seem like a mystery for many Kiwanians. I’ve heard leaders from a club with more than 60 members worry about being too small — while another club with fewer than 40 worried about being too big.

At Kiwanis International, some research weighed factors such as the hours of service and money raised per member. It indicated that many Kiwanis clubs thrive with 38 to 40 members. And the three largest have more than 500. The top CKI club has about 400.
Kiwanis is serious business with a playful spirit. So that’s exactly what this convention will be — a union of grown-up commitment and childlike exuberance. We’ll see you in Indianapolis for leadership education with a playful twist.

kiwanis.org/convention
Letters

READERS OF KIWANIS MAGAZINE AND ITS BLOGS RESPOND TO RECENT FEATURES.
JOIN THE CONVERSATIONS AT KIWANISMAGAZINE.ORG OR EMAIL MAGAZINE@KIWANIS.ORG.

Maker space
Excellent article about a great partnership between a small, dedicated Kiwanis club and a school with clear needs.

Pamela Gibson

Editor’s note: The Kiwanis Club of Sonoma Plaza, California, funded the construction of the maker space lab to support STEM education. (kiwanis.org/2019maker)

Actions, not words
Kiwanis International President Daniel Vigneron’s motto, “Res non verba,” will be our district’s work anthem. There is much to do. We are planning actions that have results, not just words. Let’s do it together in our voluntary crusade for children.

Pilar Cun Castillo
Governor, Kiwanis Ecuador District

The motto of our president seems excellent. Three words that translate the Kiwanis philosophy. Act, work, to improve, transforming the lives of others with our example of life.

Berenice Larios
Kiwanis Club of Sincelejo, Colombia

Editor’s note: 2019–20 Kiwanis International President Daniel Vigneron’s motto is “Res, non verba,” which can mean, “Action, not words.” (kiwanis.org/2019action)

A dangerous debate
When an article (“A Dangerous Debate,” kiwanis.org/2019vaccines) is presented as fact, both sides should be explained.

Lon D. Lawrenz, DDS
Kiwanis Club of Tempe-Nuevo, Arizona

How can you call it a “great” debate when Kiwanis is involved in The Eliminate Project (to vaccinate women and children against tetanus)?

What will you offer next? The “Great Debate About Whether the Earth Is Flat”?

Herb Strentz
Kiwanis Club of Des Moines, Golden K, Iowa

I understand the vaccination issue is a serious one. However, your tag line on the recent September cover is insulting. “Why do some parents choose not to protect their children?” I believe you should have said: “Why do some parents choose to not vaccinate their children?”

My children have all been vaccinated for everything imaginable. None have experienced any life threatening side effects from them. However, some of my friends have had that experience and they have a totally different view of vaccination, and it has nothing to do with “not protecting their children.”

Sadly, you insulted people (no doubt many members), before they even read the article. I’m afraid you took the Facebook approach, which is attack anyone who disagrees with you. I’m disappointed.
Vaccinations have a low risk of adverse reaction, but if it’s your kid, it’s a life or death moment. How would you read your front page if it had been you and your kid, who had that odd adverse reaction?

Jeff Condit
Kiwanis Club of Rock Island, Illinois

Julie Saetre wrote an excellent article, but I am disappointed that she left out one of the most important reasons for the 300 percent increase in measles in both the U.S. and Europe. I believe the No. 1 reason is the open borders that have become prevalent in both Europe and in the U.S., letting in millions of immigrants who have NOT been vetted before letting them into Europe and the U.S. — and vaccinated in their home countries. To not tell the truth in this article is misleading all Kiwanian readers.

Wayne Ford
Kiwanis Club of Greensboro, North Carolina

Name that tune

It’s appropriate that the September “Back Page” included “He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother” in your fun playlist to capture the spirit of Kiwanians. The first editor of Kiwanis magazine, Roe Fulkerson, published a column in September 1924 with the title, “He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother.” This, according to many sources, is the first use of the phrase exactly as it appears in the song.

In the column, Fulkerson relates the story of how he spied a “spindly and physically weak lad” carrying a baby and “staggering towards a neighborhood park.”

Wrote Fulkerson: “Pretty big load for such a small kid;” I said as I met him. “Why mister,” he smiled, “he ain’t heavy, he’s my brother.”

Richard “Dick” Isenhour
Kiwanis Club of Greenwood, Indiana

Home is where the hurricane was

Quite an amazing project!

Seth Blau
Kiwanis Club of Oceanside, New York

Editor’s note: The Kiwanis Young Professionals Club of New York City has spent more than six years rebuilding disaster-damaged homes. (kiwanis.org/2019hurricane)

Clean hands, open hearts

Great project, and I know the Key Club members gain as much as the children at the school did. Thank you all for being such good Key Club members.

Myra Hill
Kiwanis Club of Sun City Georgetown, Texas

Editor’s note: Members of the Key Club of Ross S. Sterling High School joined a Squads Abroad project to build hand-washing facilities for a Guatemalan school. (kiwanis.org/2019squads)

“Kiwanis International is committed to meeting the health and vaccination needs of mothers and children around the world so that no child dies a needless, preventable death. The need to fulfill pledges is as urgent as ever.”

— Herman Platzke via Facebook
Bicycle recycle

We run a program out of my garage called Build-A-Bike. We give away about 40 bikes a Sunday. It started 20 years ago. Sending bikes overseas has been tried, but isn’t practical. All our bikes and parts are free, and people borrow our tools.

Tom Newcomb
Kiwanis Club of Olympia, Washington

The Kiwanis Children’s Fund provided a grant in 2013 for Bikes for Lesotho to send its first container of 500 bikes to orphans in that southern Africa kingdom. To date, 5,600 bikes have been sent, with another 600 planned this month.

David Gorman
Kiwanis Club of Lombard, Illinois

Meet the music

I recently read the article “Meet the Music” in the October/November issue of Kiwanis magazine. As a professional advocate and policy researcher in Washington, D.C., who works to increase access to creative learning opportunities for young people, I applaud the effort of both the Kiwanis clubs mentioned in the article and the magazine itself for covering this story. For the past several issues there have been numerous articles about how Kiwanis clubs can support creative programs for youth in their communities. This is a meaningful cause which can impact the lives of students to become successful in school, work and life. Bravo!

Jeff M. Poulin
Kiwanis Club of Washington, D.C.

Editor’s note: The Kiwanis Club of Greater Toms River, New Jersey, operates a program that introduces young people to musical instruments. (kiwanis.org/2019meetmusic)
You can’t always lie down in bed and sleep. Heartburn, cardiac problems, hip or back aches – and dozens of other ailments and worries. Those are the nights you’d give anything for a comfortable chair to sleep in: one that reclines to exactly the right degree, raises your feet and legs just where you want them, supports your head and shoulders properly, and operates at the touch of a button.

Our Perfect Sleep Chair® does all that and more. More than a chair or recliner, it’s designed to provide total comfort. Choose your preferred heat and massage settings, for hours of soothing relaxation. Reading or watching TV? Our chair’s recline technology allows you to pause the chair in an infinite number of settings. And best of all, it features a powerful lift mechanism that tilts the entire chair forward, making it easy to stand. You’ll love the other benefits, too. It helps with correct spinal alignment and promotes back pressure relief, to prevent back and muscle pain. The overstuffed, oversized biscuit style back and unique seat design will cradle you in comfort. Generously filled, wide armrests provide enhanced arm support when sitting or reclining. It even has a battery backup in case of a power outage.

White glove delivery included in shipping charge. Professionals will deliver the chair to the exact spot in your home where you want it, unpack it, inspect it, test it, position it, and even carry the packaging away! You get your choice of stain and water repellent synthetic DuraLux with the classic leather look or plush microfiber in a variety of colors to fit any decor. Call now!
What’s happening
TRENDS, TIPS, FACTS AND FIGURES FROM KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

President Poly Lat dies
Florenceo C. “Poly” Lat, 2018-19 Kiwanis International president, enjoyed life. When he’d introduce his family, he would proudly list their achievements and careers. When schoolchildren performed for his Kiwanis club, he’d join in the dance. When asked about his battle against cancer, he spoke of how his faith strengthened him. And this past June, at the 2019 Kiwanis International Convention, he was there, encouraging Kiwanis to aspire to excellence, himself inspired by the works of “Good to Great” author Jim Collins.

Lat passed away September 18. He is survived by his wife, Susan, three children and three grandchildren.

President-elect Daniel Vigneron said Lat would be remembered for the joy and compassion he brought to Kiwanis.

“Poly was a true servant leader and Kiwanis is a better organization for his membership and leadership,” Vigneron said. “As the organization moves forward, we will continue to realize Poly’s dream of making Kiwanis a great organization.”

Lat joined Kiwanis in 1988 and was a charter member of the Kiwanis clubs of Manila Bay and Fort Bonifacio Global City as well as Inter-City Homes, Muntinlupa, Metro Manila, for which he served as president. After serving as a 2000-01 lieutenant governor and 2011-12 distinguished governor of the Philippine Luzon District, he joined the Kiwanis International Board in 2013. He was elected president at the 103rd Annual Kiwanis International Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA.

During his 2018-19 term, Kiwanis achieved another successful year with 434 club openings, including more than 130 new clubs in his home country, the Philippines.

Lat was a recipient of the Legion of Honor, and within the Kiwanis Children’s Fund, he was recognized with a Centennial Award and as a member of the Walter Zeller Fellowship and George F. Hixson Diamond Fellowship. Under his leadership, Kiwanis received The Outstanding Philippine Leadership Excellence Award in Philanthropy for Environment for a joint project with Rotary and Jaycees.

“Poly challenged us to move from good to great,” says Kiwanis International Executive Director Stan Soderstrom. “As such, he has helped us move from a stagnant membership organization to one that is showing significant growth in many parts of the world.”

Rochford back on board
Jim Rochford of Peoria, Illinois, will serve another year on the Kiwanis International Board of Trustees. The 2019-20 Kiwanis International Board appointed him to fill the vacancy in the immediate past president position created by the death of 2018-19 Kiwanis International President Florencio C. “Poly” Lat.

As outlined in the Kiwanis International Bylaws, the person who served as president most recently prior to the immediate past president who is willing to assume the office shall become the immediate past president. Rochford served as the 2017-18 Kiwanis International president and immediate past president during the 2018-19 administrative year.
Welcome, Nepal!

It’s official: Nepal is Kiwanis’ newest district.

Kiwanis International chartered the Nepal District on September 7, 2019, during the district’s first convention, held in Kathmandu. Nepal is the newest charter since Malaysia became a district in 2003.

Kiwanis Asia-Pacific Chair Peter Zander was in attendance in Kathmandu to present the charter to newly named Nepal District Governor Sujan Kumar Shrestha (right).

“We are now inspired to ensure that all kids in Nepal are in school — fully clothed, with full stomachs and in sound health — so that they are prepared for their own world tomorrow,” Shrestha says.

Nepal will host the Kiwanis Asia-Pacific convention in March 2020.

1984-85 President Lansford believed Kiwanis inspires action

“The opportunity is service, but the challenge is performance.”

Raymond W. Lansford repeated those words often during his term as 1984-85 Kiwanis International president. Lansford, who died September 9, urged Kiwanians to believe in Kiwanis with a belief that inspires action.

“As Kiwanians,” he wrote, “our beliefs require us to serve, to make a personal contribution to building better lives and better communities.”

Lansford joined the Kiwanis Club of Columbia, Missouri, in 1959, serving as president in 1967 and as a Missouri-Arkansas District lieutenant governor in 1969-70. After his year as the district’s governor in 1974-75, he joined the Kiwanis International Board in 1977.

As Kiwanis International president, he promoted a Major Emphasis Program titled “Uplift Underprivileged Children,” saying, “Every underprivileged child deserves the opportunity to explore the world, find his own place in it and fully experience all that life has to offer.”

Lansford was a recipient of the Kiwanis Children’s Fund’s Tablet of Honor and a George F. Hixson Diamond 3 Fellow, as well as a life member. In addition, he was professor emeritus of the Trulaske College of Business at the University of Missouri-Columbia, which established a distinguished professorship in leadership in his name.

His wife, Beuna, preceded him in death. Pride in Kiwanis, Lansford said, is not rewarded for merely wearing the “K” on your lapel or paying lip service to the organization’s ideals. “It must be earned,” he said, “by action, persistence and dedication to meeting community and world needs.”

New Kiwanis clubs opened in the 2018-19 administrative year — the second-highest number of clubs opened in a year in our 104-year history.
A PROGRESSIVE SCHOOL IN TURKEY USES DRAMA AND ART TO HELP CHILDREN LEARN.

Story and photos by Serra Akcan/Narphotos

With a flat yellow smile over a purple and pink bow tie, Toros the puppet is changing the way Turkish children learn social studies, while also challenging perceptions of one of the nation’s underprivileged schools. Located in Ankara, Turkey, Aksemsettin Elementary School teaches children from poor, nomadic families. Past violent incidents contributed to its notoriety.

“It’s very difficult for children from the countryside to adapt to the big city life and classes,” one teacher explains.

That’s all changing.

With support from the Ankara Kiwanis Club, Aksemsettin now draws on the creative arts to complement traditional courses. Students can now see possibilities when they dream of careers.

Ilgin, 8, dons red ruffles across her hair and darkens her eyebrows to animate a Frida Kahlo self-portrait. “It seems Frida suffered a lot in her life,” Ilgin says. “Despite everything, she was a very powerful woman and that’s what I liked about her.” Ilgin wants to be a pastry chef.
Berat, 7, loves pantomime, soccer, Scooby Doo and English class. He hopes to be a teacher. Or a pilot. Or a detective.

Ayse, 10, teaches her young brother some of the things she has learned through drama, including silent movie acting, a favorite activity. “I’d like to be a brain surgeon when I grow up,” she says.

The Form 2-A teacher explains why she sought to make a change. She has worked at Aksemsettin Primary School, searching for new ways to reach and teach the children. The students, she says, had problematic behaviors and low levels of comprehension.

“It was hard to gain their

Social studies lessons come to life in a student performance of “From Darkness to Light” (above), a play about Turkey’s war for independence. Time spent in the school’s two studios also helps a young girl find a role model and a third-grader solve math equations (opposite page).
“We are teachers of a disadvantaged group of students. They are not very happy at their homes. Their parents generally have economic problems, yet we want to change their perspective on life and show them another world is possible.”
very happy at their homes. Their parents generally have economic problems, yet we want to change their perspective on life and show them that another world is possible.”
Attention and include them in the learning process using techniques from the syllabus,” she says. “So I began to implement different methods, starting with social skill activities like how they will sit, stand, interact with one another. And I implemented a reading program by which students interpreted the text using different branches of art.”

At first, she applied the program in her classroom, until Kiwanians stepped in with financial support and expertise in engineering and construction. Five years ago, they built a “Dreams Studio,” where students could read books, discuss them, re-enact the stories and portray the characters via different art forms.

Impressed by the reading program’s success, school teachers and administrators encouraged the Kiwanians to expand the program by building a drama studio that would broaden creative opportunities for children to unearth talents, express themselves better and improve communication skills.

Construction took nine months, which included installing lighting, sound equipment, acoustic walls and cupboards to store costumes, props, puppets and other materials. Their work, one Kiwanian explains, was only the first stage of the program’s success.

“The more important part is to make it useful for the students,” says member Unal Peker, an architect who designed both studios. “That is the second stage: to find people who will implement it.”

The arrival of a new drama teacher created excitement within the school. Students began counting the days they would return to the studio. Through improvisation, storytelling and puppeteering, they improved their skills of observation and empathy. They began solving problems together. Parents and other teachers became involved too.

“In schools like ours, parents are not expected to participate in social activities or to help their children, but it’s not like that in our case,” says one teacher. “They are involved. They produce art with their children.”

One mother told her mother-in-law she had to attend a PTA meeting just so she could get away for a visit to the studio. She and other parents spent the time painting, drawing and talking about the old days when the school didn’t have a good reputation.

Most of the school’s teachers noticed differences in their students and are now trained to use the studio with instructions provided by the drama teacher, building on a four-month training course.
“We are teachers of a disadvantaged group of students,” a 3-A teacher says. “They are not very happy at their homes. Their parents generally have economic problems, yet we want to change their perspective on life and show them that another world is possible.”

Another teacher, who has worked at five different provinces over the past 18 years, says Aksemsettin has been a turning point in her career.

Kiwanians are pleased too.

“Aksemsettin has become a very active public school, both because of the structure of the classrooms and the working enthusiasm of the teachers, who are unlike those you will find in many private schools,” says club Secretary Cahit Erkurt.

Aksemsettin’s headmaster reports that she has seen a difference in her school’s students.

“They are laughing as if they are not in school,” she says. “I see happy children. I see children with high communication skills, with high imagination. I think I see everything that should be. So what more should I expect from them? All of this happened within nine months!

“There should be 12 studios instead of 12 classes.”

Cahit Erkurt and Unal Peker (above) applied their engineering and architectural expertise to the studios’ construction. The school uses both traditional lessons and creative arts to boost students’ learning.
Three days before the Christmas holiday, families have descended on Orlando, Florida, ready to bask in the sun and tour the state’s famous theme parks. Attraction lines stretch far beyond each entrance, filled with impatient children and disgruntled parents tired of hearing “How much longer until we get to the front?”

Three hours to the southwest, children and parents also wait in a lengthy line snaking slowly through a park. But the tenor of this queue is markedly different. There is no impatience here, no complaining about wait time or thumbs flying across mobile phone screens. The families traveled to the park by foot and, unlike their Orlando counterparts, didn’t hand over more than US$100 per person to enter. They are here for Christmas in Immokalee, an annual event sponsored by the Northside Naples Kiwanis Club.

Immokalee is an unincorporated area just under an hour’s drive north of Naples, a Florida city “Forbes” magazine called one of the “top 25 places to retire rich.” Collier County, home to both Immokalee and Naples, is the wealthiest county in Florida, with a per capita personal income of $87,829, as reported by The Palm Beach Post.

Story by Julie Saetre
Photos by Srijita Chattopadhyay
But you won’t find those rich retirees living in Immokalee. This heavily agricultural area produces an abundance of vegetables and fruits and is one of the major suppliers of tomatoes in the United States. And those tomatoes, peppers, oranges, strawberries and other bounty would not make it to supermarkets and restaurants without Immokalee’s residents.

The families gathered in the park are migrant workers and their children. Many are from Mexico or Haiti; all want a better life for their families and are willing to work long days in the hot sun to find it. Tomato pickers, for example, generally work 10 to 12 hours in the fields each day. They handpick the vegetables, dropping them into 32-pound buckets that they then prop on their shoulders and cart 100 feet or more to a transport truck. They toss the tomatoes into the truck and quickly return to the fields.

The workers must move rapidly if they hope to make money. Harvesters are paid by the piece. At today’s rate, every filled 32-pound barrel earns 51 cents. That means one person must pick nearly 2.5 tons of tomatoes daily to earn minimum wage, according to the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, a human rights organization.

Not surprisingly, then, more than 43 percent of Immokalee’s population lives below the poverty level. And many of those families eagerly anticipate Christmas in Immokalee, which draws thousands each year.

That long line they’re so patienty waiting in? When they reach the
front, children get to meet Santa and Mrs. Claus and pose for a photo. And then, the most magical moment of all: The families enter a space lined by shelves overflowing with brand-new toys. Tonka trucks. Dolls. Dollhouses. Bowling sets. Beauty kits. Ukuleles. Basketball (of both American and soccer varieties). Skateboards.

There is no rushing, no pushing, no greedy grabbing of treasures. Families move calmly through the space as children carefully consider the choices. Each child gets to select a toy to take home, and the decision is a momentous one. Most likely, it will be the only material gift they receive this holiday season.

Kiwanian Pat Milford has been Christmas in Immokalee’s “toy lady” for more than 30 years, almost as long as the event’s 35-plus-year history. At first, the Kiwanis club sought out gently used toys and distributed them to as many children as possible. But many of the donations received were far past the gently used stage, and she wanted more for Immokalee’s kids.

“Our concept was these people are our guests,” Milford explains. “They are to be treated like they’re in your home — that’s the only way to treat them.”

So the club raised funds, and Milford began buying new toys. Today, she orders 1,000 toys from an Orlando wholesaler to ensure that children of any age can find the perfect present.

“To see some of these kids,” she says. “You’ll see a little, short guy with this big ol’ truck or a big ol’ basketball, and the smile is from ear to ear and his eyes are shining. You just go, ‘Oh my, what a wonderful thing to be doing.’”

Fellow Kiwanian and longtime Christmas in Immokalee volunteer Jeanette Igoe plays a key role in organizing the annual event. During the gently-used-toy days, she carted home boxes of donations to spruce up for the young guests.

“I’d wash stuffed animals in the washing machine, and they would be fresh and clean, then I’d fluff them up. Dolls would get their hair brushed. New ribbons put in. Everything we selected was refurbished before giving to
the children. But you can only do so many stuffed animals a year. Now, everything’s brand new, out of the elegant boxes.”

But the club doesn’t stop at Santa visits and toy shopping. It also provides a meal for the families — a tradition much appreciated by parents, who often have no money to spare for a big holiday meal. Some years it featured chicken cooked on 12-foot-long grills staffed by Kiwanians. Last year, the nonprofit Meals of Hope provided a spread that included taquitos, tacos, refried beans, fruit salad and cups of lemonade, all served in foam containers by volunteers. (At the event’s conclusion, Igoe walked through the crowd, passing out plastic grocery bags so the guests could load up on extra food to take home.)

With parents, grandparents and children all eager for a meal, the food line can stretch well beyond the kitchen area.

“There will be hundreds of (guests) waiting,” Milford says. “You see three or four people in our Publix supermarket line, and they’re already getting antsy. And (the Immokalee guests) are just waiting there so nicely and patiently.”

Until 2018, the event was held on Christmas Day, so volunteers often spent more time with Immokalee’s families than they did with their own on the holiday. For about 15 years, Rita Easterbrook was one of them. It’s an event she wouldn’t miss, because she also attended as a child — when she was one of those valued guests.

“That was the one time where I got to see my parents actually smiling, laughing, having a good time,” she recalls. “My parents were migrant workers, so there wasn’t a whole lot of smiling throughout the year. It was a lot of working very early hours, late nights. And so when we came here, it was very joyful. It was very memorable. They were dancing and laughing, having a good time. My mother was throwing her head back. I can still feel it every time I talk about it.”

Returning to Christmas in Immokalee each year as an adult volunteer became a tradition not...
“Somebody asked me, ‘Why do you do it?’ I said, ‘You have to see the children. You would understand if you could see the happiness it brings those kids.’ And you can’t do enough for those kids.”

only for Easterbrook, but for her husband and their three children.

“They say they don’t know what else to do on Christmas Day,” she says, smiling.

Last year, Easterbrook’s children, now young adults, had to work at their jobs and couldn’t attend, but Rita’s sister and brother and their respective kids filled in the gap. Key Club members pitched in as well, packing food, replenishing toy shelves, painting young faces and nails and handing out bags of candy.

Chris Zuccarello, immediate past vice president of the Gulf Coast High School Key Club in Naples, attended the event for the sixth consecutive year in 2018. He sees some of the same children each year, always asking them about their lives, schools and activities. He’s encouraged them to work hard at their studies and reach for a higher education and is thrilled when they later tell him their plans to attend University of Central Florida or Florida State University. He knows what encouragement from an older teen can mean in their lives.

“When I was about the age of these children, I was actually going through a similar situation,” he says. “And now that I’m out of that situation, it’s really humbled me and made me really think about how privileged I am, as well as what I can do to better help the community. … Each year, we ask about how they’re doing, what are their grades now. And each year, they respond, ‘I’m doing better. I’m always trying.’ And that’s what really counts, as long as those kids thrive.”

When the Kiwanians switched the event from Christmas Day to the preceding Saturday, they were concerned that the date change might bring fewer families. Plenty of people still showed up. Noticeably absent, however, were the men. On Christmas Day, the fields are closed. But a regular Saturday is a workday.

“A day away from work,” says Igoe, “is a day without pay.”

Crowd levels already had dropped previously from the years when 4,000 guests gathered in the park to celebrate. The United States has taken a more aggressive stance on its immigration policies. Agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a federal law enforcement agency, have been ramping up arrests for violating policies, and undocumented workers and their families fear separation and deportation.

“People are afraid to come out of fear that ICE will arrive and bring them in,” Igoe says. “They’re scared. A lot of them are scared.”

But as long as any Immokalee residents are willing to attend, the Northside Naples Kiwanis Club plans to be there for them.

“Somebody asked me, ‘Why do you do it?’ I said, ‘You have to see the children,’” says Igoe. “‘You would understand if you could see the happiness it brings those kids.’ You get into the mode, you know? And you can’t do enough for those kids.”

Adds Easterbrook, “The smiles the children have when they pick out their toys. As a child, I couldn’t see my own face. So now I get to see their faces, and they just light up when they find a toy they love. And that’s my Christmas now.”
IT’S NEARLY SHOWTIME AT IMAGINATION THEATER, WHERE THE DREAMS OF YOUNG AND OLD ARE ABOUT TO UNFOLD IN A MUSICAL HOLIDAY SHOW.

Story by Nicholas Drake • Photos by David Calvert

up the steps the little feet scurry, landing center stage in a circle. The piping sounds of young voices fill the air as family, friends and patrons of Imagination Theater settle into their seats with hot chocolate and cool cider. The singers warm up but peek to see where mom, dad, grandma or grandpa might be.

Concessioners, ticket-takers and stagehands are at the ready. The magical and humorous tale of “Madeline’s Christmas” is about to unfold. It’s holiday time in Placerville, California, where being a part of the theater is a rite of passage for the town of 10,389 residents.

“My favorite part of performing is being with all the other cast members,” says Gianna Kaldunski, who has the lead role of Madeline. “We’re like one big family.”

The 11-year-old has summed up the attraction. Family is at the heart of it all in Placerville. It’s a place where you make friends for life even when you’ve just met.

“I think all the girls are fun and nice,” says 9-year-old Charlotte Loeprich, who plays the part of Kate in her fifth theater performance. “It’s better than school.”

An usher walks up the center aisle, whisper-
ing, “Find your seats everyone. The show is about to begin.”

Stage lights burst brightly on cue as the cast of 16 masterfully unwraps the story of young Madeline taking care of her bedridden boarding schoolmates at Christmastime. The 1956 book by Ludwig Bemelmans springs to life as the audience basks in the glow of the holiday presentation.

Thirteen girls, two women, and one man make up this year’s holiday cast, along with a trio of understudies. The crew hits all the right notes and turns the small community theater production into joyful celebration. As the energetic Madeline, Kaldunski weaves the storyline of attending to her schoolmates’ many comical requests with aplomb. All the girls have the flu and may not make it home to their families for Christmas.

“That little 16-inch riser changes lives,” says Peter Wolfe, who co-founded Imagination Theater with fellow thespian and fellow Placerville Kiwanian Lanny Langston. “It’s my greatest delight to watch it all happen.”

The duo launched an idea in 1999 to bring topnotch productions like “Les Misérables” and “Our Town” to the Placerville community. The collective applause has been deafening. Averaging 20 performances of four or five shows a year, the venture now enters its third decade a runaway success.

“I’ve been acting since I was seven years old,” says Langston. “I love acting and I love working
with fellow actors, especially the talent we have right here in El Dorado County.”

On stage this night, these talents shine with humor, hubris and drama. The adult actors portraying Miss Clevel, Mrs. Murphy and Monsieur Brun interact seamlessly with the kids taking on the roles of Madeline, Simone, Anne and Amy. Everyone in the cast is having a blast, and the audience is entranced.

There’s a gentle, telling moment in the play when cast members look at one another and give pause to the enormity of what they are doing with a knowing giggle. They quickly compose themselves and move on to the next unveiling of Madeline’s story.

Intermission breaks up the audience laughter as attendees head to the lobby for snacks and beverages. There’s a buzz about the show. “It’s going so well!” says one proud parent to another. “They really have that Christmas spirit up there tonight,” says another.

People in Placerville quickly bond over shared family experiences. The greetings and smiles in the lobby are immediate and embracing. Wolfe and Langston know everyone on a personal basis.

“Peter’s the artistic guy, the guru of sets and the director for many of our productions,” says Langston. “We’re a perfect match to make this whole thing a success.”

Placervillians certainly think so, if the response to tonight’s show is any indication. As the onstage...
story resumes, the magical rug merchant Harsha finds a way to get the schoolgirls back home in time for Christmas.

The play kicks up a beat as the cast strolls into the audience for a dazzling number. Friends and family wink at their favorite actors singing just a few feet away from them. The familiarity between the players and the attendees is palpable. It should be. There’s a role for all in this setting.

“It really is a family affair,” says Becca Kaldunski, assistant director of “Madeline’s Christmas” and mother of Gianna. “My son, Jayce, played the lead role when Imagination Theater staged ‘Oliver’ in 2014. Lanny got him interested in taking part in theater. ... It’s a wonderful experience.”

A dozen or so Placerville Kiwanians perfect tonight’s performance by hanging decorations, painting backdrops and taking tickets at the door.

“We’re a pretty close-knit group,” Wolfe says. “Proceeds from tonight’s performance will go to our club. In turn, we’ll donate to The Eliminate Project, Kiwanis International’s global campaign toward eliminating maternal and neonatal tetanus.”

As the show winds down, the enthusiasm soars on stage. The story closes with the girls getting home for Christmas but reuniting back at boarding school, where they bond over the entire adventure.

The curtain closes on “Madeline’s Christmas” for another successful Imagination Theater performance. The cast reemerges to take a bow.

Merry Christmas, Placerville. You have a good thing going on there.
On any ordinary day, students and teachers of School 55 may be howling, growling and meowing. Or they may be kneading bread or tending herbs and hostas. As principal of Mongolia’s largest school for children with mental disabilities, Ganbileg Chuluunbaatar encourages her staff to find creative ways to teach their students. So they practice animal sounds as part of speech therapy and learn life skills and careers by baking bread and gardening.

On any ordinary day, School 55’s staff is extraordinary, as most ordinary teachers are. Outside the classroom, several members of the faculty are members of the Kiwanis Club of Ulaanbaatar, seeking creative ways to serve their community. Using funds raised by selling theater tickets, for example, they have purchased clothing, toys, food and hygiene products for needy families. And they have built a ger.
A ger is a predecessor of a yurt, a tent designed for nomadic people. The obvious difference between a ger and a yurt is that the latter uses curved poles as framework for both the roof and wall. A ger has a gently sloping roof with straight rafter poles that connect the crown to a lattice wall.

There are many gers in the 14th Microdistrict, a settlement area in the Bayanzükh District of the nation’s capital. One of these gers is the home of a 69-year-old grandfather and his 13-year-old grandson, Tugsmandakh, who has cerebral palsy. For six years, the fabric-wrapped residence has been part of this densely populated community where coal-burning stoves contribute to heavy winter air pollution.

“Their ger leaks when it rains,” says Kiwanian Ochisuren Batmandakh. “It needs to be dismantled, cleaned and rebuilt.”
On a hot, dry, sunny day, a string of vehicles wanders through the settlement, stirring trails of brown dust. They turn at a shack made of discarded metal and make a sharp turn at a two-story cinder-block house with glass windows. Right turns and left turns, everywhere they go, they stir up trails of brown dust.

Pulling up to a fenced compound, the Kiwanians grab supplies — rags, soap, tools, buckets, tubs — and file through a gate. The grandson, Tugsmandakh, is there in a makeshift wheelchair and greets them with a broad smile. His toddler sister stares with furrowed eyebrows at the strangers, before straddling a tricycle and pedaling furiously to her nearby home. She’ll be back with another brother to watch them work.

One crew unties straps that secure the structure. Other Kiwanians step through the low doorway to move cots, refrigerator, rugs — nearly everything — outside for cleaning. Since there is no running water nearby, they make regular runs outside the compound to refill their fast-blackening tubs.

Within 15 minutes, the ger’s three layers of covering are lifted away from the framework: The outer, leaking canvas and the inner cotton wall are discarded. The middle layer of wool insulation is set aside for reuse. The framework of the ger is exposed:

- **Khana**: The circular lattice wall, which can be collapsed for easy transport.
- **Uni**: Poles that serve as rafters, connecting the crown to the wall.
- **Toono**: The crown, a round, open wooden ring that vents the interior and the stove.
- **Bagana**: Two pillars that support the crown.
- **Haalga**: A low wooden door that faces south.

The work continues. The uni are pulled from notches in the toono and untied from the khana. A cleaning crew scrub each uni,
the toono and bagana, revealing blue, orange, white and red-swirling designs. They call other workers to view the once-hidden art. “Beautiful,” one declares.

Within an hour, workers reverse the process, securing the roof poles to the crown, adding a new inner sheet, which is covered with the wool insulation and a new orange outer canvas and cinched tightly with straps. Kiwanians carry clean furnishings inside, along with a new wheelchair, sunglasses, clothing and other gifts for the grandson, grandfather and their neighboring family.

After a hard day’s work at the ger, the Kiwanians have one more stop (right). One of the School 55 teachers had noticed that a student had not been attending class and learned that his grandmother could not afford medicines that controlled fainting episodes. She had to make a decision between the medicine and the care of the boy and two other grandchildren. The Kiwanians visited the home, bringing clothing, food, toys and medicine. As the volunteers dispersed toward their vehicles, their principal called them back. They gather in a broad circle. Looking at every face, Principal Chuluunbaatar commended their work.

“You have made a difference,” she said. “Kiwanis is about helping children, and that’s what we’ve done today. We will continue to help children wherever we find them in need.”

“You have made a difference. Kiwanis is about helping children, and that’s what we’ve done today. We will continue to help children wherever we find them in need.”
Homes for the holidays

A FESTIVE TOUR OF HISTORIC HOUSES HELPS RAISE FUNDS FOR COMMUNITY NEEDS.

Story by Wendy Rose Gould • Photos by Wales Hunter

Getting into the holiday spirit sometimes requires a tiny festive nudge, and that’s exactly what Kentucky’s Williamsburg Kiwanis Club offered its community via a 12-day holiday home tour fundraiser in 2018. The premise was simple: Allow residents to tour a handful of historic homes, complete with holiday cookies, cocoa, decor and sometimes live music.

“The city of Williamsburg has numerous beautiful homes that were built around the turn of the last century,” says Steven Jett, the club’s president. “Some are antebellum style, some were built by prominent architects and others just have a sense of flair. They’re the kind of homes that make people say, ‘I’d really like to take a look inside.’”

Last year, 12 families opened up their homes for the tour — a play on the famous song “The Twelve Days of Christmas” — and the club secured temporarily-donated vans from local churches to tote people from one to another. Tickets cost US$30 each, and about 60 participants took the tour. Because the vans were donated and the hosts opened their homes out of goodwill, the club incurred very few overhead costs.

“The response was overwhelmingly positive,” says Jett. “Many made comments saying it really put them in the holiday mood, and you could tell that the volunteer hosts pulled out all the stops for the love of the community.”
SHOWCASE

The Kiwanians allocated funds from the home tour for the purchase and installment of a mommy-baby swing in a city park. The swing, specifically built for children with disabilities, met an unfulfilled need in the community.

“The fundraiser promotes the spirit of the holidays, but it’s also a time for Kiwanians to talk to people and remind everyone about the reason for the season,” says Jett. “It also gave us an opportunity to work as a team and to help meet the real needs of real people in our community.”

The club plans to continue the holiday home tour, perhaps on an every-other-year basis, with the goal of featuring different homes each season.
Growing up in California, Joseph Sherman had always been interested in service. He volunteered for a variety of projects as a tween, and when he started high school, a teacher recommended he join Key Club. “It was the first time that I had a group of friends that were all into service,” Sherman recalls. “And I also especially liked that it was not a religious organization. It was the very fundamentally, universally human idea to make the world a better place.”

Little did he know, however, that the Key Club experience would lead him to one day develop a service program with worldwide impact.

In 2015, Sherman, an artist and marketing specialist now living in Israel, established The Holocaust Art Institute, a diverse group of artists and other professionals who raise public awareness of the Holocaust and its heroes. Institute members visit embassies, cultural organizations and museums to present Sherman’s paintings, which are inspired by those who saved Jewish lives during World War II. Other paintings and photographs are shared as well.

“It has been over 70 years since the Holocaust, and the heroes that I paint about have usually been memorialized in different ways,” Sherman says. “But to keep the lessons of their legacies relevant in the hearts and minds of the next generation, new forms of engagement must be created. This is a big project, but it comes down to making an impact one person at a time.”

He has met diplomats and government ministers from a wide range of countries, including Latvia, Malta, Croatia, France, Germany, Belgium, Romania, Russia, India, Kenya, Hungary, Greece and Serbia. Speaking to so many high-ranking individuals could have been daunting, but lessons he learned in Key Club proved invaluable.

“I had a flashback to the first time I spoke at a Kiwanis club,” Sherman says. “That was intimidating. And at first, it was very intimidating going to embassies. But I got used to it. They’re just people. And the more comfortable I got, the more comfortable they got.”

Key Club also taught him to build connections and plan for the future, skills that he’s used to broaden the Institute’s depth and reach. The Institute includes executive directors of organizations, university professors and other key sources.

“At first (in Key Club), I was surprised to learn that one of my main jobs as the club president was to develop leaders who would continue the club,” he says. “I had a similar experience as an artist presenting paintings. I realized that if I want to truly have a global impact, I need to develop a network of people who embrace the cause. These are people who are very successful in their own right. As much as I teach these esteemed representatives about interacting with dignitaries, I learn a lot from them. Together, we build bridges of hope.”
Say what you want about men and motorcycles, but when the rubber hits the road, Carl Sutter is raising money for Kiwanis.

The 76-year-old has made seven long-distance rides to raise money for children through the Southeast Volusia County Kiwanis Club. He covers all personal expenses (gas, lodging, etc.) and solicits pledges that go directly to the club. Each ride has raised about US$5,000.

His first trip was a 5,500-mile coast-to-coast journey from his home in New Smyrna Beach, Florida, to San Diego and back. The next trip took him from Florida to Seattle, Washington. Subsequent rides included a trip around Florida, a trip to Nova Scotia, a venture to Yukon territory and “A Superior Ride” from Florida to Michigan, around Lake Superior and back home.

While Sutter rides solo, his wife, Ann, is his chase-car driver, carrying his gear and keeping an eye on him. Sutter is on one of his two Yamaha Roadstar Silverados, riding through all sorts of weather as the couple gets to see the country while raising Kiwanis funds.

That’s not to say there haven’t been mishaps. After the first ride, Sutter went to his doctor and discovered his coronary artery was 90 percent blocked and needed a stent. During another trip, a bee made its way into Sutter’s wrap-around sunglasses, resulting in a swollen eye. Ann thought the trip should be over. Sutter said, “Oh baloney” and procured some ice from a fast food restaurant.

His trip to Alaska was a bit scarier. Due to a combination of fatigue and mechanical problems, Sutter dropped the bike about 200 yards from his midway destination. Emergency room doctors feared he’d punctured a lung, but his ribs were the only casualty.

“One of the toughest rides was coming home 5,200 miles with cracked ribs,” Sutter says.

But if the kids benefit, Sutter wants to keep it up. He’s written a few books about his travels, and he sends out a nightly email during each trip to those who have sponsored him. By his estimation, he’s traversed the equivalent of the Earth’s circumference twice. He has even started wearing a helmet, although he says that’s more because his hairline is thinning: He wants to avoid a sunburn.

He expects to motor somewhere next year, most likely during the month of June. After that, who knows?

“I’m hoping (to ride) until I’m 80 or 90,” Sutter says. “I’ll take 80 first, and then if I get 90, that will be frosting on the cake.”

Road warrior
RACKING UP THE MILES REVS UP SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN.

Story Lori Roberts
The elderly woman lying in bed didn’t move when the students walked in. The nursing home staff had explained that she usually was unresponsive. But these 11- and 12-year-olds from the Taylorville Junior High Builders Club in Illinois had brought a surprise: an American miniature therapy horse named Bailey.

At about 3 feet tall, the horse approached, its head even with the bed. Bailey gently nudged her long nose along the edge until her large, dark eyes were even with the woman’s face.

“Then she opened her eyes, and when she saw Bailey, she just came alive,” says Jacqueline Foil, the club’s sponsor. “It was one of the kids’ favorite visits.”

“The kids” were a group of 15 Builders Club members bringing homemade valentines, small horses and big hearts as part of a service partnership with Heartland Mini Hoofs. The club held fundraising events during the 2018-19 school year to help Heartland provide feed, hay, grooming items and veterinarian and farrier services.

Andra Ebert, Heartland’s executive director, was more than willing to work with these students.

“It has been a wonderful experience,” she says. “My own grandson is in Builders Club. It’s taught him a great deal about compassion, about communication, about doing. He immediately sees the benefit people receive from him doing a service.”

The Taylorville club always focuses on just one service partner per school year so students can establish a connection with the organization, Foil says. She has been the club’s sponsor for 10 years, stepping in when its original teacher liaisons moved on to help other student groups. The club had 50 students then, but that number dropped the next year after Foil set standards for accountability: good grades, good behavior and meeting attendance.

These rules made a difference in the kind of students who stay with the club. Students now aren’t necessarily sports-oriented or at the top of their class, but they want to help others.

“Our community is what you’d consider sort of impoverished, with 55 percent of students on free or reduced lunch,” Foil says. “So to see these kids get out there and fundraise is huge, because a lot of them are living below the standards of most other kids.”

In all, the club raised US$2,220 for Heartland during the school year. Besides crediting her students, Foil stresses the support she and the students always get from the Taylorville Kiwanis Club. (The club recognized Foil this year for her decade of service.)

“Our Kiwanis club didn’t just start the Builders Club and leave us hanging,” she says. “They’re there for us, and they’re great examples for the kids. I tell the kids they’ll go on to become Kiwanis club members one day.”

Tall in the saddle

A BUILDERS CLUB SUPPORTS MINIATURE HORSES USED FOR THERAPY.

Story by Cindy Dashnaw
Restoring wishes

FLOODWATERS COULDN’T DROWN HOLIDAY DREAMS, THANKS TO CANADIAN KIWANIANS. Story Julie Saetre

On a mid-September day earlier this year, hot, humid air prompted severe storms to pop up in Ontario, and the small town of Petrolia took a major hit. Both a tornado and a downburst of wind damaged trees, barns and buildings. Heavy rainfall flooded streets and basements.

One of those basements was at the Petrolia Food Bank. When Petrolia Property Restoration stepped in to clean up the water and the resulting sewer backup at no cost, worker Scott Honke discovered a troubling casualty: CA$5,000-worth of destroyed toys that had been stored in the basement, awaiting distribution to children in need during the holiday season.

Honke, a former member of the Seaway, Sarnia Kiwanis Club, couldn’t fathom the idea of children going without holiday gifts, so he reached out to friend and current club member Ken Stothers. Would the Seaway club be willing to donate $3,000 toward replacing the ruined toys?

Together, the friends approached the club’s board of directors, which agreed to vote on the request. The board chose not to donate the $3,000; instead, it approved the full replacement value of $5,000.

“This was actually approved by an email vote,” says board...
member and Division 3 Lieutenant Governor Donna Kelso, “since our next board meeting was going to be too far in the future.”

It was, she reports, a unanimous decision.

Funds came from the club’s ongoing Seaway Kiwanis TV Bingo fundraiser, which airs weekly on a community-focused station. Viewers pick up bingo cards at designated locations and pay a small fee to play the game.

Says Stothers, “Merry Christmas to the folks in the little town of Petrolia.”

BIRTHDAYS

These clubs celebrate their 100th, 75th, 50th and 25th anniversaries in January.

100TH — 1920
New Castle, Pennsylvania, January 3
Raleigh, North Carolina, January 3
Lexington, Kentucky, January 8
Portsmouth, Virginia, January 11
Lynchburg, Virginia, January 14
Victoria, British Columbia, January 18
Morristown, Tennessee, January 23
Watertown, New York, January 23
Wabash, Indiana, January 31

75TH — 1945
Bethesda, Maryland, January 23
McLouth, Kansas, January 29

50TH — 1970
Barranquilla, Colombia, January 13
Valence, France, January 13
Akranes-Thyrlir, Iceland, January 26

25TH — 1995
Coats, North Carolina, January 5
Bordeaux Entre-Deux-Mers, France, January 11
Leiden, Netherlands, January 17

Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation
(All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)
1. Publication Title: Kiwanis
2. Publication No.: 011130
3. Filing Date: August 23, 2019
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. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: September 2019
14. Extent and Nature of Circulation
   Published Nearest to Filing Date:
   a. Total Number of Copies: 123,254/121,756.
   b. Paid Circulation
      (1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541:
          114,618/114,967.
      (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®: 5,994/6,048.
      (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS: 0/0.
   c. Total Paid Distribution: 120,612/121,015.
   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: 0/0.
      (4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail: 685/235.
   e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution: 685/235.
   f. Total Distribution: 121,297/121,250.
   g. Copies not Distributed: 1,957/506.
   h. Total: 123,254/121,756.
   i. Percent Paid: 99.44%/99.81%
16. Electronic Copy Circulation
   Published Nearest to Filing Date:
   a. Paid Electronic Copies: 0/0.
   b. Total Paid Print Copies: 120,612/121,015.
   c. Total Print Distribution: 121,297/121,250.
   d. Percent Paid: 99.44%/99.81%.
   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 2019 issue of this
    publication.
   Signature and Title: Jack Brockley, Publisher. Date: August 23, 2019. I certify that all
   information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone
   who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or
   information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including
   fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).
Dangerous play

SOME TOYS HAVE A BAD REPUTATION. AND FOR A GOOD REASON.

Story and illustration by Curtis Billue

Kiwani clubs around the world have protected kids from harm with projects ranging from bicycle safety and free bike helmets to fire safety, free car seats and safer playground equipment. But what about toys? During the holidays, children receive new toys — and some of them can be dangerous. Check out the ones that have made the naughty list over the years.

Lawn darts or jarts. Who doesn’t love a game of flying spikes raining down from above? 6,000 kids were hospitalized over an eight-year period through the 1970s and ‘80s.

Toothpick crossbows. This should be a no-brainer, but it is a hot item in some areas of the world. A metal crossbow that shoots a toothpick at speeds of 159 mph. Yikes!

Magnets that look like candy. Small children will eat almost anything — even if it isn’t colorful. And when magnets get digested, they can connect, causing tissue damage and ER visits every year.

Clackers. Remember these from the ’70s? Such fond memories of getting knocked on the head or the hand. These acrylic balls would sometimes crack and shatter in tiny, dangerous shards.

Old Easy-Bake Ovens. Ah, the memories of your first Easy-Bake cake. They probably aren’t as good as you remember them. Neither were the burns! A heating coil or light bulb hot enough to cook pastries — and your skin — were the risk and reward of this holiday favorite.

Good ol’ hoverboards. Remember the days of riding around on your hoverboard while avoiding future Biff in “Back to the Future Part II”? No? Not only did the original models of these skateboard-like motorized devices cause falls and crashes, some caught fire while charging overnight, which led to mass recalls in 2016 and 2017.

Aqua Dots. Colorful beads that could be arranged and sprayed with water to be permanently set in fun designs. The problem was the glue contained chemicals that metabolized into gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB), a drug that led to children vomiting and lapsing into comas after swallowing.

Moon shoes. What better way to celebrate the anniversary of the moon landing than bouncing around on “anti-gravity,” super-bouncy, moon shoes? Unless you end up spending it in the hospital getting metal rods and crutches for your broken ankles.

Atomic Energy Lab by A.C. Gilbert. The man who made Erector sets wanted all kids to learn the power of atomic energy by including uranium ore samples and a Geiger counter so they’d know when they absorbed too much radiation.

Sky Dancers. Imagine it. Fairies floating down from the sky on a magical sunny day. Now think whirling dolls shot up in the air and dropping straight down on your head. The Consumer Product Safety Commission finally recalled this toy after multiple injury reports, including scratched corneas, broken teeth, concussions, broken ribs and cuts to the face.
Kids need Kiwanis. And sometimes Kiwanians need people who can help us serve them. Kiwanis International has a whole roster of partners whose missions are similar to ours. Team up to extend your reach, increase your visibility — and enhance your club’s next signature project.

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

READ KIWANIS MAGAZINE ONLINE
Enjoy the inspiring stories you love from Kiwanis magazine, plus added content, slideshows and video.
Visit kiwanismagazine.org to read about great Kiwanis projects, and then share those stories and photos via social media buttons for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram found right on the page. It’s that easy.
When you read something you love, pass it on.
#kidsneedkiwanis #kiwanis