

# notes



Hello fellow Kiwanians:



Larry Dobson, Governor

We are off to a strong start this year, with meaningful progress being made in both club building and adapting to Engage, our new reporting platform. While the transition to Engage has required patience and extra effort, many clubs are beginning to see its value as a tool for communication, reporting, and long-term planning. Learning a new system is never easy, but the willingness of our members and leaders to learn, ask questions, and support one another has been encouraging. Each step forward builds confidence and helps us create more consistency and transparency across our clubs.

At the same time, this year has presented some significant challenges. We have seen the closure of at least three clubs—two that were built just last year and one that was chartered in 2023. Losing a club is never easy, especially when those clubs represent recent growth and the hard work of many dedicated Kiwanians. These closures

remind us that while starting a club is an important milestone, sustaining a club requires ongoing attention, leadership development, and strong member engagement.

These experiences have highlighted the importance of what happens after the charter celebration. New clubs, in particular, need continued mentoring, clear expectations, and regular communication to help leaders and members feel supported and connected. They also reinforce the need for realistic growth strategies, strong administrative practices, and a culture that keeps members engaged and inspired by Kiwanis' mission.

As we move forward, our focus remains on strengthening the clubs we have while continuing to pursue growth in a thoughtful and sustainable way. By prioritizing mentorship, leadership education, and collaboration at the club, division, and district levels, we can help ensure that our clubs are not only formed but are positioned to thrive long-term.

This is where each of us plays an important role. I encourage every club leader and member to reach out, ask for support, share ideas, and stay engaged—especially with our newer clubs. Attend training opportunities, use the resources available through Kiwanis, and take time to mentor and encourage one another. Together, through intentional support and active involvement, we can strengthen our clubs, grow sustainably, and continue building a stronger, more resilient Kiwanis presence in our communities.

We will be hosting our 2026 Mid-Year Conference on March 13–14 at Embassy Suites in Lexington, KY. This annual event brings together members from across the district for a weekend of learning, networking, and planning.

Attendees will participate in workshops on leadership, membership growth, service projects, and fundraising, gaining practical tools to strengthen their clubs and expand their community impact. Beyond training, the conference offers opportunities for fellowship and collaboration, with social events and discussions that connect members across divisions.

Open to club officers, committee chairs, division leaders, new members, and youth program participants, the conference also celebrates club achievements and encourages inter-club collaboration. Register early and reserve your room at Embassy Suites. The KT District Mid-Year Conference is more than a meeting — it's a celebration of service, leadership, and community, inspiring members to make a lasting difference.

Looking forward to seeing you in Lexington



2026 Mid-year convention



**MID-YEAR CONFERENCE**  
**March 13-14, 2026**  
**Lexington, Kentucky**

EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE:  
 FEBRUARY 10, 2026

Lt. Governor-Elect  
 Training  
 April 17-18, 2026  
 Rough River

DISTRICT CONVENTION  
 August 13-16, 2026  
 Alcoa, Tennessee

Check the District web site for updates:  
<https://k10.site.kiwanis.org/events/>



Join fellow Kiwanians for the Kiwanis International convention in Manila, Philippines! Mark your calendar — and make a note to register **by February 2** to get the best price.

- Member registration** (December 1, 2025-February 2, 2026): **US\$409**
- Late member registration** (February 3-April 13, 2026): **US\$509**
- Non-member guest:** **US\$199/US\$299**
- Under 18 years of age:** **US\$109**

Registration gives you access to sessions, events and activities for each day of the convention: **Wednesday, June 24, through Saturday, June 27**. Lunch on Thursday and Friday will be included with your registration. (Please note: A one-day registration option will not be available. Also, onsite registration will not be offered.)

To attend the 2026 Kiwanis International Convention, **you must register by April 13**.

# SIGNATURE PROJECT CONTEST

Signature projects show the impact a Kiwanis club can have on a community. From playgrounds and parks to festivals and fundraisers, signature projects are the hallmarks of what Kiwanis clubs are known for in their communities. Kiwanis International hosts the annual Signature Project Recognition Program for clubs and districts. Clubs with 27 members or fewer are judged in the Group I category. Clubs with 28 members or more are judged in Group II. Each group is judged separately, and the top 10 finalists are determined for each group.

The 2026 Signature Project Contest is open for submissions. The submission period will close on January 29, 2026. Clubs will submit their project details using the online contest entry form, which will be posted at the bottom of this page in January 2026 or will be sent to you from your district leadership. Each club's entry will be sent to their district for selection of the Group I or Group II projects that the district will enter into the 2026 Signature Project Contest. The top three selections from each group are recognized as the gold, silver and bronze winners. The winning projects in each group are awarded US\$2,000, \$1,500 and \$1,000! The Kiwanis International Board Committee on Service and Partnerships reviews qualifying submissions and selects the finalists. Finalists will be recognized at the 2026 Kiwanis International Convention and/or other communication channels.

## What is a signature project?

Think about what your Kiwanis club is known for in your community. It can be a service project or a fundraiser. Signature projects:

- **Are recurring.** (Note: A new project can qualify as a signature project if the intent is to continue the project.)
- **Enhance the Kiwanis image.**
- **Demonstrate significant impact on the community in terms of monies raised or children served.**
- **Strengthen membership and partnership opportunities.**

Signature Project Contest entry forms

**Submit Your Entry** (*entries can be submitted from 12:00 am ET January 6, 2026, through 11:59 p.m. ET on January 29, 2026*)

[https://www.cognitofrms.com/KiwanisInternationalFoundation/\\_2026SignatureProjectContestEnglish](https://www.cognitofrms.com/KiwanisInternationalFoundation/_2026SignatureProjectContestEnglish)

Check out more award winning projects at: [Kiwanis.org](https://www.kiwanis.org/)- [Home](#) [Members](#) [Service & projects](#) [Examples of Signature Projects](#)

For 55 years, the Kiwanis Malt Shop has been a must on to-do lists of Minnesota State Fair attendees — and members of the Kiwanis Club of North Suburban, Saint Paul look forward to it every year, too! During the 12-day fair, club members are joined by the Roseville Key Club and community volunteers in dishing up 15,000-20,000 malts over the course of 230 four-hour shifts.

In just four years, the Kiwanis Club of Birmingham's Kiwanis Reads program has brought books into the schools and homes of 20,000 children. In this literacy program, Kiwanians visit 900 preschools in Birmingham twice a year to read to students and give each one a book to build their own home libraries.

Every year, the Kiwanis Club of Sydney raises funds through a cake stall at a local shopping center, a raffle and a silent auction to support children and families through their most difficult times. The proceeds help to make "comfort care cases" for kids facing end-of-life care at Sydney Children's Hospital Randwick.

# FRESH FROM DISTRICT

FUNDRAISING | SERVICE | NEW OFFICERS | NEW CLUBS

**BOYD COUNTY:** For the past three years the Carter County Kiwanis Cub under the leadership of Willis Johnson sponsored a Harvest Pack project prior to Thanksgiving. That first year 20,000 meals were packed and then, in the next two years, 30,000 were packed. Willis became ill and was unable to head the project in the fourth year. Time to schedule a date was getting close. After some group discussion, the Kiwanis Club of Ashland Breakfast decided to continue this project for the Eastern Kentucky area.

We changed the name to the Christmas Harvest Pack. We encouraged all area civic organizations, churches, and businesses to not only donate to this project, but to also join us on packing day. Together we were able to increase our beginning goal of 30,000 meals to 50,000 within three weeks. The use of the Boyd County Convention Center was provided at no cost. A great local organization, Send Relief, provided us with a place to have the supplies delivered and then this organization brought our supplies to the convention center, provided some volunteers to join us, and then transported the materials back to their warehouse to await transportation to arrive to take them back. On the first Tuesday of December the entire tri-state area of many businesses, organizations, and hundreds of volunteers joined together at the Boyd County Convention Center to pack 51,520 meals for families throughout our area. As we work, a slide show was displayed above the stage thanking each of our sponsors for their donation of time, people power, and finances.

There were volunteers from the Kiwanis Clubs of Ironton, Ohio, Ashland Noon, Carter County, and Ashland Breakfast as well as the Ashland Rotary Club. There were students from the Boyd County and Paul Blazer Key Clubs, Ashland Middle School Cheerleaders, Raceland HS FCCLA, Boyd County football team, and others. The Ashland Tri-state Aktion Club also provided a large number of volunteers. We had a great turnout from the members of Legacy Ashland Church and Oak Grove Church of Christ. Plus, all the teams from many area banks, such as PNC, City National, First National; UK Kings Daughters Hospital; and Marathon Petroleum. Then, numerous volunteers from the tri-state area simply showed up because they wanted to be part of this worthwhile project. Members of the Boyd County Sheriff Department arrived as volunteers and carried filled boxes from the lines to the front display. What was projected as 230 volunteers evolved into over 350. Although the teams were packed, they still worked so diligently and efficiently that all the boxes holding 40 bags of food each were filled within about an hour. The loud sound of a gong signifying a box was filled rang throughout the building over 150 times. What an exciting atmosphere!

All these meals will be distributed to community kitchens, food pantries, churches, school backpack programs, and other areas of need throughout the entire tri-state area of Kentucky-Ohio-West Virginia. With the success of this year's project, we have already begun contemplating increasing our numbers for next year. So many of our volunteers left proclaiming how much they enjoyed this project and stating that they will be back next year. We are looking forward to seeing those promises come to fruition in 2026.

Boyd County (cont.)



**KIWANIS CLUB OF RICHMOND:**

Christmas gifts are provided for whole family in Madison County, Kentucky

The Kiwanis Club of Richmond members participated in the Secret Families of Madison County with Gates Auto on December 13, 2025. Over 77 families were supported and our club sponsored a family, wrapped gifts, and helped to deliver to the chosen family.

Charlie Johnson, a long-time member of the Kiwanis Club of Richmond and Manager of Gates Toyota Sales and Service in Richmond stated, "The families were identified by school resource directors." He added that most of the families served would not have had a Christmas without this support.



**MURFREESBORO KIWANIS CLUB, MURFREESBORO, KENTUCKY**

Murfreesboro Kiwanis Club, joined by area Key Clubs and neighboring Kiwanis Club of Rutherford County entered the Murfreesboro Christmas Parade in December.

Lead by members of Kiwanis and Key Clubs, holding their respective banners members strolled the couple mile route handing out candy to children and spreading the Kiwanis and Key Club names. Mike Eyster, Murfreesboro Kiwanis president, allowed members to help decorate his late 1960's Chevrolet C-10 with a tree and bed full of presents.

While the weather was cold, Kiwanis family spirits were high for this great interclub activity.



**KIWANIS CLUB OF KINGPORT, KINGPORT, TN**

A grant of \$5,000 was awarded on December 19, 2025, to FAMILY PROMISE OF GREATER KINGSPORT (FPGK) by Bill Reese of the KNTCCF. FPGK serves homeless families with minor aged children ad assists them in achieving sustainable independence by providing temporary shelter and meals for those families in need, as well as counseling and support in establishing future income, budgeting, childcare and housing.

The facilities are located on C Street, which consists of a small house with a detached building converted into two tiny apartments. Currently residing on this property is: (1) a family of five in the house; (2) a single dad and two young teens in the upstairs apartment; and (3) a single mom with a young teenager in the downstairs apartment. These funds will cover some of the basic expenses such as natural gas, electricity, water, ad sewer; insurance on the buildings, automobile, and officer/ board insurance; personal hygiene products; cleaning products and related supplies; replacement of "furniture" including fresh pillows and comforters for each new family member; drug testing supplies; criminal background checks for adults; rent and copier/internet/telephone service for the Day Center/Office; personnel expenses; routine maintenance/tires for the FPGK van; guest needs such as birth certificates, permanent identification; nonroutine maintenance on property buildings; KAYS bus passes for families to go to work; miscellaneous school or medical supplies.



**KIWANIS CLUB OF LEXINGTON BLUEGRASS**

The Kiwanis Club of Lexington Bluegrass Family had a very busy time leading into the winter holidays.

A time honored project of serving Thanksgiving Lunch at Harrison Elementary School included members from Frederick Douglass High Key Club ad Henry Clay Key Club in serving real turkey, dressing, gravy, cranberry sauce, and pies to the Harrison students and staff.

Sleeping Lamb is a more recent project addition to our annual service roster Each spring and fall, we assist in the building of beds, their funding, and their delivery to children without beds.

Transylvania University Circle K spent a great morning before Thanksgiving baking and decorating sugar cookies for some downtown Lexington Fire Stations.

Other activities included financial assistance to The Nest for their Annual Reindeer Express Christmas Market; Thanksgiving Food Basket at Liberty Elementary, and bell ringing for the Lexington Salvation Army in December.



**KIWANIS CLUB OF SOMERSET**

The Kiwanis Club of Somerset celebrated Five Kiwanians for their years of service to Kiwanis by inducting them in the Kiwanis Legion of Honor. From left to right: John Rogers, 27 years, Norman Martin, 47 years, Jerry Stykes, 53 years, Stan Oliver, 39 years and second picture, Gene Cheshire, 55 years. A lot of volunteer years on behalf of children in our communities. Congratulations!



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**KIWANIS CLUB OF MT. STERLING**

First Board meeting of 2026! As we looked back at the past year and the 40+ donations made to various organizations- it made us all recognize the positive impact the fundraising efforts provided to the community! From larger projects: \$1000 monthly funding to the Community Food Coalition, \$7000 to Gateway Children's Services, \$13,000 to New Beginnings, \$4000 to The Post Clinic, \$5000 for The Jag program at the high school and \$3000 to the Sterling House- to MOCO Black and Hispanic Achievers, the library summer reading program, after prom, MOCO Transit and so many more. Our club could not do it without the support of the community! As we begin fundraising efforts in 2026- please help us to make it the best year yet! The needs are even greater this year! We thank you and appreciate any and all donations!



Well, Montgomery County Schools, you did it again! With Key Club Sponsor Eric Buckman leading the way and a host of Key club members, FCA, The Builders Club, from Elementary all the way up, you raised 22,500+ items of food for the Sterling Coalition! This was the 11th Annual and it exceeded all others! Congratulations on your efforts. You have stocked the food pantry with enough food to last until April! Thanks to the MCHS leaders who allow this amazing opportunity for our county, for showing the kids that this is important...that we care for each other. Thanks to so many others - Bo Queen of Dutch's, Mt. Sterling Kiwanis, Kroger, Save-A-Lot, Sterling Coalition board members, our area Banks and other local businesses, individuals who donated cans and money, the teachers and administrators of Montgomery County Schools. Montgomery countians are amazing!



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**KIWANIS CLUB OF CLARKSVILLE, TENNESSEE**

Members Dan Black and Key Club advisor Christopher Lanier attended the Rossvie High Hawks Key Club meeting. Treasurer Dan Black presented the Rossvie Key Club with a check from the proceeds from their sales of Smoked Turkeys from our club's fundraising project. They are donating it to the Ronald McDonald House, one of the Kentucky-Tennessee District of Key Club International's preferred charities that they support. Thank you Rossvie Key Club in serving the children of our community and the world.



**KIWANIS CLUB OF SPRINGFIELD, TENNESSEE**



In just under 4 hours during roadblock in downtown Springfield, passersby generously gave \$1,439.83 in support of the Kiwanis for Kids Christmas Assistance Program! THANK YOU, our community's generosity never ceases to amaze us.

Gratitude is also extended to the club members who volunteered part of their Saturday during the Thanksgiving holiday to represent our club by standing in the street to collect funds in support of this club initiative: Gerry Sand, Mike Norton, Jon Graves, Sharon West, Ann Williams, Alan Sparkman, Howard Bradley, Ace Timmermeier. Thank you all.



**KIWANIS CLUB OF SOUTH PADUCAH**

Kiwanis Club of South Paducah sponsors the McCracken County Fair as their main fund raiser. Part of the fair includes pageants for Miss McCracken County Fair, Ms / Mrs Pageant, Little Ms. And Mr. McCracken County resident, Caitlyn Hooks brought home the title of Miss Kentucky County Fair 2026 as the historic first time for McCracken County since the pageant's inception in 1956.



### COPPERHILL KIWANIS CLUB

The Copperhill Kiwanis held their Christmas parade that they have sponsored for over 60 years. It starts in McCaysville, Georgia, and ends in Copperhill, Tennessee. Lots of participants and large numbers watching. Dwight Watt rode in one of the lead vehicles as Division 3 Lt. Governor.



### KIWANIS CLUB OF PADUCAH

Kiwanis Club of Paducah began supporting the area elementary schools Accelerated Reader program in 2008 by offering a bicycle for those who met their challenges. For every challenge or goal that a student meets, they are entered into a drawing for the bicycle. In January we attend a ceremony at each school for the drawing and presentation of the bicycle.



## DOES KIWANIS INSURANCE COVER ME?

BY: CHARLES E. RIDENOUR  
District Risk Manager  
P.O. Box 444  
Sweetwater, TN 37874  
423-337-6123  
FAX 423-337-6124



### What can our club do to protect the members from liability?

The number one thing a club can do to limit a members liability is to incorporate the club. This limits the liability of the members, in a worse case scenario, to the assets of the club. Without a corporation, each member could be liable for any amounts not covered by insurance.

**Second**, appoint a “Club Risk Coordinator” in every club to review all club projects with safety in mind.

**Third**, make sure all projects are approved by your Board of Directors prior to the event and your club secretary includes it in your club Board meeting minutes.

**Four**, put all agreements in writing and signed by all the parties thereto. This agreement should be written by an attorney for the club. Normally, the attorney draws a contract to protect his client. Remember that when you sign someone else’s contract.

**Five**, limit the clubs liability by not signing agreements which has language which requires you to hold someone harmless. This can be very expensive if you agree and liability occurs, even if Kiwanis would not be legally liable, the contract may make us responsible. It is alright for each party to agree to assume their own liability.

**Six**, if possible, get the other party to hold your club, the K-T District and Kiwanis International harmless for the event.

**Seven**, always get written proof of insurance from the other party. Require them to have their insurance company name your club, K-T District and Kiwanis International as an additional named insured on their policy. This will require their insurance company to defend us and pay any claims. This is very common and should not be difficult. If the other party claims they can not do this, look closely because something is wrong.

If you have a project of any size, it is always wise to consult with a local attorney before the event. You need to determine if our insurance is sufficient. If you can, shift the liability to other parties or you may need special event coverage. If you are having a large event with a number of different events, more than likely you will need to obtain special event coverage locally. Remember, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.