



“Good People Doing Great Work on Behalf of Children and our Community”

KIWANIS CLUB OF JACKSON

Serving the Children of the World Since 1918

AUGUST NEWSLETTER 2022



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CAROL ZUCHOWSKI

Jennifer and I recently drove to Ypsilanti to see her daughter. As we approached the city limits, we noticed the familiar, round Kiwanis and Rotary signs. Even though I rarely visit this city, I felt strangely welcome. To my knowledge, her daughter is the only person I know there, but somehow, I felt among friends.

You may know that Jackson has three similar signs, located at popular entrances to our community. Our signs not only proclaim the pride of Rotary and Kiwanis, but Exchange, Optimist, Lions, and other service clubs. I had never truly contemplated the importance of those signs; they have stood there for as long as I could remember. I must admit that I drive by them regularly and pay little attention. Since my out-of-town visit, I now see them through new eyes. I am convinced they are doing their job: telling residents and visitors that we are a community who cares.

Your board decided some time ago that our signs needed some sprucing-up. COVID put our plans on hold, but thanks to Denny DaPra, the project is back on track. The board voted recently to lead efforts to refurbish these signs. Denny contacted each of the service clubs to request a share of the cost.

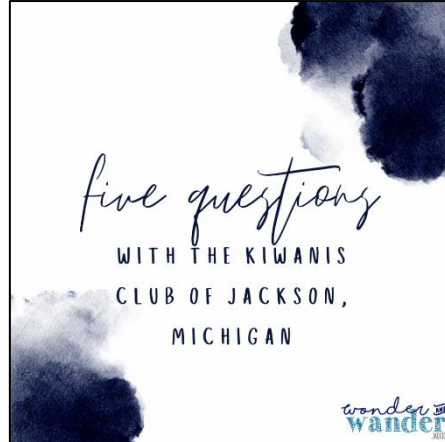
He also contacted Experience Jackson, formerly known as the Chamber of Commerce visitor's bureau.

Experience Jackson feels these signs are important, too. These experts in tourism who are charged with inviting people to get to know Jackson recognize the important role service clubs play in creating the fabric of a community. They believe so strongly in our work that they have agreed to provide 70 percent of the cost.

Work on our signs should begin shortly. In the meantime, be on the lookout for the familiar “Circle K” when travelling. Chances are you will find nice people and a community made better by the Kiwanians who live there. As my former pastor Ed Ross used to say, “Happy Trails”!

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Chad



Welcome to our social impact series, called “Five Questions.” On the first day of every month, we will share five questions with a community organization serving children and youth in Jackson County. We hope to inspire you, enlighten you, and connect you with community organizations should you ever need assistance. By sharing this with you, we hope that together we can be inspired to take action to improve our communities!

Back in May, I had the pleasure of being invited to share all about Wonder and Wander – Jackson with The Kiwanis Club of Jackson. Before receiving an invitation, I honestly did not know much about Kiwanis. I knew they had their [park here in Jackson](#) (what a gem!). I knew of my family friend who had been a Kiwanis member in my hometown, but otherwise, I had a lot to learn.

When I tell you that what I found was the kindest group of people, I am not exaggerating. The sole purpose of Kiwanis is to serve the children, and these folks work tirelessly to do that in our community. From funding events to maintaining multiple outside spaces in Jackson, they really do it all. I am thrilled to feature The Kiwanis Club of Jackson, Michigan on the blog this month. I had the pleasure of sharing five questions with Kiwanis Club secretary **Joe Wolfe**. Keep reading to learn more about this amazing organization.

Five Questions with The Kiwanis Club of Jackson, Michigan

1. Tell us about The Kiwanis Club of Jackson, Michigan. What is the mission of your organization?

Kiwanis is a worldwide service organization founded in Detroit in 1915. In 1918 the Kiwanis Club of Jackson was formed by 75 local businessmen to help needy children in Jackson. Today that mission still is the focus not only of Kiwanis International, to “serve the children of the world”, but also the Jackson club’s mantra, to serve the children of Jackson. And we do that in many ways – from nutrition to education, to physical activities, to developing leadership.

2. Many people might not know that you maintain your very own park here in Jackson. Tell us about the Kiwanis Park!

The Kiwanis Park, also known as the Kiwanis Playground, is located at the intersection of Elm, Blakely, and Seymour Streets. In 1947, the Jackson Kiwanis Club adopted this city-owned park and promised to maintain it. All new playground equipment was installed a couple of years ago, a new concrete bike/walking path was built, picnic tables and grills are provided, and the cleanest restroom facility of all the city parks can be found at Kiwanis Park. Club members regularly plant flowers, add mulch, weed, and keep the landscape picture perfect! Hundreds of kids use the playground daily during the summer.

3. Kiwanis does so much work in our community to support youth. Can you please tell us more about this work and your projects in the community?

We could spend all day talking about Kiwanis and community support. Here's a list of some of the most recent projects completed to give you an idea of what Kiwanis does yearly.

- In April, with the help of students from The Middle School at Parkside, we packaged 10,000 meals that will be distributed by the Salvation Army to needy families.
- In April, we also donated \$8,000 to the Dahlem Center for the creation of a Story Walk trail. Completing the walk and the story is a little less than 2 miles.
- In May, \$1,000 was donated to the Y Center to help fund their Summer Camps program.
- Hundreds and hundreds of kids will be entertained at the Michigan Theatre this summer with Kiwanis-sponsored movies.
- Throughout the year, Kiwanis furnishes shoes and boots to K -6 graders attending Jackson Public Schools. This year footwear will be provided to over 400 children.
- We awarded two \$1,000 scholarships to local high school graduates who plan on attending Jackson County-based colleges.
- Kiwanis sponsors two Key Clubs, one at Western High School and the other at Jackson High School, where high school-age kids learn leadership skills and participate in their own Kiwanis fundraisers and philanthropy.
- Every third grader in Jackson County is gifted a dictionary. And with March being Reading Month, the club furnished bicycles to various grade schools to encourage reading.
- Last year Kiwanis donated \$40,000 to the Y Center for their renovation project.
- The Jackson club sponsors the Splash Pad at the Cascades and the Disc Golf Course at Ella Sharp Park.
- Every Halloween, we host a party at the Kiwanis Playground where we furnish cider and donuts to the trick-or-treaters and their families. Over 700 attended the party last year!

4. Kiwanis conducts many fundraisers throughout the year to raise funds for all your amazing projects that support children in our community. Please tell us about these fundraisers. Can someone donate to you in other ways?

Currently, there are three major fundraising projects.

1. The flag service, where individual homeowners or business owners can subscribe to having an American flag in their yards 5 times a year – Memorial Day, Flag Day (June 14), Independence Day (July 4), Labor Day, and Veterans Day (Nov 11). Kiwanis members plant the flag about a week before the holiday and take it down about a week after the holiday. The cost is \$40 a year. We currently have 1250 flag customers in Jackson County.
2. We host a Winter Golf Outing in January where a special golf course is setup in the snow, and plastic golf balls are used. It sounds crazy, but around 350 people participated last year, and the club made over \$10,000.

3. Our oldest fundraiser dates back to 1918, the year Kiwanis was founded in Jackson, and that is our annual newspaper sale. A special Kiwanis edition is sold at various businesses, on the streets downtown, and even by mail. The newspaper tells about the good works of Kiwanis and members sell the paper for “any contribution”.

Between these three major fundraisers, the club realizes between \$80,000 to \$100,000 in revenues, which fund all the projects. And 100% of all money collected goes toward charitable use.

5. If someone wants to become a Kiwanis member, how do they do that? Are there any prerequisites or requirements to becoming a member?

The only prerequisite is you must be at least age 18 – and, of course, have a passion for helping needy children! Call Joe Wolfe, the club secretary, at 517-740-3008. The club meets every Friday at noon at the Cascades Manor house, and anyone is welcome to attend the luncheon, which includes an informative program — just like the Wonder and Wander Jackson program presented last month!

For more information on The Kiwanis Club of Jackson, Michigan, you can visit their website here:

<https://www.jacksonkiwanis.com/>

And their Facebook page here:

<https://www.facebook.com/jacksonkiwanis/>

[Kiwanis Summer Picnic](#)

Our club’s annual **Summer Picnic** is on again this year after being postponed due to COVID. The picnic will be on Wednesday, August 24th, and will replace our normal meeting on Friday, August 26th. A steak dinner will all the trimmings, beverages (including beer and wine), and delicious desserts will be served. Spouses and guests are encouraged to attend – this is a great time to bring a prospective member! While the ticket suggests 5pm, early arrivals can help the Sekerkes set things up. The cost is \$20 per person (children 12 and under are \$10/ 5 and under free). This is a great time to see your fellow Kiwanians outside a meeting atmosphere and enjoy the weather and beautiful landscape of the Sekerke Estate. There will be a golf scramble (no skill required) at noon at Burr Oak – see Glenn Pascoe to sign up for the golf.

Joe Wolfe
517-740-3008



Early Childhood Project

The Jackson Kiwanis Club purchased 420 books for Jackson Head Start students for the 2022 Early Childhood project. These books will be given to children by their teacher when they do their initial home visit this fall.

At these home visits children meet their teachers for the first time and as the teacher reads to the child, he/she begins to build a relationship which makes the first day a little

less stressful. Reading in the presence of the parents also provides good modeling, as teachers display a love of reading, emphasize print and vocabulary, and picture cues.

This project provides much needed books directly into the hands of low-income families throughout Jackson County.

On July 15 our Kiwanis members stamped these books with our Kiwanis logo before delivering them to the Head Start office. Thank you to all our members who helped with this project.



George F. Hixson Fellowship Award



Andy Johnson was presented with the George F. Hixson Fellowship Award at our Kiwanis meeting on Friday, July 22nd for his significant contributions to the Kiwanis Club of Jackson. Shortly after joining Kiwanis in 2008, Andy started working with the Key Club at Jackson High School and has been the Kiwanis advisor ever since. He served as our club's Treasurer for several years before becoming President for the 2017-2018 year. Andy was instrumental in rebuilding the Kiwanis Playground. Working with his dad, Bob Johnson, the playground was transformed from a dusty baseball field with a raggedy looking cyclone fence to a state-of-the-art playground, bike and walking paths, picnic area with grills, and the best restroom facility of all the city parks. Oh, and the raggedy fence was replaced with a stately looking wrought iron fence along with park benches, a flagpole, and beautiful landscaping. Andy organized Kiwanis members to be part of the work crew from assembling playground equipment to landscape gardening chores. Today Andy serves as the President of our Kiwanis Foundation and has helped steer the committee with recent community investments like \$40,000 to the Y-Center, pickle ball courts at the Cascades, and Disc Golf at Sharp Park, to name a few. For these contributions to Kiwanis and Jackson, the Kiwanis Board proudly awarded Andy a George F. Hixson Fellowship, the highest honor a club can bestow on a fellow member.



Tee it up for Kiwanis



It's Easy!

- Make a Pledge
- Sponsor a golfer in the Marathon

(all sponsors of \$20.00 or more will be entered into a drawing for 4 Tickets to a Redwing Hockey game or \$300.00 cash)

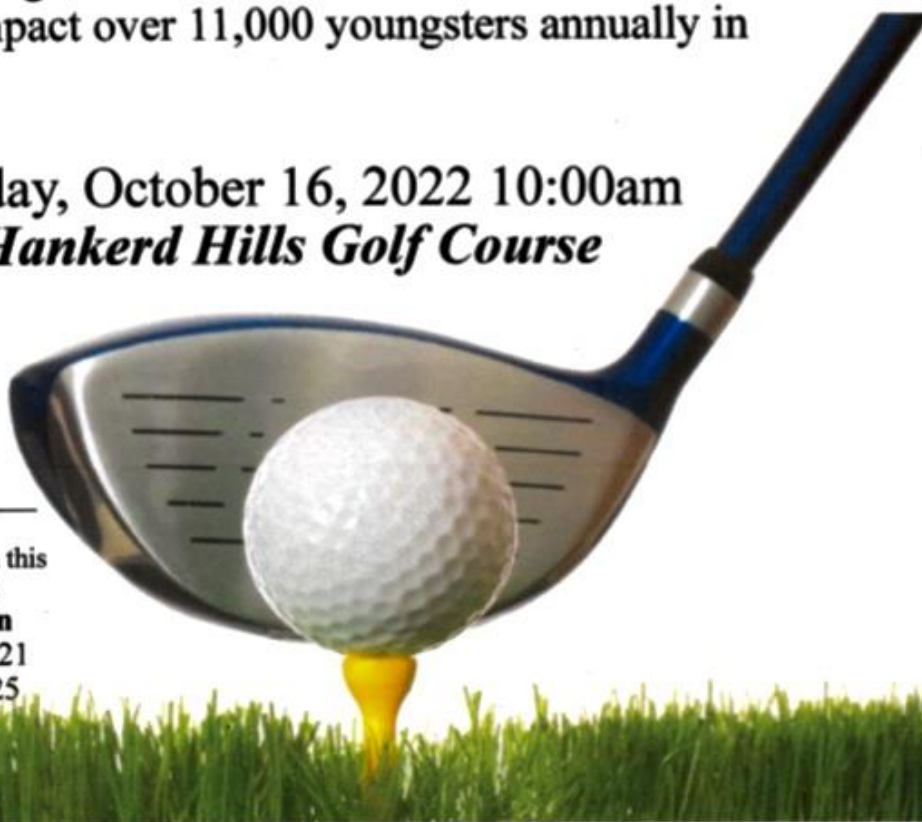
Proceeds from this event:

- Provide a dictionary to all our 3rd graders in Jackson County.
- Provide elementary schools with two bikes for prizes as part of their reading month activities in March. These programs positively impact over 11,000 youngsters annually in education.

Sunday, October 16, 2022 10:00am
Hankerd Hills Golf Course

For additional information on this event or becoming a member:

Kiwaniis Club of Jackson
Stan Mazur (517) 392-5921
Jeff Mazur (517) 795-6425



"TEE IT UP FOR KIWANIS"

Get ready for the "Tee it Up for Kiwanis" fundraiser on Sunday, October 16th. Sign up to golf at this fun Kiwanis event or sponsor some of our golfers to help raise money for kids! The Golfers to sponsor so far are Stan Mazur, Jeff Mazur, Bob Frank, Bob Johnson, and Mike Zuchowski. For more information or to sign up to golf, contact Stan or Jeff Mazur.

AUGUST CALENDAR

Wednesday, August 3 - Zoom Board Meeting

Friday, August 5 - Aaron Dimick, President at People for the Parks & Trails of Jackson, Michigan

Friday, August 12 - TBD

Wednesday, August 17 - Zoom Board Meeting

Friday, August 19 - Ye Ole Carriage Shop - Sign-up sheet available at the Friday meetings.

Wednesday, August 24 - **SUMMER PICNIC & GOLF!**



Friday, August 26 - **NO MEETING!**

Friday, September 2 - **NO MEETING!**

Thursday, September 8 - **Divisional Meeting**

SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16

"TEE IT UP FOR KIWANIS" GOLF EVENT

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS



August 4 - Cheri Johnson

August 5 - Linda Hayes

August 7 - Denny DaPra

August 12 - Andy Johnson

August 15 - Jim Kolb

Jackson Kiwanis Sponsored SLPS



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