

January 2024

Kiwanis®

Louisiana-Mississippi-West Tennessee District News



**Governor and First Lady Spread
Holiday Cheer with Union City Kiwanis**

Improving the world one child and one community at a time

23



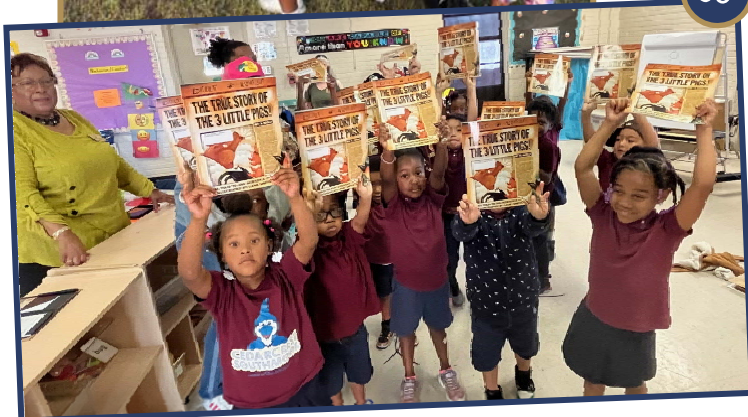
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ON THE COVER: SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER

LaMissTenn Governor John Fry and Cathy Fry Christmas shop with Union City Kiwanis Club members Selena Parnell Dozier and Christie Beeler for their adopted Angel Tree children. *See more on Page 7.*

The Season of Giving

By John Fry, Governor

As I sit down to pen this message the Christmas holiday season is quickly approaching. It has been a busy first few months of the Kiwanis new year and as they say time flies when you are having fun. Yes, there has been work both behind the scenes administratively but also boots on the ground serving the communities that we live in. First Lady Cathy and I have had the privilege to visit several clubs in the first three months of our Kiwanis year to help with fund raisers and service projects. We have met so many new Kiwanians throughout our district and we have enjoyed rekindling friendships with long time connections.

As we approach the Christmas season I often think about when I was a child and the whimsy and the magic of the Christmas season. I get to live that now through the eyes of my grandchildren. It is fun to experience the magic of Christmas through the eyes of a child. All the cheer, all the hope, all the magic of the season of giving. Over the last few weeks as I have scrolled through my social media feed, I have seen Kiwanians giving of themselves to make the communities that they live in better places not only for kids but for everyone. We are helping to create that magic. It warms my heart to see the differ-



ence that we are making in the lives of those around us simply by giving of ourselves. That is who we are, it is what we do, and I am proud to say that the Kiwanians of this great and historic Louisiana Mississippi West Tennessee district of Kiwanis International do it well.

I want each of you to stop and think about your time in Kiwanis and how many lives you have impacted through those years or through those weeks or months. As we are in the season of giving, I am reminded that Kiwanians give year-round. We may see more presence of giving this time of year simply because there is more opportunity and there is more need, but this is what we do 365 days a year. Service to others is one of the things that truly sets us apart from other organizations. I truly hope that at the end of the day each of us can look in the mirror and be proud of what we have done to impact those

around us no matter the size of the project or the scope of the fundraiser, it is all about giving back. It is all about helping someone else in need.

I feel honored to be leading this district in service for the current Kiwanis year and I am truly proud of all the work that every Kiwanis member within our district is doing in their communities and quite honestly, I want to see more of it. I would love for you to share stories and photos with the rest of us so we can be inspired by the work that you are doing in your communities. Kiwanis should not be a secret. We should all be cheerleaders for what we are doing because what we are doing matters. It matters to people we know, and it matters to people that we will never meet. It is these efforts that we put forth every day that make me proud to say that I am a Kiwanian, and I am a Kiwanian in the great and historic district of Louisiana Mississippi West Tennessee.

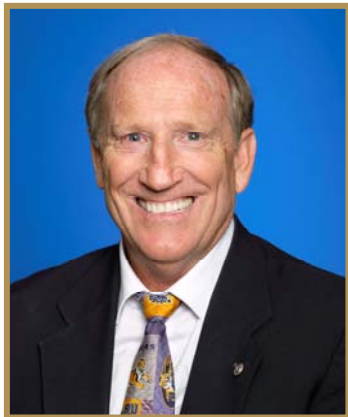
Happy holidays from me and the first lady to each one of you and we wish you a happy, healthy, and productive new year.

Yours in service,

Governor John

Keeping an Open Mind to New Ideas

By Bruce Hammatt, Immediate Past Governor



I am sure most of you have heard of the old proverb “there’s more than one way to skin a cat!” According to Google, this old saying dates back to the 19th century. I have thought about that numerous times in my more than 30 years as a Kiwanian, but a lot more in the last year or so. I am pretty sure most people who know me think I have a type A personality. I would agree that I am highly ambitious, highly competitive, anxious, outgoing, and to a fault I am severely impatient.

However, as I served my second term as Governor, I felt like I was thinking a lot more about the old “cat” proverb. It seemed as though I was surrounded by new ideas. And they were sometimes seeming to come at me faster than I could process them! First, I was working daily with a much younger and brand new Executive Director for LaMissTenn. You may not know this, but as the Board members found out early on, Jen Robertson is extremely proficient on the computer. There were numerous times I

could swear she was reading my mind, more clearly processing my thoughts, and typing them out for all to see on the overhead screen quicker than I could say them. It was quite daunting to me.

I see many of the same attributes in our current Governor John. He is a quick thinker and seems to always have a positive attitude. He also has a knack of presenting different options and then explaining, usually quite convincingly, of what he thinks is the best option. I know I have said he has changed my mind on numerous occasions when I know my idea was best.

I think the old proverb about the “cat” is really playing on my mind. You see, that is the reason I love Kiwanis. There is no doubt in my mind, that Kiwanis has changed me quite a bit in the last few years. Be-

cause Kiwanis is full of members that have their own thoughts and ideas. It is fascinating to me how many Kiwanians have ideas that are different than mine, and better. I am not sure if that is because I am surrounding myself with great human beings or just because I am learning to listen a little more.

Regardless of the reason, I know that Kiwanis, the LaMissTenn District and my club are in good hands. As we start a new year, I hope to listen more while honestly considering other options. I must remember there is always more than one way to skin a cat. We need to embrace different and new ideas. We need to be open to other people’s perspective. And please, always strive to have fun at your club meetings.

Oh, and mark your calendars for this year’s CLE trainings!

Mark Your Calendar!

2024 Club Leadership Education

Interactive Virtual Sessions on Mondays at 6PM

6/24/2024: *President*
 7/8/2024: *Secretary 101*
 7/15/2024: *Secretary 102*
 7/22/2024: *Treasurer 101*
 8/5/2024: *Treasurer 102*
 8/12/2024: *Membership Chair*
 8/19/2024: *Board Member*
 8/26/2024: *Bylaws & Policies*



www.LaMissTenn.org

'Twas a Christmas Night in the District

By Claude Vinson, Governor-Elect



'Twas a Christmas night in the district, and all throughout its land,
Were the faithful members of LaMissTenn readying for the wonderful event which was very much close at hand.

The clocks on their walls showed a quarter to ten, which caused them to dash,
To rush to sleep, without even a peep, proud that their pebble made a little splash.

Club Presidents had put to rest their gavel, for their work this year was done.

The lieutenant governors lay cease to their travels, satisfied they've accomplished a ton.

The District Committee had taken a pause from its guidance in watching every dime,
Worked to stay true to its word and blue to its mission in improving "one child and one community at a time."

Foundation members dreamt visions of dollars signs and ways to give cash out,
For there was enough money, and easy to get, so not one club would have to pout.

With Governor John in his bed as he and his first lady prepared to nest,
Were saying 'good night' and settling down for a long-deserved Kiwanis rest.

Satisfied with the work done so far, and contemplating while in the know,
Fresh ideas were swirling in his head like a bed of new-fallen snow.

When all of a sudden, with eyes wide open, he threw off his warm, comfy sheet.
He sprang to the door, grabbing his robe as he placed slippers on his feet.

As he scurried to the window, he proclaimed to his dear,
"I must build four clubs and I must build them in the next year!"

"It's a promise I made to President Katrina," he stated as he twirled.
Club building is necessary, EVEN essential, to continue to serve the children of the world!"

"I know, I'll make a plan and build a team of the district's brightest and best,
These will be of the finest members who love a great challenge and test!"

"On Laura, on Al, on Chelsey, on Jen, yes, you are needed too, and bring your tigers, lions, and bears, oh my, so we can build strong clubs thru and thru!"

"On Eva, on Marcel, educate, train and recruit other members for some,
So the new clubs will thrive and remain intact for many years to come!"

"On Don, on Judy, on Sidney, you're in charge to lead the SLPs,
For the mission is about the kids of our community and we must fulfill their needs!"

The governor was merely fretting and there was really no need for alarm nor dwell,
For the progress being made with his leadership, thus far, was proceeding quite well.

So, with a nod of his head and a twinkle in his eye,
He turned to the First Lady and exhaled a calming sigh.

"Ok, I guess you are right, for plans are in place and I should not dread,
I'll make a trip to the fridge, and look around a bit, before I come back to bed."

As he grabbed a glass of milk, he crept over to take a look,
And noticed the plate of cookies by the Christmas tree still sitting there waiting to be took.

Then he laid down on his pillow and turned to cut out the light,
And whispered to all the Kiwanians of LaMissTenn, "Merry Christmas and have a great night!"

Meanwhile, t'was a Christmas night in the district, and the Governor-Elect was sleeping like a log,
And no other creature better be a stirrin', well ok, maybe the family dog! ☺

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays, everyone!

Be your invincible you,
Claude Vinson
Governor-Elect

2024 Mid-Year Education Conference



Mark Your Calendar!

March 2nd ★ Natchez, MS

Tentative Agenda

- **9:00 AM:** Registration Opens - Packet Pickup
- **9:30 AM:** Governor's Meeting
- **10:00 AM:** Opening Session
- **10:15 AM:** Membership Program
- **11:15 AM:** Fundraising & Service Projects
- **12:25 PM:** Lunch
- **12:45 PM:** Announcements
- **12:50 PM:** Awards
- **1:00 PM:** Club Networking & Co-Learning
- **2:00 PM:** District Foundation Presentation
- **2:25 PM:** Final Announcements
- **2:30 PM:** House of Delegates
- **3:00 PM:** Election of Region IV & VII Trustees
- **3:30 PM:** End of Day

House of Delegates

A special call House of Delegates will be held at the Mid-Year Education Conference. The only item for consideration at this time is a bylaws amendment to add the position of Vice Governor to LaMissTenn. Please review the amendment and complete the Certificate of Election of Delegates to register your club's delegates at www.LaMissTenn.org.

Hotel Information

Natchez Grand Hotel and Suites
 \$135/night + tax & fees + \$14.95 value package
 1-866-488-0898 or 1-446-9994
 Group Code: MidYear
 Room block held until February 24, 2024



Registration

- www.LaMissTenn.org (*Mid-Year Education Conference page*)
- **Registration:** \$35/person until
Until February 21st
- **Late Registration:** \$45/person
February 22nd-March 2nd
Must call district office for availability (225) 769-9233
- **New Club Attendance Incentive:**
free registration for up to 4 members of each new club chartered since April 2023.
Contact the district office to take advantage:
districtoffice@lamisstenn.org

Region IV & VII Trustee Elections

Region IV and VII delegates will elect Trustees for Region IV and VII for a term ending 9/30/2027. Confirm what Division and Region your club is located in on the District Map. You can learn more about what a Trustee does in Article 3 and 4 of the District Bylaws.

- To vote in a Trustee Election, you must be a Kiwanis member in the candidate's Region. Complete and submit a Delegate Election Certificate by February 14, 2024.
- If you would like to run for Trustee, submit a Trustee Application & Endorsement form by February 1, 2024.

All forms can be found at www.LaMissTenn.org on the

Mid-Year Education Conference 2024 page.



2024 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION • JULY 3-6 • DENVER**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!****Come Support Gary Graham in the Election for International Vice President**

Three years ago in August 2020, I was honored when I was endorsed by the Louisiana-Mississippi-West Tennessee District for my run for Kiwanis International Trustee. On June 26, 2021, I was elected by the Kiwanis International Council in Salt Lake City. I have learned much in the past two years as a Trustee on the workings of Kiwanis International and from members around the world and look forward to my third and final year. As I want to continue my service to our members and to our great organization, I have decided to run for Vice President of Kiwanis International at the convention slated to be held in Denver in 2024 as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the adoption of our Six Objects of Kiwanis. I am again asking for your endorsement. - *Gary Graham*

Save the Date!

**106th Annual
LaMissTenn Kiwanis District Convention
July 26-28, 2024**



TUPELO
★
Mississippi



For more information visit: www.LaMissTenn.org

LaMissTenn Governor Fry Hits the Ground Running!

LaMissTenn Governor John Fry and wife Cathy started off Kiwanis One Day at Pancake Day with the **Kiwanis Club of Union City**. Stop 2 was at the 45th Annual Reelfoot Road Race with the Union City Kiwanis family. And, to finish the day off, they joined the **Kiwanis Club of the Twin Cities** at the Christmas Craft Fair! Then, in November, Governor Fry traveled to Metairie, LA to help the **Dawn Busters Kiwanis** with their Thanksgiving Turkey Fry!



Spreading Holiday Cheer

ANGEL TREE

On November 30th, the **Union City Kiwanis Club** helped make Christmas a little brighter for children this year. LaMissTenn Kiwanis Governor John Fry and wife Cathy, along with members of the Union City Kiwanis Club, shopped for the children they adopted from the Angel Tree Program. Angel Tree helps provide Christmas gifts for hundreds of thousands of children around the country each year. Gifts bought by donors in the community are distributed to families to place under their Christmas trees.

Pictured Christmas shopping with Governor John Fry and Cathy Fry are Union City Kiwanis Club Members Selena Parnell Dozier and Christie Beeler.



RINGING THE BELL

Governor John Fry and wife Cathy Fry, along with Key Clubbers, were out ringing the bells in the early morning of December 9th for Salvation Army. The Governor is off to a good start this Kiwanis year!



2022-2023 Community Award Winners



Firefighter of the Year: Joshua Ashby

Nominated by the Kiwanis Club of Shreveport

Josh has been a firefighter and paramedic with the Bossier City Fire Department for over ten years. Josh has distinguished himself as a loyal and dedicated Firefighter/Paramedic and has on many occasions gone above and beyond the call of duty to the citizens and guests of his home city. Joshua was awarded the Citizen's Life Saving Award for saving the life of three year old Easton Dempsey. While off duty, Josh and two others performed CPR on Dempsey after he was found on the bottom of a pool. Josh is an active member of Cypress Baptist Church and is devoted to his family, fellow Firefighters, and to his city.

Lawperson of the Year: Bry Layrison

Nominated by the Kiwanis Club of Ponchatoula

Bry began his career in law enforcement when he was just 18 years old and was hired as a police officer with the Ponchatoula Police Department after graduation. He has served in many law enforcement capacities such as patrol officer, Drug Prevention Officer, Narcotics Division Instructor, and Special Agent with the Attorney General's Office. He was elected Chief of Police in 2007 and continues thousands of hours of training in advanced law enforcement. He has successfully completed the FBI National Academy in Quantico, VA.



Layperson of the Year: Mary Elizabeth Bell

Nominated by the Kiwanis Club of Martin

Mary is 89 years young and is an active member of the Martin Kiwanis Club. She is a retired teacher who taught at Martin Primary and Martin Elementary School for 20 years. She co-authored a science textbook that was utilized by the University of Tennessee at Martin where she received her MS degree in education. After retirement, she taught kids how to sew at UT-Martin for 7 summers in the 4-H Round-up. She has taught Sunday school for 48 years and is very involved in her church. She organized the Girls Auxiliary Club and is very active in the American Cancer Society.

Teacher of the Year: David Bellard

Nominated by the Kiwanis Club of St. Bernard-Arabi

David teaches at Chalmette High School where he was awarded Teacher of the Year for 2022-2023. Over the last 9 years he has guided and assisted 24 students in earning full scholarships valued on average at \$250,000 each to some of the most prestigious schools in the country. He is a source of counseling and guidance, and is the recipient of numerous testimonials from former students and teachers. Each testimonial not only mentions his skill as a teacher but also speaks to his kindness, sincerity and love for his students.



New Annual Club Giving Levels



Donation based on KI's official Oct 1st club membership #

of free gift basket raffle tickets for club members attending Mid-Year Education Conference & DCON

ACG Club	\$5/member	
Governor's Club	\$6/member	1 ticket/member
Elite Club	\$8/member	5 tickets/member
Founder's Club	\$10/member	10 tickets/member

Banner patches will be awarded to "clubs in good standing" who make their ACG donation prior to **April 1st** at the 2024 DCON.



GRANTS

Level I "Gold" Grants (up to \$5,000)

- Awarded twice during administrative year
- 75% reimbursement of verified receipts up to the amount of the award
- 1st round due February 1st
- 2nd round due July 1st



Level II "Silver" Grants (up to \$2,000)

- Awarded monthly until funding is depleted
- 75% reimbursement of verified receipts up to the amount of the award



www.LaMissTenn.org



Key Club & Circle K Scholarship Programs

About Scholarship

The LaMissTenn District Foundation offers scholarships to:

- ✓ Senior Key Club members &
- ✓ Circle K members.

How to Apply

Applications open Nov 1, 2023 on the website, www.lamisstenn.org.

Applications must be submitted online.

Applications due **by 11:59pm on Jan 31, 2024.**

More Information

☎ 225-769-9233



www.lamisstenn.org



Become a Friend of the Foundation & Support Foundation Grants for Your Club

Visit www.LaMissTenn.org to make an annual tax-deductible donation of \$120 or monthly donations of only \$10, \$20 or \$50. *Anyone, not just Kiwanians, may become a Friend of the Foundation!*



SLP Grant Program: Growing the K Family



Kiwanis®

Service Leadership Programs



The LaMissTenn District Foundation is establishing a new grant program to assist LaMissTenn Kiwanis Clubs to charter a **NEW** Service Leadership Program (SLP) by reimbursing the club **up to 75% of the charter fee** paid to Kiwanis International. **SLPs include:** K-Kid Clubs, Builders Club, Key Club, Circle K Club, and Aktion Club

www.LaMissTenn.org

LAMISSTENN SUPER GRANT

Visit www.lamisstenn.org



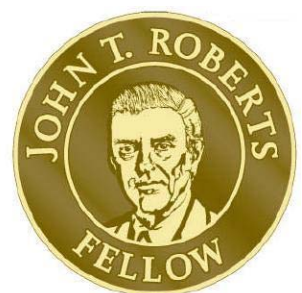
Super Grants are reimbursable grants in an amount of 85% of the total cost of projects, up to a maximum award of \$10,000 (reimbursed after verification of receipts and completion of the project).

To be eligible for a LaMissTenn Foundation Super Grant, your club must meet the following criteria:

1. Club is at least 3 years old
2. Club has good standing with 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024 ACG
3. Club is current on Kiwanis International and District dues.
4. Club must not have an open Foundation grant.

Consider Purchasing a \$1,000 Endowment Award to Help the Foundation Provide Grants and Scholarships

www.LaMissTenn.org



Your LaMissTenn Kiwanis Foundation Update

By Andrew Dozier, District Foundation President



Your District Foundation is fully engaged and committees are busy working to improve all aspects of the Foundation's mission and goals. We are committed along with all dedicated Kiwanians.

Our Scholarship Committee and Executive Director are working with Key Club Administrator Judi Zimmermann and Circle-K Administrator Sid Guedry. Our goal is to promote scholarship information and to streamline the application process for outstanding Key Club and Circle K members.

The District Foundation Key Club Scholarship is open to high school seniors who are active Key Club members in the LaMissTenn District. The District Foundation Circle K Scholarship is open to all college students who are active Circle K members in the district. All applications shall be submitted to the District Office through the LaMissTenn website by January 31, 2024. Visit www.LaMissTenn.org to

find the District Foundation page.

Service is a must, to accomplish our goals for our KIDS and COMMUNITIES! By contributing to the Foundation, you help our district provide service to our KIDS and COMMUNITIES!

First Quarter focus:

- Friends of Foundation
- Annual Club Giving (ACG)
- Community & Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

The LaMissTenn Kiwanis Foundation's mission is to provide financial assistance for Kiwanis projects and programs within our District.

Help us accomplish our mission by becoming a Friend of the Foundation. Encourage your club to contribute to the Annual Club Giving campaign (ASAP). All proceeds are dedicated to grants, scholarships, leadership training, and community projects.

Continue to support the District Foundation Endowment Programs:

- River of Life Fellowship
- Henry Nash Tablet of Honor
- John T. Roberts Fellowship
- Charles H. Ford Legacy

All endowments provide income sources and allow the district to assist more Kiwanis Clubs with extra funds to complete worthy projects throughout LaMissTenn every year.

Another way of helping the Foundation is by becoming a member of the board. Board positions are open in Regions I, II, IV, V, and VII for the 2024-2025 Kiwanis year. Contact the Foundation Nominations Chair Cathy Fry or any board member if you have any questions or would like further information.

If you are interested in serving on the Foundation Board for your region, please visit the Foundation at www.LaMissTenn.org to view qualifications and board duties and to complete an application.

Please contact any Foundation board member or the district office for any questions or assistance regarding support of the LaMissTenn Kiwanis Foundation.

I wish every Kiwanian happy holidays and a prosperous New Year! Thank you for your continued service throughout our great and historic LaMissTenn Kiwanis District!





Granting Club Wishes . . .

By Cathy Simmons, Foundation Grants Chair

YOUR District Foundation has been quite busy this 1st Quarter of 2023-2024! Since awarding grants during the 2023 District Convention (DCON), Clubs around the District have been able to send school supplies, uniforms and hygiene kits, coats to kids and install 1 AED in a school and 1 AED in a senior center! Over \$16,500 has been reimbursed to clubs since October 1st... and we're just getting started!

What wish do you have for your club? Check out the **Grant applications on our District Website** and keep dreaming! Community Service Grants: **"GOLD"** level grants (up to \$5,000) has 2 funding cycles: **February 1st** and **July 1st**. **"SILVER"** level grants (up to \$2,000) are awarded monthly until funding is depleted. **NEW** Clubs during their first 2 years of charter, have a \$1,000 grant available to them for a community service project. The **"SUPER GRANT"** (\$10,000) deadline to apply is **June 1st**, awarded during DCON 2024.

NEW CLUB grants: Here's the time line for the following new clubs to apply for their grants (then they have 1 full year to complete the project!): Tri-Parishes (2/8/24), Rayne (3/10/2024), Leesville (9/30/24), Red River Parish (10/13/24), NW St. Tammany Parish (5/25/25), Central (8/17/25), Tipton County (9/13/25)

Something new . . . **SLP GRANT PROGRAM: Growing the K Family.** Gov. John is encouraging Kiwanis Clubs to sponsor Service Leadership Programs (SLP). YOUR Foundation has established a grant to reimburse Kiwanis Clubs that sponsor **NEW** SLPs up to 75% of the cost to charter these clubs in the elementary, middle, high school and college/university.

How does the Foundation get the funds for these grants? Annual Club Gifts are a HUGE part of those funds, together with baskets the clubs donate for Gift Basket Raffles at Mid-Year Education Conferences and District Conventions. Yes, all those funds and items donated stay RIGHT HERE in the LaMissTenn District to support our clubs. Thank you for your support!



Kudos to the following Kiwanis Clubs for receiving grants: 1. East St. Mary provided uniforms and hygiene kits to all elementary schools in East St. Mary Parish, 2. Alexandria provided funds for school supplies at Rugg Elementary, and 3. Ponchatoula provided a free jacket to every fifth grader at Martha Vinyard Elementary.



Kiwanis®

CHILDREN'S FUND



Your Club's New Year's Resolution

By Lenny Simmons, Kiwanis Children's Fund District Chair

It is hard to believe that the first quarter of the Kiwanis year is already over. As we begin 2024, I am asking that your Club make its **Annual Club Gift** to the Kiwanis Children's Fund if you have not done so already. So far only **17** Clubs have made their donations. That is only **14%** of the Clubs in our District.

The Kiwanis Children Fund President's Challenge for 2023-24 is as follows:

1. **10% increase in the number of clubs in the district donating.** Increasing the number of clubs participating in charitable activities is a testament to the growth of Kiwanis in your district. It's a win-win situation where more clubs mean more

positive changes in your community.

2. **10% overall increase in the total amount of club giving:** By striving for a 10% increase in total club giving, you're making a tangible impact on the lives of those who need our help. This increase can fund essential projects, drive more significant support for local initiatives, and strengthen the Children's Fund's ability to make a difference.

So, get with you Club's Board to see how we can achieve the KCF President's Challenge from our District.

I want to remind you that one of the criteria for being a Distin-

guished Club for 2032-24 is to contribute to the Children's Fund. Make your club's check payable to the Kiwanis Children's Fund and mail to:

Kiwanis Children's Fund
P.O Box 6457 – Dept. # 286
Indianapolis, IN 46206

You can also pay online by credit card by going to Kiwanis.org and go to the Kiwanis Children's Fund tab. So, remind your club treasurer to send in your Annual Club Gift to the Kiwanis Children's Fund as soon as possible.

Happy New Year! And thank you for continuing **Serving the Children of the World!**

KIDS NEED KIWANIS. MORE THAN EVER.



 **Kiwanis**
CHILDREN'S FUND

Preparations for Key Leader North

By Linda Ramsey, Key Leader North Coordinator

In January, we will begin to prepare for Kiwanis Key Leader North which happens at Lakeshore Camp and Retreat on April 26-28, 2025. The registration will be open at, www.wtnkeyleader.org in January, 2024, so that both students and chaperones can begin to register for this year's event. Three new chaperones have already been recruited. If you would like to serve as a chaperone, there is no cost involved, except for getting a Kiwanis background check which is \$25, and it is good for two years.

We have already received funding for 12 scholarships for our event in the spring. The LaMissTenn District Foundation has provided 8 scholarships of \$250 each, and an individual who wishes to remain anonymous has provided 4 additional scholarships of \$250, for a grand total of \$3,000 to start the year off. We are extremely grateful for these donations. If you know of any students who would like to re-



ceive a scholarship or a sponsorship, please encourage them to contact me.

There are ten positions for Student Facilitators which will also open in January. Any student who has attended Key Leader before is eligible for one of these positions. If a student hasn't attended, but has acquired some leadership skills doing something else like Student Council or serving as an officer in a

club, etc., he/she is also eligible for this position. Student Facilitators will need to come to Lakeshore Camp and Retreat early on Friday to be trained by the Lead Facilitator so they will be prepared to assist with the curriculum through the weekend. The cost to attend for a Student Facilitator is \$150, but these students are also eligible for scholarships or sponsorships.

Regular student participants can be any student, whether they are in Key Club or not, who is 14-18 years of age or is in the 8th grade going into the 9th grade, or currently in the 9th through 12th grade in high school. The cost to attend for a regular participant is \$250; however, most, if not all, will receive a scholarship or sponsorship to attend.



Continued on page 16 . . .



Aspire to Inspire: Rejoice in the Afterglow

By James A. "Jeems" White, III, Past Governor

After holiday celebrations we return to routine life if there is such. The new year brings those traditional resolutions to improve . . . to eliminate some things, to begin others. But let us also bask in the memories of sharing with family and friends, of the excitement and delight in the eyes of children, of the feelings of peace and love the holiday season inspired.

Christmas is a special time for children. In his Nutcracker Suite Ballet of 1892 Tchaikovsky understood and expressed quite well the magical aspects of the Christmas season for children. He appointed the Sugar Plum Fairy as the physical embodiment of joy and compassion and put it to music for dance. That ballet has been a favorite for children ever since because of the fantasies surrounding the season. It is also a favorite for many adults because it rekindles exactly those same feelings.

Why are music, dance and visual fantasy so important? Perhaps because they are part of the essence of humanity. Perhaps because they provide symbolic release from various stresses.

Here is a wonderful quote from Phylicia Rashad: "Before a child speaks, it sings. Before they write, they paint. As soon as they stand,

they dance. Art is the basis of human expression."

We adults often go to some lengths to create fantasies, joy and excitement for children . . . our own children and as Kiwanians for many others. That is as it should be. It rekindles our own memories of childhood. Through the decorations, the gift-giving, special foods, music and so much more the goal is to create joy for all. For Christians it is the time to celebrate the birth of a special "bundle of joy."

This year we should also rejoice teenagers . . . a very special group of teenagers. It has been thirteen years since Kiwanis launched **The Eliminate Project** to prevent neonatal death from tetanus. Those babies whose mothers we immunized with the "three sixty-cent shots" and who did not die of neonatal tetanus are now becoming teenagers. Shall we all rejoice in the existence of those thousands of teenagers? Who knows? In a few years some of them may become Key Clubbers and Kiwanians and help spread joy and excitement for the next generation of children . . . and themselves improve the world.

So, there are a great many reasons that we should REJOICE IN THE AFTERGLOW and at the same time RESOLVE to redouble our efforts to help children grow into successful and productive adults. Remember what Charles Dickens wrote in his

Christmas Carol in 1843, "I will honor Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year."

Preparations for Key Leader North Continued . . .

Students just need to indicate that they are interested in having a scholarship or sponsor.

If any club, organization, church, business or individual is interested in becoming a sponsor or providing scholarships for students to attend Key Leader, please also let me know. We have different levels of sponsorships available. Any amount is welcomed, and you will receive recognition for your generosity. Investing in our future leaders is money well spent. You may never know the impact you can have on a young person, but anyone who attends Kiwanis Key Leader will be positively changed for the better.

Email me, Linda Ramsey, at mr Ramsey2@utm.edu for more information about any of these positions, sponsorships or Key Leader in general. Thanks!

KEY LEADER®

K-Kids Numbers are Increasing

By Don Eye, K-Kids District Chair

Our K-Kids have been busy and their numbers are increasing. Collections from Farmington K-Kids are supporting the "Angel Tree" program for children needing a happy Christmas. Germantown Elementary treats a school in North Memphis every year by collecting socks, scarves, hats, and mittens. The 5 Below store has fuzzy socks and they are a huge hit for kids needing to stay warm this winter. Germantown Elementary has Mitten Trees erected around the school hallways to be decorated with the above clothing items. Kiwanis delivers the items before the holiday break.

The Dogwood K-Kid club was down to 15 members. The advisor directed them to bring a friend to the next meeting. They now have 24 members. We should all do that!



The Madonna Learning Center has their annual Christmas Play in December and the seats were sold out immediately! Our community is high on kids and it sure makes Germantown a great town.

Our annual Holiday Parade is coming up and all the K-Kids will be singing along with the Kiwanis "Home Grown Tomatoes" riding our Kiwanis float. Those walking will be handing

out candy.

In January, we will have a fifth K-Kid Club and a new Builders Club. It took a few years to win them over, but they are all in. We can increase our adult club numbers by assuring we have viable Service Leadership Programs. When I sit down to speak with the school staff about youth programs, I always ask, "Does your school have a service club?" Easy question-easy answer. If they say no, I don't leave until they do.

I love working the young Service Leadership Programs. Make it simple for them and keep your school advisors happy. Invite them to your meetings and socials. Send a card of appreciation or give them a cookie!

AKTION CLUB NEWS

Making a Difference!

By Linda Fisher, Germantown Kiwanis Club

After a bell ringing opening to their meeting by Vice President Ben Galveston, the **Madonna Learning Center Aktion Club in Germantown, TN** began their monthly service project. This month, Birthday Bags were assembled for the Binghampton Christian Academy (BCA). BCA provides



residential housing for their students.

Aktion Club members assembled everything needed to celebrate a birthday in bags to provide those residential students a way of celebrating. Cake mix, frosting, candles, streamers, baking cups and balloons were part of the Birthday Bags. The Honors Academy of the local high school, Houston High, donated the 40 boxes of cake mixes and frosting and the **Kiwanis Club of Germantown** provided the rest of the items needed to celebrate a birthday.

Also, last month, the Aktion club made 300 bologna and cheese sandwiches for St. Mary's Mission.



And in October, the Aktion Club sold "Boo Grams" to raise money for the local Memphis Epilepsy Foundation. The club earned over \$400 selling Boo Grams at \$2 each. Great job and leadership Aktion Club! You are making a difference!

The Madonna Learning Center Adult Aktion Club has 24 members and meets monthly.

Hammond Kiwanis Appreciates Aktion Club

*By Vic Couvillion,
Hammond Kiwanis Club*

CHRISTMAS PARTY: For the past decade the **Hammond Kiwanis Club** has hosted a Christmas party for members of the **Hammond Kiwanis Aktion Club**. This tradition has become an important spot on the club's annual calendar because the event has come to mean so much to Aktion Club members. The latest Christmas party was held on December 5th at Options, the Hammond agency that serves persons with disabilities in the community.

Aktion Club members were given holiday snacks, specially prepared gifts that included some money for the Aktion clubbers to purchase a gift for themselves, participated in a fun game, and sang Christmas carols accompanied by Hammond Kiwanis member Terry King on his guitar.

The highlight of the party was playing the "Wright Family Game." King read the script that frequently



includes the words, "right," and "left." When those words are spoken, participants, standing in a circle, must pass gift bags in the direction called for in the script. Aktion Club members turn the game into a festival of laughter as they try to keep up with the rapid exchange of the gift bags. At the game's conclusion each participant is left with a gift bag that will brighten their holidays at least a little bit.



the gathering featured much fellowship, laughter, conversation and in general just a very good time.

Hammond Kiwanis Club member Terry King said of the Aktion Club, "meeting with these incredible Aktion Club members is always a pleasure. The joy that the members derive from being part of an organization designed to put them in a spotlight is spontaneous. Our Kiwanis members always come away from Aktion Club gatherings the richer for the experience. When we started the Aktion Club over eleven years ago no one could have anticipated that the club would mean so much to the adults with disabilities. Involvement with the Aktion Club is one of the highlights of my many years in the Hammond Kiwanis Club."



AKTION BAR-B-Q: The most recent activity for the Hammond Aktion Club was participation in a barbeque hosted by the Hammond Kiwanis Club. Kiwanians cooked hamburgers and hot dogs and provided all the other trimmings for a complete meal for the Aktion Club members. In addition to the food,



Twin Cities Supports Key Clubbers & Sponsors New SLPs

By Kimberly Jackson,

The Twin Cities Kiwanis Club

The Kiwanis Club of the Twin Cities received their charter five years ago. We have worked hard to do the mission of Kiwanis by improving the world, one child and one community at a time. For four years, we have sponsored the South



Fulton Middle High School Key Club. In that club, we encouraged the students to work on their Global Leadership Certificates, to partner with our club in service opportunities and to look for opportunities to lead. We now have a Key Club Lieutenant Governor, Ryleigh Johnson, serving Division 1B in the LaMissTenn District of Kiwanis International. Governor Fry, member of the Twin Cities Kiwanis Club, attended the Key Club Fall Rally in Union City, TN to support Ryleigh and the participating Key Clubbers.

We decided in October to put forth efforts in our local schools to support additional Student Leadership Programs (SLPs) and to teach more students about the work of



Kiwanis. Our club has now sponsored three new SLPs – a Builder's Club at Carr Elementary, a Builder's Club at South Fulton Middle School, and a Key Club at Fulton Independent High School. We are committed to helping these organizations to grow and because of these efforts, we know that Kiwanis will have a bigger impact in our community.

St. Aloysius Key Club Enjoys Christmas Giving

By Allison McSherry, Vicksburg Kiwanis Club

The Key Club of St. Aloysius High School of Vicksburg, MS celebrated the Christmas season with a pizza party on Friday, December 15, 2023. Members were asked to bring in a canned good for the local food pantry. A fun time was had by all!



Algiers: Children Helping Children

*By Judi Zimmermann,
Algiers Kiwanis Club*

Selflessness becomes a habit; when we are kind and caring the world becomes a better place. Every community has a Toy Drive of sorts. Helping to ease the stay of a

child in the hospital at Christmas is a gift that will always be remembered. This year the **Kiwanis Club of Algiers** along with their Key Clubs participated in the 32nd Annual Children's Hospital Toy Drive in Gretna on Thursday, December 14th. Collections were dropped off all day long and the members and

students spent the day sorting toys to have them ready for delivery to the hospital on Saturday, December 16th. It is encouraging to know that through the kindness of children helping children, the amount of toys collected will allow the hospital to be able to have toys for the children all year long.



Germantown Celebrates 60 Years

*By Susan Olsson,
Germantown Kiwanis Club*

The **Germantown Kiwanis Club** held its 60th anniversary at the Great Hall on November 16th. Mayor Sharon Goldsworthy regaled us with stories of the history of Kiwanis. Over 150 people attended the celebration. It was a time to connect with people we know and love and to honor contributions of some extraordinary individuals.

The Club is pleased to announce that Steve Veesart is the Kiwanian of the Year. Steve has been a Kiwanian for nearly 30 years. In that time he has served as board mem-

ber, president, and chairman of various fundraisers. Steve has been a distinguished member and he was also awarded the Kiwanis Hixson Fellowship. In 2016 he created the Jim Mitchell fund in honor of his father-in-law which donates to the annual Kiwanis college scholarship for High School Key Club mem-



Baton Rouge Early Risers Provide Community Outreach

By Arthur Dubriel,

Baton Rouge Early Risers Kiwanis

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The Kiwanis Club of Baton Rouge Early Risers has been engaged in several community projects this year. Our most recent project was held on December 16 in honor of one of our longtime members, William M. Lockhart who was a prominent member of the Chaneyville community. We hosted a Christmas program of fellowship and caroling followed by the serving of dinners for over a hundred senior citizens of the community. Several members were present to provide holiday cheer.

SCHOOL GARDEN

The Club partnered with Cooper Farms and My Kid Plate Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, to bring healthy foods to communities with limited resources and access. The



mission is to increase access to nutritious foods by creating nutrition educational programs for low socioeconomic communities.

The school garden was originally established with elementary school students participating in the Science, Writing and Agriculture (SWAG) summer program at Southern University Laboratory School. The students, with assistance from the Early Risers, maintain and harvest the garden during the summer. Through this activity, the students learn the importance of eating healthy foods, participate in the Science, Writing and Agriculture summer program and develop lead-

ership skills. This is the first time many of the students have seen vegetables growing. The Club has received a grant from the Kiwanis Children Fund for the "Southern University Laboratory Garden Expansion."

KIWANIS ONE DAY

For our Kiwanis Day of Service, Early Risers partnered with LSU Kiwanis and the Baton Rouge Council on Human Relations to provide much needed supplies to the Capitol Area Alliance for Homeless. The day shelter serves hundreds of clients each week providing showers, laundry, shelter, and many other services. Michelle White, the executive director, and Pam Wall, board chair, were very helpful and able to give us a generous list of needed supplies. We provided over \$700 in hygiene bags, laundry products, underwear, and body lotion. We also collected dozens of t-shirts and socks. With such abundance we were also able to help the men's shelter for St. Vincent de Paul.



Dyersburg Helps Goodfellows Program

*By William Northcutt,
Dyersburg Kiwanis Club*

The **Dyersburg Kiwanis Club** collected donations from residents, businesses, schools, churches, and the Club's own members for their 78th annual Goodfellows program. This year, our Kiwanis provided

350 boxes of food so that food-insecure families could have a warm, nutritious meal during the holiday season.

On December 18th, the Club and community volunteers met at the Dyer County Fairgrounds to construct and pack the boxes. Banding together to help, about 140 volunteers included Kiwanis members, their families, friends, and students

from area schools. The next morning, beginning at 5 a.m., the Dyersburg's Street Department, Newbern's Public Works Department, and the Dyer County Highway Department delivered the boxes

Coordinator John Lowrance said, "The boxes contained chicken, canned goods, flour, sugar, oranges, potatoes, and packaged beans." He noted contributions from area businesses: Lowe's discounted boxes, Save-a-Lot ordered food, Develey Mustard donated sauces, Burks Beverage provided cartage, Love's Truck Stop made breakfast available, and the schools provided a trailer and carted away the packaging.

This year's Goodfellows was a true community operation. The Kiwanis Club of Dyersburg worked with the whole county to improve our area, 350 households at a time.



New Orleans Kiwanis Kares

*By Cathy Simmons,
New Orleans Kiwanis Club*

The **Kiwanis Club of New Orleans** (KCNO) kicked off the Christmas Season with their annual "Kiwanis Kares Christmas" Project wherein club members purchased gifts for 31 children from Angels' Place (respite care for young patients and families) and 7 Gents from Magnolia Services received their wishlist from the KCNO Elves! We also collected over 100

pairs of socks and 125 pairs of gloves to donate to our Key Club at Ben Franklin for their socks/glove drive benefitting the homeless that are served by the New Orleans Mission. Seventeen of 23 club members participated in this project.

Meanwhile over at the Ronald McDonald House, next to Children's Hospital, the KCNO Elves were busy "Decking the Halls," as they strung lights, garland and wreaths for the front porch and balcony. Division 4A Lt. Gov. Kristine Koepp joined us in getting the



house ready for the 22 families who were staying there, while their children received medical treatment, nearby. It's quite a busy and fun season, for sure!

East St. Mary: Giving Back to the Community

*By Tracey Scarbrough,
East St. Mary Kiwanis Club*

UNIFORM & HYGIENE CLOSET

East St. Mary Kiwanis launched a Uniform and Hygiene Closet this year! Uniforms and hygiene products were purchased and distributed to all 7 elementary schools in East St. Mary Parish. Donated items included uniforms, undergarments, socks, shoes, belts and hygiene kits. To launch our closet, we received a Community Service Grant from the LaMissTenn District Foundation and used additional funds from fundraisers. Kiwanians delivered a total of 28 containers.

Our mission is to provide a consistent and sustainable resource to school faculty who are aware of a child's challenges with childhood poverty. Plans are to establish uniform and hygiene closets in all East



St. Mary Parish public schools.

A GREAT DAY FOR KIWANIS ONE DAY

Kiwanis of East St Mary spent the day at Morgan City Junior High School for our Kiwanis One Day Project. Landscaping "Artisians" spent the day sprucing up the grounds at the school. The project included weeding and cleaning up the flower beds, landscaping and pressure washing the grounds.

TRUNK OR TREAT & TRUCK OR TREAT

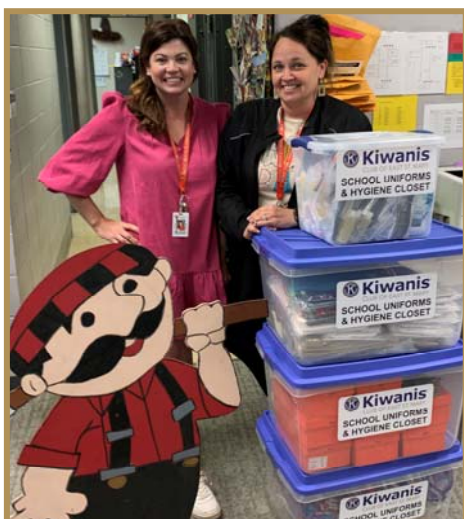
Our Kiwanians participated in two events for Halloween! Morgan City's annual Trunk or Treat had

over 1500 trunk or treaters for this event held in downtown Morgan City. Our local Key Clubs also participated in this event.

And since one wasn't enough, we also participated in Berwick's Truck or Treat located at the Lighthouse Food Truck Court.

BINGO!!

Kiwanis of East St Mary host BINGO every month for our two local nursing homes, Morgan City Healthcare and Patterson Healthcare. The residents enjoy the companionship and goodwill and we love seeing the smiles on their faces.



Gulfport Kiwanis Glow Ride is a Success

By Jennifer Gates, Gulfport Kiwanis Club

The **Kiwanis Club of Gulfport** celebrated Kiwanis One Day with a Kiwanis Glow Ride to benefit the Women's Resource Center. The event raised over \$500 and months' worth of diapers and wipes. Elementary students in Gulfport had so much fun as they rode their bikes behind the Gulfport Police Department and in front of a Gulfport Fire Truck. Key Club students were instrumental in set up, tear down, and traffic control. Many people came out of their houses to take pictures of the colorful parade riding through.



We took advantage of the event by hanging 6 banners throughout the community and purchasing 4 rotating billboards advertising not only this ride, but Kiwanis itself. WLOX joined us during the route. We all had a blast serving the community.



Long Beach Spends a Night Out Against Crime

By Howard Lock, Long Beach Kiwanis Club

Members of the **Long Beach Kiwanis Club** participated in the Long Beach Police Department's 2023 *Night Our Against Crime*. National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie throughout the nation. The aim is to make communities safer and more caring places to live and to build trust between residents and those who protect and serve.

Pictured from left to right are Long Beach Kiwanis Club members Charlie Fulmer, Howard Lock and Ingrid Miscavage.

Lucedale Spreads Christmas Cheer

*By Stephanie Chisholm,
Lucedale Kiwanis Club*

THANKSGIVING CARE PACKAGES - Lucedale Kiwanis

Club members made Thanksgiving bags for middle and high school students who will need a little extra food over the holiday break. The care packages were delivered to George County High School and

George County Middle School.

RINGING THE BELL - Every year, the Lucedale Kiwanis Club partners with the Salvation Army of Jackson and George counties to ring the bell.



Hammond Stays Busy During the Holidays

*By Judy & Vic Couvillion,
Hammond Kiwanis Club*

HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

Once again, the **Hammond Kiwanis Club's** annual Christmas Food Drive was an overwhelming success. The club utilized its proven formula for gathering huge amounts of food that filled 105 large boxes of food to overflowing at the event's conclusion.

During the week or so before the food drive was held, this year on Saturday, December 16th, notices were placed in the mailboxes of residents in selected subdivisions. The notes informed residents that if they wished, they could leave a bag or box of non-perishable food items on their doorsteps for pick up on the morning of the drive. The notes state that doorbells would not be rung and door would not be knocked upon. At 9 a.m. Kiwanians and volunteers fanned out across the city and soon large mounds of food items began to arrive at the



home of Kiwanis members Vic and Judy Couvillion.

Approximately 50-60 Kiwanis members and volunteers gathered to help collect, sort and box the food. The age range of those participating spanned 8 to 82. Besides providing a very needy service, gathering food for needy families, the day also provided fun for the participants.

The club was also the recipient of some very generous monetary donations that were used to purchase a chicken and a loaf of bread for

each box. A local meat processor also donated frozen servings of pork. The local Walmart Distribution Center donated dozens of boxes of non-perishables for the drive. Community support was very much a part of the project.

Judy Couvillion, the club's Community Service Chairman, said of the drive, "what an incredible project...our Annual Hammond Kiwanis Holiday food drive! I am so proud to be a part of our very giving community and am most thank-



Continued on page 26...

Hammond Stays Busy During the Holidays Continued . . .

ful for the great participation from club members and friends! So many needy families will have a better Christmas because of our effort. This is what a Kiwanis Club is all about...serving those in need while enjoying fellowship and the knowledge that we together are making the world a little bit better. It's a great day to be a Kiwanian."

CHRISTMAS DINNER

The Hammond Kiwanis surprised the clients at the Tangipahoa Volunteer Council on Aging's Hammond Senior Citizen Center with a Christmas dinner on Friday, December 15th. The seniors were treated to turkey, gravy, dressing, a sweet potato casserole, corn, cranberry sauce and banana pudding.

Judy Couvillion, the club's Community services Chairman, said of the meal, "it was such a fun event ...great food...singing of Christmas carols, and small gifts for everyone! The clients were most appreciative! To me, this is what Christmas is all about!"

Club members served about 70 senior citizens and members of the



center's staff. When the meal was completed, Kiwanians led the group in a session of singing Christmas carols. Individual gifts for each client had been prepared earlier and the gifts, in special holiday bags, were distributed by Kiwanians.



The Hammond Kiwanis Club has a long history of assistance to the local Senior Citizens Center. Several years ago the club spearheaded a project that included general renovations to the center. The club also installed needed awnings on the building and in the wake of Hurricane Ida, club members assisted in

clearing the center of damaged furnishings and materials in preparation for extensive renovations to the center. Couvillion said of the club's involvement with senior citizens, "when there is a need, the director and staff know who to call upon. They know that if our Kiwanis members can be of assistance, that assistance will be rendered. This is one more way in which we serve our community."

SAMARITAN PURSE

OPERATION CHRISTMAS

After a year of collecting and buying items for the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child Shoebox project, members of the club gathered to fill the boxes. The 150 boxes were overflowing with many "goodies" for children in three age groups that will eventually be delivered to children in nation's around the world. Without the shoe boxes, many of those children would have nothing for Christmas.



Houma Gifts the Magic of Christmas

*By George Robichaux,
Houma Kiwanis Club*

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

The Kiwanis Club of Houma held its 34th Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 2nd. Over 300 hungry children and their families were treated to all you can eat pancakes and sausage. The **Vandebilt Catholic High School Key Club** pitched in to provide crafts and face painting for the children. Santa was on hand to visit with the wide eyed believers and take orders for Christmas gifts. Over \$5,000 was raised for various club projects.

COATS FOR KIDS

The Kiwanis Club of Houma held its 23rd Coats for Kids project



this December. With the help of the community, the Club collects 600-800 gently used and new coats, plus blankets each year. The club then sorts and hangs the coats for distribution. Terrebonne Parish school counselors come each year to pe-

ruse the coat inventory and take whatever coats they need back to their students. Remaining coats and blankets are distributed through the local St. Vincent de Paul Society. Many are kept warm thanks to the club's efforts.



Hammond Hosts Hot Dog Social

By Judy & Vic Couvillion, Hammond Kiwanis Club

Hammond Kiwanis recently hosted a hot dog social for residents of The Phoenix, an assisted living facility in Hammond. Family members and friends of the residents also joined in the Halloween festival held in the facility's courtyard. Kiwanis members cooked and served 150 hot dogs for the residents and their guests. Club members also delivered "trick or treat" gift bags, prepared by our Aktion clubbers. Residents and guests greatly appreciated Kiwanians for their role in a fun evening.



North Lake Charles Volunteers at Christmas Carnival

*By Jasmine Abel,
North Lake Charles Kiwanis Club*

The Kiwanis Club of North Lake Charles volunteered at the “C” Christmas Carnival at Combrel-Fondel Elementary!

Our **K-Kids at Combrel-Fondel** and the entire school reached their goal set last school year, which was to become a “C” school. Through hard-work, determination and motivation, Combrel-Fondel received a C rating by the State of Louisiana.

We are so proud to be able to contribute to their success through our **Student of the Month** program, which highlights students each month in grades kindergarten through 5th for their hard-work and focus in school.

Congratulations to our K-Kids School, Combrel-Fondel and their achievements. An achievement for our children is an achievement for Kiwanis!



Combrel-Fondel Elementary School Students of the Month



Children Send Letters to Santa at Waynesboro Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast

By Pamela Lang, Waynesboro Kiwanis Club

The room was filled with aroma of fresh pancakes and syrup and so much laughter and joy. **Kiwanis Club of Waynesboro** held our 3rd Annual Pancake Breakfast with Santa at the Wayne County Waynesboro Public Library on Saturday, December 9, 2023, in Waynesboro, MS. The members welcomed over 150 children and their families and served nearly 500 pancakes. The breakfast guests enjoyed Christmas music, took pictures with Santa and dropped their Christmas Letters in the big red “Letters to Santa” Mailbox. The annual event is the club’s biggest fundraiser to support service projects throughout the year.





Kiwanis Club of NW St. Tammany Happenings

*By Paige Mizell,
NW St. Tammany Kiwanis Club*

Our little club may be new and small, but we are ACTIVE! The NW St. Tammany Kiwanis Club has started the Terrific Kids program at Folsom Elementary School

and is in the process of chartering a Builders Club at Folsom Junior High School. Our members also volunteer at both schools regularly. The schools are not the only places you can find our members making a difference. We can be found all over the community! We celebrated our first Kiwanis One Day by participating in our community's Trunk-or-Treat. This event was also used as a membership drive since it was a great way to introduce ourselves and what we do to everyone!

We held our first big fundraiser recently, the Run Run Rudolph 5K and Fun Run. It was a HUGE success, and we cannot wait until next year. In the meantime, we are busy planning our next two big events;



the Folsom Spring Garden Festival, Saturday March 16th at Midway Church Park; and The Giddy Up and Go Kiwanis Car Show, Saturday April 13th at Giddy Up Café. For more information about either event check out our Facebook page! Until then you can find our fabulous little club volunteering throughout the community!



Trunk or Treat

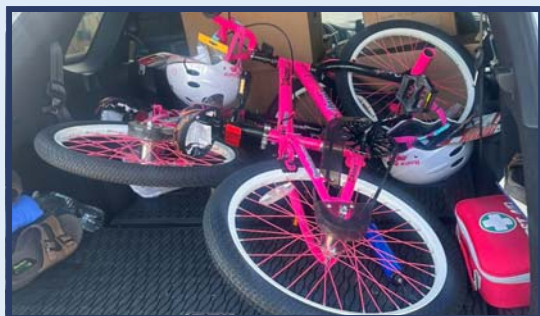


NW St. Tammany Club volunteering at Toys for Tots on December 18th.

Ascension Kiwanis Delivers Christmas Cheer

By Tiffany LaPorte, Ascension Kiwanis Club

Ascension Kiwanis Club members had a wonderful morning on December 16th delivering toys and food to children in Ascension Parish for the Holidays.



Opelousas Hosts First Spice Up Gala

*By Carrie Richard,
Opelousas Kiwanis Club*

Kiwanis Club of Opelousas hosted its 1st Spice Up Gala on October 11, 2023 at the Delta Grand in Opelousas, LA. The club held a recognition ceremony for their dedicated supporters, inducted members, and appointed leadership for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Carrie Richard and Katrina Daigle Brown were both awarded Kiwanians of the Year.

Special attendees were Division 7 Lieutenant Governor John Gheradi, who inducted new members and officers, Region VI Trustee Andrew Dozier, and Mistress of Ceremonies



and KLFY TV 10 News Anchor Darla Montgomery.

The following businesses and individual were honored for their major contributions to the organization for the 2022-2023 term: Dairy Queen, Mama's Fried Chicken, Mickey's Donuts, Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers, Shine Nutrition, and Jody White.

Attendees were able to purchase tickets to the gala where they enjoyed live music presented by recording artist Holly Ortego, ate a delicious meal, and had an opportunity to partake in a raffle. The club's goal was to fundraise with the purpose of assisting more children and numerous organizations in the community.

Picayune Rocks!

*By Steve McDonald,
Picayune Kiwanis Club*

On November 2, the **Kiwanis Club of Greater Picayune Area** conducted its annual Fishing Rodeo for Special Needs Citizens. Participants from the Pearl River County and Poplarville school districts participated in the rodeo which intro-

duced many of them to fishing for the first time. The event was a success thanks to the help of the Key Club members of the Heritage Christian Academy and Pearl River Central along with Mr. Guy Stegall and his Bass Assassin's teams from Picayune High School and the Pearl River Central High School. Additional support was given by Mr.

Tim and Mr. Steve Carpenter. All participants were treated with Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Donuts and Chips during this event. Mr. Guy Stegall presented award trophies to the top four anglers.

On December 1, Picayune Kiwanis hosted another successful Annual Pancake Breakfast. Special thanks goes to the Heritage Academy Key Club for their valuable assistance.



Ponchatoula: Making a Difference!

*By Peronous Clark,
Ponchatoula Kiwanis Club*



TEAM UP AND CLEAN UP

On an early Saturday morning after a home football game, **Ponchatoula Kiwanis** members joined our Key Club in picking up the trash at the stadium. We were able to team up and clean up as our Kiwanis One Day Project. Our Key Clubber's were excited to spend time with us as well as beautify the football stadium. We ate donuts, laughed, and got a little exercise all at the same time. This was a wonderful way for our new club members to interact and meet some of our Key Clubbers to help encourage and praise them for their service!



THANKSGIVING DINNER

We had the pleasure of hosting our annual Thanksgiving dinner for the Council on Aging once again. We partnered with our Ponchatoula Rotary Club to make this event a success. We plan and execute the food, decorations, set up and clean up so the seniors do not have to do any work, just come, and enjoy. We had about sixty-five seniors attend, and our club members gloved up to serve a hot meal so they could socialize with their friends. The seniors look forward to this event and our club as well. This is a fantastic way to help bring joy for the holidays to the Council on Aging!



CHRISTMAS PARTY

We cannot express the joy of hosting this event as the kids in the program come together once again. Our club helped decorate, serve food, and pass out gifts. We had fun with the young adults by meeting and interacting and watched as they enjoyed the fun games. A few members of their families came to enjoy this time with them.

Our club was also able to donate certain gifts and partner with other local business owners for donations as well. There was a photographer taking their pictures at the photo drop throughout the party. To see the happiness and smiles on the young adults' faces makes us all happy and enforces the reason for what we do!!



Divisions 4A & 4B

Join Forces

*By Myra Lewis,
Pontchartrain Kiwanis Club*

The Kiwanis Club of Pontchartrain hosted a Kiwanis One Day event held at the New Orleans Women and Children's Shelter (NOWCS) Saturday, November 11th. Members from nine clubs within divisions 4A and 4B donated household items, furniture, cleaning supplies and monetary funds. Participating clubs met at the facility to clean areas including a bedroom, education center, playground and meeting area.



NOWCS' Executive Assistant, Ms. Sidney Coleman, met with the Kiwanians to describe the shelter's mission. The full-service facility now opens its doors to homeless families to provide extended shelter, counseling, job assistance and placement, housing location and ongoing support. The facility has a ninety eight percent (98%) success rate in transitioning individuals and families to become employed and housed. Because newly employed and housed families leave the shelter with bedding and other household supplies, the need for those

items is ongoing.

Participating clubs for this event included Kiwanis Pontchartrain, St. Bernard-Arabi, New Orleans, Third District, Big Easy, Dawn Busters, Algiers, West Jefferson, Tri-Parishes and Kenner North.



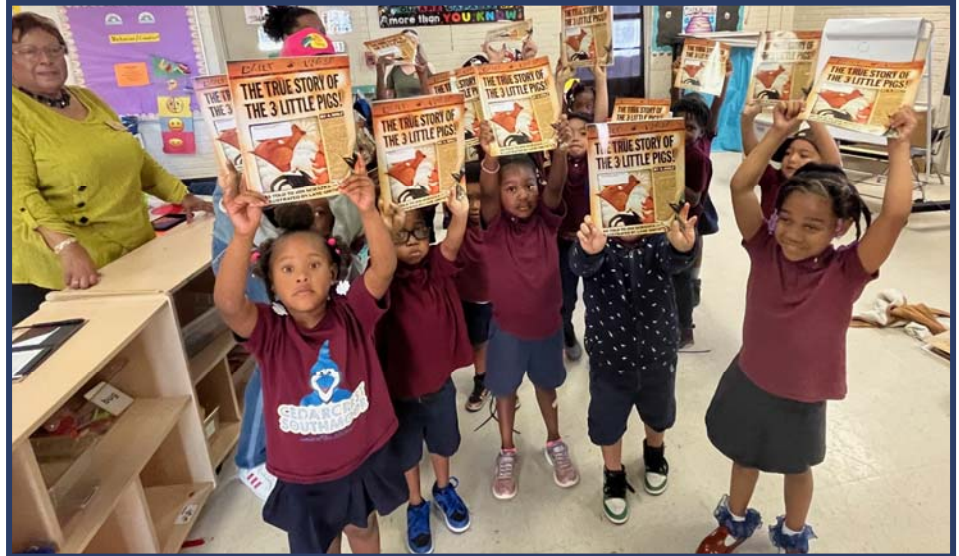
Red Stick Kiwanis Shares Love of Reading

*By Tommy Darensbourg,
Red Stick Kiwanis Club*

For the third year, the **Kiwanis Club of Red Stick** manned a service project to promote a love of reading to young students at Cedarcrest-Southmoor Elementary School, whose mission is to prepare its students for gifted and talented screening. Its emphasis on music, math, and science instruction and academic clubs spurs students in their progress.

With a student enrollment of 670 and a 19:1 student:teacher ratio, the school boasts a diverse student body and faculty and encourages everyone to embrace all cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. School performance scores have increased each year.

On October 25th, Red Stick volunteers read “The True Story of the Three Little Pigs” to the Kindergartners. Much to their delight, each student received their own personalized copy to instill a sense of pride and ownership.



Shepherding the project since its inception is Division 8W Lieutenant Governor Cherryl Matthews, a previous principal at the school.

“This investment of time and financial resources has benefitted the students and especially their families who appreciate what Kiwanis is do-

ing to encourage reading literacy,” Cherryl said.

Club volunteers will read “The Mouse and the Motorcycle” to first-grade students in January and “Charlotte’s Web” in second-grade classes in March.



Merry Christmas from Port City Kiwanis

*By Jimmy Fowler,
Port City Kiwanis Club*

The Port City Kiwanis Club (PCK) of Vicksburg, MS would like to extend wishes to all of the clubs in the LaMissTenn District for a Merry Christmas and a best year ever in 2024. PCK, along with 3 members of the PCK-sponsored Warren Central High School (WCHS) Key Club, enjoyed a wonderful Christmas Breakfast at Hawkins United Methodist Church (HUMC) during a recent meeting. During the meeting, Club members voted to provide a brighter Christmas for the children of three needy families in the Vicksburg communi-



ty. This was achieved by the generous donations from EACH of our own PCK members totaling more \$430. As a way of returning the favor to the church for providing an excellent meeting place as well as a great location for PCK ceremonies and events, our club continues to

provide support to HUMC by providing the church various levels of assistance on an as needed basis. We are also blessed by the fact that one of our members is the pastor for HUMC.

Southwest Louisiana Kiwanis Hosts

Community Baby Shower

*By Carolyn Marcantel,
Southwest Louisiana Kiwanis Club*

The Kiwanis Club of Southwest Louisiana held their annual Signature Service Project the *Kiwanis Community Baby Shower* on Saturday, September 9, 2023. The community is asked to purchase baby items while they shop at Walmart. Our goal is to “Stuff a Pack-N-Play” that is set up at the entrance of the store. Each year, shoppers overflow the Pack-N-Play. Over 175 items were donated along with cash donations. This fun and heart filled service project has been ongoing for more

than 25 years.

The committee organized club members, CKI members and six Agencies that serve families and children. The local agencies that participated were ABC Pregnancy Center, New Life Counseling Services, Children’s Miracle Network, Safe Sleep of SWLA, Healthy Blue, and Louisiana Department of Health Services. Kona Ice served snow cones to shoppers with the cost provided by our club.

Our Club was the recipient of a grant from the Kiwanis Children’s Fund and Healthy Blue. The additional funds will make the purchase of more needed baby items for the following agencies possible: ABC



Pregnancy Center, New Life Counseling Services, Safe Sleep of SWLA and the Children’s Miracle Network. These four agencies will also receive cash donations and all of the baby items collected. The 11 Kiwanis members along with 5 CKI members helped to make this year’s baby shower a success. Every one is looking forward to next year’s project.

Walker Brings Smiles to Students

By Kay Landry, Walker Kiwanis Club

A recent community project undertaken by the **Kiwanis Club of Walker** has brought smiles to the faces of many students in the Walker Community. The project involved the donation of 200 backpacks to schools in the community. The Kiwanis Club, a non-profit organization dedicated to serving children and communities, partnered with local businesses and individuals to make the project a success. The project was well received by the schools and the students who were gifted the backpacks. Many of the



students may not have been able to afford new backpacks without the generous donation from the Kiwanis Club. The project is just one example of the many ways in which the Walker Kiwanis Club is making

a positive impact in the community. By providing support and resources to children and families in need, the organization is helping to create a brighter future for everyone.

Zachary: Caring is Sharing!

By Bridgette Johnson, Zachary Kiwanis Club

The **Zachary Kiwanis Club** is super excited to give back to our community double at Thanksgiving and Christmastime. Our annual donations to the Zachary Food Pantry are always a delight.

The Zachary Superintendent picked four families to be blessed with full Thanksgiving meals and a box of household cleaning goods.

And the club hosted its Annual Christmas Party with the Lobdell House - a home for those with intellectual disabilities. Residents received gift cards and enjoyed good food, fellowship, and Christmas carols. A good time was had by all!

Also, the Zachary Kiwanis Club would like to send a special shout out to Dudley DeBosier Injury lawyers for sponsoring a beautiful bike to a blessed kid this year for Christmas. Happy Holidays from Zachary Kiwanis Club!



Thibodaux Awards Nearly \$19,000 to Local Organizations

*By Jennifer Kelly-White,
Thibodaux Kiwanis Club*

Chackbay Volunteer Fire Department was granted \$5,000 towards Fire Prevention and Safety materials for the children of our district. The funds will be used to purchase various educational materials, coloring books, fire hats and more. With the increase in the student population of our area, we will be able to service more students and educate them on the importance of fire safety and prevention. Funds will be used for purchasing 700 Red's "Prevent Fires: Be Safe in the Kitchen" StationPak and 500 Stock Fire Ready Every Day BottlePaks, to name a few.



Pictured left to right: Rebekah Richoux-Quinn, Kiwanis President and CVFD members Karlie Adams and Angel Porche.

St. John Volunteer Fire Department was awarded \$2,000 to provide fire prevention materials which will be distributed to 200-250 children at daycare facilities and little schools in Lafourche parish. During these visits, the children will be educated on what to do if a fire emergency occurs.



Pictured are Rebekah Richoux-Quinn, Kiwanis President and Jeremy Babin, St. John Fire Department.

Key Club at Thibodaux High School received \$1,500 to provide necessary safety gear and mats for students and student groups performing physical activities and stunts, namely the cheerleading squad. This equipment will be used for all students at Thibodaux High School and will be significantly used by the cheerleaders so that they may have protective headwear for when they practice their stunts and attend stunt classes. The majority of their Key Club members are Thibodaux High cheerleaders.



Pictured are Rebekah Richoux-Quinn, Kiwanis President; Alexandra Bolton, Thibodaux High Key Club Advisor and Cheerleading Coach and 4 of their Key Club members/cheerleaders.

Bless Your Heart Nonprofit received a check for \$2,500 to address the food security issues in our community. It was perfect timing

with our School Food Pantry Project which recently took place. A huge thank you for the support and for believing in our mission of enriching lives and inspiring hope by addressing social, educational and financial needs.



Pictured left to right: Rebekah Richoux-Quinn, Kiwanis President and Hilary Krum Danos, Bless Your Heart

Hi-5 was awarded \$7,650 for a new security camera that will be installed in the new Hi-5 high school facility. Hi-5 is an after-school program that partners with families to provide a safe and supportive environment. During the school year, Hi-5 offers after-school tutoring, mentoring and life skills at their community center. Back in 2019, the **Thibodaux Kiwanis** donated 25 iPads to this same group.



Pictured are Rebekah Richoux-Quinn, Kiwanis President and Jonathan Terrell, Hi-5 Board Member

St. Bernard-Arabi Makes Halloween Extra Special

*By Karen Boudrie,
St. Bernard-Arabi Kiwanis Club*

Halloween is big business in the greater New Orleans area. From parades and community gatherings to ghost tours and even a Zombie run, no one does Halloween like New Orleans!

The party flows into surrounding neighborhoods with Trunk or Treat events that offer a safe and fun alternative to Trick or Treating for families. These events feature tables set up by various organizations offering bags of candy to the event-goers, along with food, music, games and other activities.

Members of the **Kiwanis Club of St. Bernard-Arabi** have volunteered and donated candy at some of these events in past years. But



this year, the effort went into overdrive as nearly 50 Club members spread out at various community events to make sure there was enough candy and fun to go around.

St. Bernard-Arabi Kiwanians participated at four different community events including two held by the Carolyn Park Boosters, one at Nunez Community College and one for the St. Bernard Autism Awareness Krewe. In all about 3,000 Kiwanis candy bags were handed out over a four-day period!

Wherever there was a need, the club was there. In addition to volunteering at the events, the club donated hundreds of bags candy for the events, and attached stickers to

the bags with the slogan 'Kids Need Kiwanis, Kiwanis Needs You' encouraging parents to join Kiwanis.

"Our club was really front and center in the community helping to provide safe and fun activities this Halloween and that exposed a lot of families to Kiwanis and who we are as an organization," says Club President Nicholas Koepp.

Not only were these events a real treat for the kids and their families, but it was a great way for the St. Bernard-Arabi Kiwanians to bond as a club as they set up and decorated their tables, bagged candy and then interacted with the princesses, ninja turtles, spooks and ghouls and their families!



Attention Club Secretaries:

Did you know that one of the criteria for the 2023-2024 Distinguished Club Secretary Award is to ensure your club submits at least one (1) article per District News edition? That's four (4) articles total. So, make sure to get those articles in on time and earn some points! There's only 2 more editions left for this Kiwanis Year!

Check out all the criteria for Distinguished Secretary and other awards at www.LaMissTenn.org



Share Your Club's News!

By Tiffany LaPorte, District Bulletin Editor

Submit your article or photographs:

EMAIL: tiffany@lamisstenn.org

ARTICLES & PHOTOGRAPHS: All article submissions must be attached in an email as a Word document along with picture captions. *Please submit original articles written by your club's members. We cannot use pre-published articles due to copyright laws.* Do not include photos within text documents; send as separate attachments in the highest resolution TIFF or JPEG file if possible. *Please send one Word document along with pictures attached together in one email. Multiple stories per club should be sent in one Word Document, preferably an overview of each story in one article.*

DEADLINES:

The deadline for article submissions is always two weeks before the publication's date. Here are the deadlines for the 2023-2024 Kiwanis Year:

April 2024 Issue = Deadline: March 15, 2024

July 2024 Issue = Deadline: June 14, 2024

October 2024 Issue = Deadline: September 13, 2024

Include this information:

CLUB: Club, Division Number, and Author

EVENT: Make sure to answer: **what** was done, **why** it was done, **who** benefited, **when** and **where** it occurred, **how** it was accomplished, etc.

ACCURACY: Please double check all dates, locations, etc., and be sure that all names are spelled correctly. While we do our best to correct issues if we notice them, we do not have the resources to confirm this type of information.

PHOTOGRAPHS: If you're shooting a service project, look for an action photo of the volunteers in progress or interacting with children. Shoot from the front – we are not likely to use a shot with mostly backs. Use as high a resolution as possible. Captions may not always be published, but it is helpful if you can identify subjects.

AND REMEMBER . . . THE BEST SHOT WINS THE COVER!

Keep in mind, the cover photograph for the District News Magazine will be selected based on clarity, action and emotion.

We want photographs showing how your club impacts the community!



"The LaMissTenn District News"
is the official publication of the
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Kiwanis International

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