

APRIL 2024

# Kiwanis®

Louisiana-Mississippi-West Tennessee District News



**Aktion Club Honors Germantown Police and Firemen  
with Handmade Valentines**

*Improving the world one child and one community at a time*



**ON THE COVER:**  
 SHARING THE LOVE - The Madonna Learning Center  
 Aktion Club honors Germantown Police and Firemen  
 by delivering handmade Valentine's Day cards.  
*See more on Page 27*

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## From the Governor's Desk

*By John Fry, Governor*



It's hard to believe that as we're reading this newsletter, we're halfway through our Kiwanis year. Just like you, we have made a lot of plans that we haven't seen come to fruition yet and honestly wondering if we have time to see them completed before the end of this year. On the other side of that, we've seen things happen that we hadn't planned on. I guess that's what life's all about. I can say this: it has been a remarkable first half of the year for service within our district.

First Lady Cathy and I have had the privilege to visit many clubs and have been able to see first-hand how unique service is based on the specific club and the community that they represent. We've had multiple pancakes (and yes pancakes are completely different from one club to another), participated in a chili feast and made countless new friends over the last few months.

If you attended our recent Mid-Year Education Conference in Natchez, MS, you experienced, just like we did, the energy and enthusiasm that runs throughout our district. It was a remarkable event that took a lot of planning and preparation. Was it perfect? Absolutely not. But then again what is? Everything has room for improvement. My takeaway from that event was the collaboration. We had over 200 Kiwanians that shared the same room to collaborate on membership, service, fundraising and multiple other topics.

If you couldn't attend the Mid-Year Education Conference, you missed an amazing Kiwanis experience. The good news is there are more opportunities for us to recreate the energy, enthusiasm and engagement that we saw in Natchez. We have our Lieutenant Governor training coming up in early May which we hope will charge the batteries of those that will be serving our district in this capacity. We also have our District Convention coming up in July in Tupelo, MS. Here we're going to take what we learn from the Mid-Year Education Conference and try to replicate that in the workshops that Kiwanians attend. Yes, we will have Kiwanis International representatives presenting some sessions, but our goal is to

have as many peer Kiwanis members and clubs to present as possible. The evaluation surveys that were returned to us show that you want more of this type of networking at district wide events.

We've also seen an uptick in membership. As you all know, my challenge is for each of us to introduce Kiwanis to one new person before the end of September. That challenge starts with you. Just one person that you want to share your passion for Kiwanis with. Imagine what our district would look like if each of us took the time to extend the hand of Kiwanis service to someone new. We want healthy vibrant clubs throughout our district. We just chartered our newest club in Many, LA - The Kiwanis Club of Sabine. They have the same energy and enthusiasm that I just talked about, but they need direction and we're going to work with them over the next months and years to help them cultivate what Kiwanis service looks like to their community.

I look forward to seeing each of you out on the road or especially at the District Convention in Tupelo in July.

Yours in service,

**The Gov**

## A CALL TO SERVICE

By Claude Vinson, Governor-Elect



I know that it's easy to get so caught up meeting other people's needs and measuring up to their expectations that we sometimes place ourselves last.

Work, family, household obligations, and friends who count on us can be quite demanding. To be invincible is to develop that hero mentality that exists in all of us and we don't want to let anyone down. Strength, dependability, reliability, trust, and wherewithal are all excellent qualities that we as Kiwanians possess.

As we enter the season of Spring, we think about renewals of spirit, rejuvenation of the soul and resetting our priorities. Of course, our main mission is to keep ourselves healthy - emotionally, physically, and spiritually. No, it's not selfish to take time to get refreshed and to be reenergized. I hope and pray that you're not so busy to take time out

to be alone, to laugh, to exercise, and for recreation for our God delights in giving us rest to help us stay in balance.

These are certainly characteristics and words to live by even in my own life and it is a monumental honor to be able to serve our great district, LaMissTenn, as your governor for 2024-25, but I need your help!



I am on a mission to fill the following leadership positions for Lieutenant Governors in Divisions **2, 4A, 5, 6, 9, 10A, 10C, 11, 14N, and 15.**

As defined, the Lieutenant Governor serves as executive officer of the Division by expanding Kiwanis' reach through supporting clubs and providing resources to help improve the value of each member's club experience.

Serving as Lieutenant Governor is one of the most rewarding positions in Kiwanis and if you meet the qualifications to serve as Lieutenant Governor, **please** consider serving in this leadership role and take a

journey with me in continuing to make the district the best of Kiwanis International!

There are also various district leadership positions available so please consider serving in these positions as well. To learn more about these positions, visit <https://k11.site.kiwanis.org/district-positions/>

Get to know these positions and lend your talents to helping to sustain the awesomeness this district has to offer but I (WE) can't do so without you!

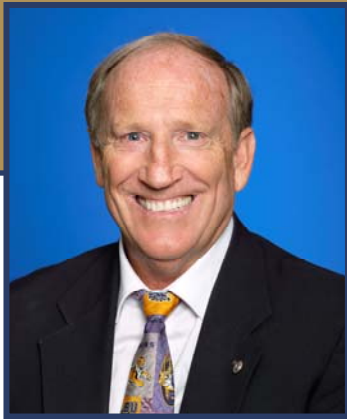
Of course, it's not about me, but about serving the kids of our communities and continuing strong leadership is essential in making that happen.

THIS IS A CALL TO SERVICE  
... Will you answer the call?

Be your invincible you,

**Claude Vinson, Governor-Elect**





## Distinguished Awards Presented by 2022-2023 Governor

Immediate Past Governor Bruce Hammatt had the honor of presenting Distinguished Awards for the 2022-2023 Kiwanis Year at the Mid-Year Education Conference. Awards were given to: Distinguished Clubs, Distinguished Kiwanians, Distinguished Club Secretaries, and Distinguished Lieutenant Governors. The Kiwanis Club of Cortana was also recognized for reporting the most inter-clubs in 2022-2023. Thank you to these dedicated Clubs and Kiwanians in the LaMissTenn Kiwanis District.

### Distinguished Clubs

- 4B** Dawn Busters, Metairie, LA
- 8E** Cortana, Baton Rouge, LA
- 11** Natchitoches, LA
- 15** Vicksburg, MS
- 17** East St. Mary, LA

### Distinguished Kiwanians

- 1A** Cathy Fry  
Twin Cities, TN
- 1A** John Fry  
Twin Cities, TN
- 1A** Kimberly Jackson  
Twin Cities, TN
- 1C** Randi Lowe  
Millington, TN
- 4B** Valerie Johnson  
Tri Parishes, LA
- 8E** Patricia Anderson  
Cortana, LA
- 8W** Gary Graham  
Baton Rouge, LA

- 8W** Bruce Hammatt  
Baton Rouge, LA
- 12** Amanda Johnson  
North Lake Charles, LA
- 13** Peronous Clark  
Ponchatoula, LA
- 14S** Betty Carter  
Pascagoula, MS
- 14S** Jen Robertson  
Pascagoula, MS
- 14S** Rogena Woods-Mitchell  
Vanceave, MS

### Inter-Club Contest

- 8E** Cortana, Baton Rouge, LA

### Distinguished Secretaries

- 4A** Kathleen Huff  
St. Bernard-Arabi, LA
- 8E** Heather Folks-Givens  
Cortana, Baton Rouge, LA
- 8W** Gary Graham  
Baton Rouge, LA

- 10B** Fred Pitts  
Tupelo, MS
- 11** Craig Caskey  
Natchitoches, LA
- 13** Shelley McNemar  
Ponchatoula, LA
- 14S** Howard Lock  
Long Beach, MS
- 17** Debbie Stevens,  
East St. Mary, LA

### Distinguished Lt. Governors

- 4A** Kristine Koeppe
- 8E** Donna Leggett
- 12** Joel Davidson
- 13** Clay Drewes
- 17** Debbie Stevens



## Stevens Awarded 2022-2023 District Secretary

Congratulations to Debbie Stevens, Secretary of the East St. Mary Kiwanis Club, for earning the 2022-2023 Jay R. Broussard Outstanding Club Secretary Award.

Debbie joined the Kiwanis Club of East St Mary in 1997 and has served as Secretary for a total of 12 years and as Lt Governor of Division 17 for the past 2 years. She attends district events and completes all secretarial duties on time.

Debbie has been instrumental to the success of her club. She has brought in many new members, chairs Trivia Night, which is one of the club's most lucrative fundraisers, and Porch Fest, which began as a community event and became a fundraiser, raising \$3,000 for renovations to Lawrence Park in Morgan City. Following Hurricane IDA, Debbie organized, cooked and served 30+ national guard members and construction

volunteers and has assisted hurricane victims on multiple occasions. Her help with all of the club's fundraisers and community service is immeasurable.

Thank you Debbie for your dedication to Kiwanis and serving the Children of the World!

## Mid-Year Education Conference Recap

More than 200 Kiwanians from over 60 clubs in the LaMissTenn District attended the Mid-Year Education Conference in Natchez on March 2nd! The energy level was high while participants enjoyed programs on membership, fundraising, service projects and club networking. Congratulations to Jennifer Kelly-White, Region IV and Darren Green, Region VII who were elected as incoming Trustees starting the 2024-2025 Kiwanis Year.



2022-2023 Distinguished Club Secretaries from L to R: Shelley McNemar, Ponchatoula; Heather Folks-Givens, Cortana; Gary Graham, Baton Rouge; Fred Pitts, Tupelo; Kathleen Huff, St. Bernard-Arabi; Craig Caskey, Natchitoches; Debbie Stevens, East St. Mary; and not pictured, Howard Lock, Long Beach.



2022-2023 Distinguished Lieutenant Governors from L to R: Debbie Stevens, Div. 17; Clay Drewes, Div. 13; Current Lt. Gov. Amanda Johnson representing Joel Davidson, Div. 12; Donna Leggett, Div. 8E; and Kristine Koepf, Div. 4A



A panel comprised of Kiwanians from across the district shared membership retention and growth methods.



A panel comprised of Kiwanians from across the district shared fundraising and service project ideas.



← Kiwanians were grouped with members from other clubs to network and share ideas regarding membership orientation, retention, communication, service projects and other ways clubs can be the best at serving children and their communities. What a great way to get to know one another while learning new ideas to strengthen clubs!



A good time was had by all!



Darren Green,  
Region VII Trustee-Elect



Jennifer Kelly-White,  
Region IV Trustee-Elect

# April 2024 Updates

## Governor's CHALLENGE 2023-2024

*Have you identified and/or recruited your new member?*

At our Mid-Year Education Conference, Governor John challenged all LaMissTenn Kiwanians to recruit one (1) new member before District Convention (DCON) on July 26-28, 2024.

### 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](http://www.LaMissTenn.org)

#### ANNUAL CLUB OFFICER ELECTIONS



**REMINDER: Reporting of Club Officers to Kiwanis International is due by June 1st!**

#### District Convention Awards

*Submission Deadline:  
June 1, 2024*

- ★ Lawperson of the Year
- ★ Layperson of the Year
- ★ Firefighter of the Year
- ★ Teacher of the Year



[www.LaMissTenn.org](http://www.LaMissTenn.org)

#### 2023-2024 Award Programs

- ★ Distinguished Club
- ★ Distinguished Kiwanian
- ★ Distinguished Secretary
- ★ Distinguished Lieutenant Governor



Will your club be distinguished?  
What about your secretary, LG, or you?  
Check out the Awards and criteria!





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

**TUPELO**  
★  
*Mississippi*

## REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

**LOWER PRICE:  
Only \$150/person!**



**DCON Attendance Incentives:**

- **1st Timers Incentive:** \$25 off base registration for the first twenty-five (25) 1st time attendees to register! To take advantage, register as normal and you will receive a \$25 reimbursement check at DCON check in. Remember to indicate you are a 1st time attendee on the registration form.
- **New Club Incentive:** Two (2) free base registrations for each club chartered since 8/2023. Contact the office at [districtoffice@lamisstenn.org](mailto:districtoffice@lamisstenn.org) or 225-769-9233 to take advantage.



**DCON Location:**

**Cadence Bank Arena**  
375 East Main Street, Tupelo, MS 38804

**DCON Hotels:**

- **Hilton Garden Inn:**  
Next to Cadence Bank Arena  
**\$139/night**
- **Hotel Tupelo:**  
Across the street from Hilton Garden Inn  
**\$149/night**

Visit [www.LaMissTenn.org](http://www.LaMissTenn.org) for registration, hotel reservations, and additional information about DCON 2024.





# District Convention 2024

## Sponsorship Opportunities



<b>GOLD</b> <b>\$1,000</b>	3 Base Registrations + 3 months website recognition + 5 social media posts + banner recognition (lg logo) + newsletter recognition (lg logo) + full page program ad + verbal recognition at Fellowship Luncheon
<b>SILVER</b> <b>\$500</b>	2 Base Registrations + 1 month website recognition + 3 social media posts + banner recognition (med logo) + newsletter recognition (med logo) + half page program ad
<b>BRONZE</b> <b>\$250</b>	1 Base Registration + 1 month website recognition + 5 social media posts + banner recognition (name) + newsletter recognition (name) + quarter page program ad

<b>\$500</b>	<b>Registration Sponsor</b>	<b>\$500</b>	<b>Refreshment Sponsor</b>	<b>\$500</b>	<b>Merchandise Sponsor</b>
Recognition at registration desk		Recognition at water and coffee stations		Recognition at merchandise table	
<b>\$500</b>	<b>Foundation Breakfast Sponsor</b>	<b>\$250</b>	<b>Past District Officers Meeting Sponsor</b>	<b>\$250</b>	<b>Past District Governors Meeting Sponsor</b>
Recognition Foundation Breakfast room & verbal recognition during meeting		Recognition Past District Officers meeting room & verbal recognition during meeting		Recognition Past District Governors meeting room & verbal recognition during meeting	

\$750

## Welcome Reception Sponsor

Recognition at reception room & verbal recognition during reception

*All Sponsors will be included on the DCON Sponsors page in the program.  
Sponsorships are tax deductible as a business expense for business promotion  
Submission deadline: July 1, 2024*

## Kiwaniis International Recognizes Bruce Hammatt as Distinguished Governor & LaMissTenn as a Pinnacle District for the 2022-2023 Kiwanis Year

Each year, Kiwanis International recognizes Governors and Districts as Distinguished who have achieved certain criteria set out by International and/or their District. These criteria change each year based on the priorities of the Kiwanis International President and the District Governor. Additionally, Districts can take it a few steps further and earn the title of "Pinnacle District." For the 2022-2023 Kiwanis Year, LaMissTenn Governor Bruce Hammatt has been recognized as Distinguished and the LaMissTenn District as a Pinnacle District by Kiwanis International President Bert West. Congratulations to Governor Bruce and all Kiwanians in the LaMissTenn District who helped us stand out as a Pinnacle District under Bruce's leadership! Below are the criteria for 2022-23 set forth by Kiwanis International:



# KIWANIS DISTRICT RECOGNITION PROGRAM

2022-23

## DISTINGUISHED DISTRICTS

*The district must be in good standing with Kiwanis International as defined by Procedure 204  
– DISTRICT STATUS as of September 30, 2023.*

### GROWTH (Must accomplish one of two)

- **Net gain in membership** over the previous Kiwanis administrative year, as certified by October 10, 2023.
- **Achievement of the new club opening goal**, as set by agreement of the president and governor (as president-elect and governor-elect). A district may achieve new club opening credit for a Kiwanis club in another nation under any program approved as such by the Kiwanis International Board.

### SERVICE AND EDUCATION (Must accomplish three of five)

- **Minimum required increase in overall giving to the Kiwanis Children's Fund** over the previous Kiwanis administrative year from all district sources (as determined by the Children's Fund).
- **Total of at least three (3) new K-Kids clubs chartered** within the district during the administrative year.
- **Submission of a club signature project** in the Kiwanis International annual Signature Project Contest.
- **Increase in Club Leadership Education (CLE) participation** over the previous administrative year.
- **Achievement of 90% compliance in mandatory background checks** among all required leaders.

## PINNACLE DISTRICTS



### GROWTH (Must accomplish all)

- **Meet the above requirements** to become a Distinguished District.
- **Achieve a net gain in active Kiwanis clubs** over the previous Kiwanis administrative year (as certified by October 10, 2023).
- **Charter a total of five (5) new K-Kids clubs** over the previous Kiwanis administrative year.

# 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 LaMissTenn 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 and a half 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 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of our Six Objects of Kiwanis. I am again asking for your endorsement. - *Gary Graham*

## 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 1 more edition left for this Kiwanis Year!



Check out all the criteria for Distinguished Secretary and other awards at [www.LaMissTenn.org](http://www.LaMissTenn.org)

## LaMissTenn Welcomes Sabine Kiwanis Club

*By Laura Gilliland, Club Opening Coordinator*



Kiwanis members opened a new LaMissTenn club in Sabine Parish in the Many area of Louisiana on Thursday, February 22nd. It was a huge success and organized at 6 PM in the Council on Aging activity room. There were four teams which were made up of: International President Katrina Jones Baranko, International Club Opening Specialist “Jay” Myron Hubbard, Past Governor/District Membership Chair Eva Abate and her husband VJ, International Trustee Gary Graham, Past Governor R. Bruce Hammett, Past Lt. Governor Becky Huff, and Club Opening Coordinator Laura Gilliland.

The sponsoring club will be the Kiwanis Club of eLaMissTenn and the coaches will be Past Governor Otha Britton and Past Lt. Governor Clarissa Preston.

Seventy-nine appointments were made for this small community, as Many has a population of less than 2,500. The school superintendent was the first to join, followed by the mayor and his wife, the police chief, the retired fire chief, the Director of the Chamber of Commerce, the Sabine 4-H Director, the Principal



of the Alternative School, the Town Clerk, a Police Juror/owner of a logging company, a heating & air company, a couple of prominent attorneys, a couple of realtors, the Community College, the Post Master, a florist, a fitness business owner, and others.

Team Many stayed at the Cypress Bend Resort which is a scenic area that spreads over 300 acres and has 66 rooms. The International Staff members were upgraded by the hotel manager to suites. There was a huge fishing tournament housed at the resort, as well.

Special thanks goes out to David

Sherman, Ambrosia Bakery for the amazing cake for our Instructional Meeting; Buzzy Heroman, Billy Heroman’s for the breathtaking floral arrangement presented to International President Katrina Baranko; Randy Rolland and Suzanne Fogle, Cypress Bend Resort, for upgrading the rooms of our International President and Staff Member; DMC Eva and VJ Abate for refreshments; and Becky Huff for providing ice and drinks, as well as registering members and guests at the Organizational Meeting.

LaMissTenn Governor John Frymet with the club opening team weekly since October to carefully plan this process.



## LaMissTenn Signature Projects Selected for Kiwanis International Contest

The LaMissTenn District of Kiwanis is pleased to announce its selections for the 2024 Kiwanis International Signature Project Contest. The project chosen from Group 1 (clubs with 27 or fewer members) is “Backpack Library for 2nd Graders” submitted by the **Kiwanis Club of Louisville** in Region II, Division 10C. The project chosen from Group 2 (clubs with 28 or greater members) is “Kiwanis Duck Blast” submitted by the **Kiwanis Club of Dyersburg** in Region I, Division 1A. The LaMissTenn Kiwanis District received a total of 8 project submissions.

### Group 1 Selection: Backpack Library for 2nd Graders

*Submitted by  
Kiwanis Club of Louisville*

Reading scores are often low in Winston County, Mississippi so the **Kiwanis Club of Louisville** has kicked off a yearly service project that gives 2nd graders the opportunity to improve their reading comprehension. The club has partnered with local businesses and organizations to fill enough backpacks with books and activity sheets for 175 second graders in Winston County. These books and activity sheets will enhance learning by providing more

practice with 2nd and 3rd grade literacy skills.

*The Backpack Library* will also help build life skills for each student as they read, write, and speak to communicate effectively. These skills will assist rising

2nd graders in meeting the standards and transform the students’ daily lives as upper elementary students. Improved reading comprehension has a positive impact in all subjects across the curriculum.



### Group 2 Selection: Kiwanis Duck Blast

*Submitted by  
Kiwanis Club of Dyersburg*

Over the years, the **Dyersburg Kiwanis Club**’s signature fundraiser, *Kiwanis Duck Blast*, has raised more than \$200,000 for charitable organizations in Dyer County, Tennessee. The Kiwanis Duck Blast is a one-of-a-kind hunting event that attracts people from "all walks of life": from a local business person to an avid hunter from as far away as Texas. The event includes both an evening dinner banquet and a morning duck hunting competition.

This year’s 13th Annual Duck Blast provided funds for the Salvation Army Uniform Project and Healing Horses. The Salvation Army Uniform Program purchases school uniforms to donate to children in need who can't afford the proper attire. Healing Horses is a nonprofit organization that provides persons with disabilities the opportunity to use horseback riding and other related equine activities as experiences where they can grow and develop physically, emotionally, cognitively, and socially helping to enhance their quality of life. Each year, different organizations are selected as beneficiaries of the event based on community impact.



## LaMissTenn Signature Project Submissions Group 1

### Kiwanis

#### Back 2 School Dance

*Submitted by  
Kiwanis Club of New Orleans*

The Kiwanis Club of New Orleans' *Back 2 School Dance* began 10 years ago to provide St. Michael Special School's parents/caregivers a needed break, all while allowing their special needs children/family members a time to get together for a fun evening with their friends, in a safe and secure environment.

St. Michael Special School, a leader in special education in New Orleans, provides an environment where students and adults with special needs are able to reach their

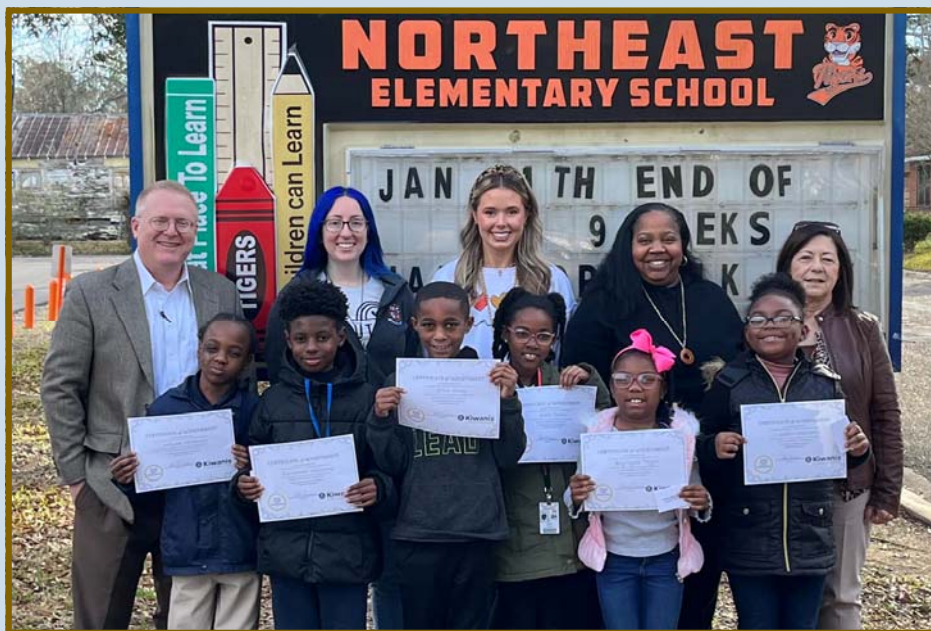
full potential. This annual event provides students in the upper school (ages 16-21) and Joy Center (ages 22+) the opportunity to participate in a typical 'Back 2 School Dance' that is common in most high school settings.



### Kiwanis Kids

*Submitted by  
Kiwanis Club of Opelousas*

Each year the **Kiwanis Club of Opelousas** coordinates with area schools to honor most improved students in 3rd grade. Every 9 weeks, the club's *Kiwanis Kids* program motivates, inspires and recognizes students who put forth their best effort. Students who are chosen by their teachers as *Kiwanis Kids* receive a certificate and a gift card. At the end of the year, the students' names go into a drawing for a boy and a girl bike from each school represented.



# LaMissTenn Signature Project Submissions Group 2

## Lafreniere Park Family Series

*Submitted by  
Kiwans Club of Dawn Busters*



The purpose of the **Dawn Busters Kiwanis Lafreniere Park Family Series** is to improve the local East Jefferson Parish community, ONE CHILD, with family, at a time. The club hosts the Easter Bunny Fest, which includes the largest Easter Egg Scramble in Jefferson Parish. The Bunny Bash which includes multiple Easter Egg Scrambles for different age groups is tailored primarily to young children, in contrast to the other events.

In October, the Dawn Busters hosts the BOO-2-U Halloween Fest with the

evening's largest regional Trunk-O-Treat. Both events are hosted in Lafreniere Park, the most popular safe and secure park on the East Bank.

The club's new, magical, and inspiring high end social event will be the first High Tea, to be presented in the Lafreniere Park Foundation Center. Also, the Club intends to implement the ONE CHILD AT A TIME Cookies with Santa event, inside the park's carousel earlier on each of the two Saturdays in December.

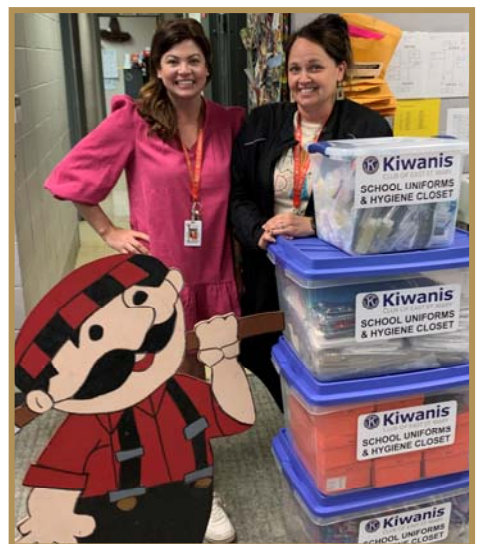
## Uniform & Hygiene Closet

*Submitted by  
Kiwans Club of East St. Mary*

**East St. Mary Kiwanis** launched a *Uniform and Hygiene Closet* this past year. Uniforms and hygiene products were purchased and distributed to elementary and junior high schools in East St. Mary Parish. Club members contacted all of the schools to develop a list of items needed for the *Uniform and Hygiene Closet*. Donated items included uniforms, undergarments, socks, shoes,

belts and hygiene kits. To launch the closet, the club received a Community Service Grant from the LaMissTenn District Foundation and used additional funds from fundraisers. More than 250 students were positively impacted by this signature project.

The club's 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.



# LaMissTenn Signature Project Submissions Group 2

## Krewe of Majestic Miracles

*Submitted by Karen Boudrie,  
Kiwanis Club of St. Bernard-Arabi*

The Krewe of Majestic Miracles Shined at the Second Annual Ball. It wasn't a miracle that doubled the participation in the 2024 Krewe of Majestic Miracles Mardi Gras Ball for Special Needs people in St. Bernard Parish. It was the hard work of the **Kiwanis Club of St. Bernard-Arabi!**



The Second-Annual event was held on January 19, 2024 at the Val Reiss Sports Complex in Chalmette, Louisiana. And Kiwanis members went all out knowing last year's ball was such big hit, they had to follow with an even grander celebration featuring a live band, celebrity guests, a Second Line led by the vibrant Chalmette High School Brass Band and a Royal Court full of pomp and beloved Mardi Gras pageantry!

The fun kicked off with last year's Royalty parading in and tossing beads

and trinkets to the crowd, followed by the crowning of the 2024 Royal Court! Then some 200 guests dined and danced the night away all thanks to generous community sponsors.

"We celebrate the Special Needs community for being who they are, and do our best to make them feel special on this night," said Nicholas Koepp, president of the Kiwanis Club of St. Bernard-Arabi. The festive mood and many smiles showed it was clearly mission accomplished!



## Kiwanis Glow Ride

*Submitted by  
Kiwanis Club of Gulfport*

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. The neighborhoods participated by leaving diapers and wipes out by mailboxes which were picked up by the club and police.

Elementary students 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.

The club 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.

The partnership has been highly successful and plans are in the works to expand next year.



## Your LaMissTenn Kiwanis Foundation Update

By Andrew Dozier, District Foundation President



The District Foundation is determined to continue to find ways to support scholarships and leadership training of the Service Leadership Programs and service projects of all Kiwanis clubs.

interested in serving on the Foundation Board. The experience and skills you bring to the table are important. Nominating committee Chair Cathy Fry is accepting applications for the following openings: **Region IV (The Bayou) and Region VII (Red River)**. If you are interested in serving for your region, we encourage you to complete an application online. Visit [www.LaMissTenn.org](http://www.LaMissTenn.org) for the application, duties and qualifications.

### Second Quarter focus:

- Scholarships
- Friends of the Foundation
- Annual Club Giving
- Endowments
- Grants/AED
- Promotion of the Foundation across LaMissTenn
- Foundation Board Member Positions



The Scholarship committee was busy with 53 Key Club applications, awarding 10 Scholarships (\$15,500), which will be presented at the upcoming Key Club DCON. The Foundation was also able to help 25 Key Club members in financial need for the Key Club DCON with financial assistance stipends (\$200/Key Clubber totaling \$5,000).

The Circle K Scholarship only had 1 applicant and was awarded the scholarship (\$3500.00), which was presented at Circle K DCON.

During the Mid-Year Education Conference, club participation in the Foundation gift basket raffle was a success. Gift Basket Chair Betty Carter and her committee members promoted and encouraged clubs to participate. A total of 53 gift baskets (page 19) were donated and overall contributions to the foundation were more than \$5000.

Our development and sub-committees are continuing to develop meaningful service and ideas to educate clubs about the Foundation and expand the use of the District Foundation for service opportunities.

Friendly reminder - any time during the year, become a Friend of the Foundation.

I want to congratulate the following Kiwanians and clubs for their recent contributions to the Foundation Endowments:

- **Charles H. Ford Legacy:** Ed Gautier, Donna Osburn and Judi Zimmerman
- **River of Life:** Rick Latiolais and Cortana Kiwanis in honor of Paul Salvant
- **Tablet of Honor:** Gulfport Kiwanis in honor of Bryan Caldwell

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.

The District Foundation is seeking Kiwanians who are

Please contact any foundation board member or the district office for assistance with supporting our district Foundation.

And remember, “optimism is the faith that leads to achievement.”

~ Andrew Dozier

**Garden Flags**

**Only \$5!**

### New Endowment Program Pricing!

**John T. Roberts Fellowship**

**\$500**

**River of Life Fellowship**

**\$750**

**Henry Nash - Eugene Maier Tablet of Honor**

**\$1,000**

**Charles H. Ford Legacy**

**\$1,000**

# Foundation Grants

By Cathy Simmons, District Foundation Grants Chair



**\$10,000**

**JUNE 1<sup>st</sup> will be here before you know it!** That’s the deadline to submit your club’s application for the \$10,000 Super Grant. Scan the QR code above for eligibility, description and more information or visit [www.LaMissTenn.org/super-grant-eligibility/](http://www.LaMissTenn.org/super-grant-eligibility/). Start planning now! Completed projects are not allowed. **ONE club in the District will be awarded a Super Grant during the 2024 DCON in Tupelo.**

## Don’t have a project big enough for the \$10,000 grant? Did you know the District Foundation offers other grants?

GRANT	AMOUNT	Deadline to Apply	Description
<b>AED - Automated External Defibrillator:</b> (one per club per year)			
AED for school	\$1,000	Monthly	For schools (Elementary, Middle or High School)
AED for facility	\$500	Monthly	For facilities other than schools listed above
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANTS:</b> Completed Projects not allowed. (one per club per year)			
<b>NEW CLUB</b> community service grant	\$1,000	Within 2 years of charter date	100% reimbursable grant for a specific project in your community
<b>Community Service Grant</b>	“Silver” Up to \$2,000	monthly	75% reimbursable grant for a specific project in your community
<b>Community Service Grant</b>	“Gold” \$2,001-\$5,000	Round 1: Feb 1 <sup>st</sup> Round 2: July 1st	75% reimbursable grant for a specific project in your community
<b>Service Leadership Program Grant</b> (one per club per year)	\$300-\$400	Monthly	75% reimbursement of charter fee paid to Kiwanis International
<b>Disaster Relief Grant (DRG)</b> (clubs may apply for more than 1 per year as long as previous Disaster Relief Grant is completed)	Up to \$1,500	After declared disaster	For immediate/essential relief; grant must be completed within 30 days of application (not long range)



**\$5,000 “Gold” Grant deadline is July 1<sup>st</sup>,  
and will be awarded at 2024 DCON in Tupelo.**

## Mid-Year Education Conference Gift Basket Donation THANKS!

*By Betty Carter, District Foundation Board Member*

A great big THANK-YOU to all of the clubs who donated a gift-basket to the District Foundation Mid-Year Education Conference 2024! We appreciate your support!!

### SLP Grant Program: Growing the K Family



NEW GRANT PROGRAM assists LaMissTenn Kiwanis Clubs in chartering a **NEW** Service Leadership Program (SLP)

**UP TO 75% REIMBURSEMENT OF THE CHARTER FEE!**

SLPs include: K-Kids, Builders Club, Key Club, Circle K, & Aktion

- Acadiana-Lafayette
- Ouachita
- Pontchartrain
- Alexandria
- Greenville
- Rankin County
- Algiers
- Gulfport
- Red Stick
- Amory
- Hammond
- Shreveport
- Ascension
- Houma
- St. Bernard-Arabi
- Baton Rouge
- Lafayette
- Southwest Lafayette
- Big Easy
- Leesville
- Southwest Louisiana
- Biloxi
- Louisville
- Southern Hills
- Columbus
- Memphis
- Starkville
- Cortana
- Millington
- Thibodaux
- Greater Covington
- Natchez Trace
- Third District
- Dawn Busters
- Natchitoches
- Tri Parishes
- Dyersburg
- New Orleans
- Tupelo
- East St. Mary
- Northshore Mandeville
- Union City
- Germantown
- Opelousas
- Vicksburg
- Greater
- Pascagoula
- Ponchatoula

## Community Service 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
- 1<sup>st</sup> round due February 1st
- 2<sup>nd</sup> 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



## New Annual Club Giving Levels

ACG Club	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.



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

Visit [www.LaMissTenn.org](http://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!





# Kiwanis<sup>®</sup>

## CHILDREN'S FUND

### YOUR CLUB'S ANNUAL GIFT TO THE KIWANIS CHILDREN'S FUND

*By Lenny Simmons, Kiwanis Children's Fund District Chair*

As of March 15th, **38** Clubs have submitted their Annual Gift to the Kiwanis Children's Fund (KCF). That means that **33%** of our Clubs in the District have made their contribution to KCF. We have already donated **\$16,786** to the Children's Fund this administrative year.

The KCF President's goal for 2023-24 is for all Districts to achieve a **10%** increase in the amount of money given directly to mission dollars by active clubs. Our goal for 2023-24 is **\$24,853** which is an increase of **\$2,259** over last year. It would also require a **10%** increase in the number of clubs contributing to the KCF over the previous year which would be **63** clubs.

Our District has just been awarded a **\$1,842** grant from the Kiwanis Children's Fund. The funds will be used to fund a \$1,000 scholarship for a Key Club student and \$842 to help pay Key Leader expenses.

We need your Club's help more than ever. If your Club has not given yet, please consider making your gift now.

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 going to [Kiwanis.org](http://Kiwanis.org) and go to the Kiwanis Children's Fund tab.



**Kiwanis**  
CHILDREN'S FUND

**KIDS NEED KIWANIS FOR  
HOLIDAY CHEER**



## LET'S BUILD OUR BRAND!

*By Donna Leggett, LaMissTenn District Public Relations Chair*

How are you bringing the Kiwanis Brand to life in your community? The best source of information comes from the enthusiasm of our members. We have the biggest impact on how our community views Kiwanis and our club with our branding. Our club's visual brand is wholly in our control. We need to focus on key messages, our purpose, relevance, service, diversity and our mission connection. It is easy to amplify our message with social media. Facebook, Instagram and X are free and one of the main advantages is its ability to connect people and facilitate communication. These are great resources to convey your club's story through sharing photos, graphics and videos while providing a great platform for sharing our brand.

Let your pictures tell the story of your members, events and service projects. Photography is the greatest way to show that service is fun with Kiwanis. The best photos focus on

people being active. Candid moments are more interesting than posed photos because emotions can be captured. Fellowship photos will show the fun that Kiwanians have more than a meeting photo. Try to avoid photos of people standing in a row and posing. Keep in mind that most people do not want to be photographed from behind. A good guideline for Facebook and Instagram post length is fewer than 100 characters. On X you can use up to 200 characters but short threads are better.

Research indicates that of all the charitable causes in the world, helping children is the one people most want to support. While serving children, think about "Kids Need Kiwanis" and how you can communicate that we are about helping kids. Showcase that we are having fun and we are meeting the kids' needs, whatever they are. Use your photography to demonstrate that Kiwanis is a hands-on organization that gives volunteers the opportunities to experience these rewarding moments with children. Take lots of photos and choose the best.

As a reminder, if your club has a website, make sure it is up to date with information about when and where you meet. Include contact information and details about your service projects.

Be sure to utilize the resources available through Kiwanis International. They offer photos and graphics for all social media channels which can be easily downloaded to your computer and uploaded to your social media accounts.

Please visit [www.LaMissTenn.org](http://www.LaMissTenn.org) to find the Awards Programs listed under the "About Us" tab or scan the QR code below for the criteria on the LaMissTenn District 2023-2024 Facebook and Newsletter Awards.



I am available as a resource to your club. If you have any questions about promoting the great news of your club, feel free to contact me at [DonnaL100@yahoo.com](mailto:DonnaL100@yahoo.com). I look forward to seeing your efforts on building the Kiwanis Brand!

## Aspire to Inspire: Spring has Srpung

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



Flowers are bursting into glorious colors. Trees are leafing into dozens of greens. Daylight savings time c'est arrive' and no one regrets the chill of winter left behind. Signs of renewal and rebirth are everywhere. How many metaphors can you add?

Spring is the morning of the year and this poem by Jane Taylor (1783-1824) states it well...

### MORNING

by *Jane Taylor*

*The lark is up to meet the sun,  
— The bee is on the wing,  
The ant its labor has begun,  
— The woods with music ring.*

*Shall birds and bees and ants be wise,  
— While I my moments waste?  
Oh, let me with the morning rise,  
— And to my duties haste.*

*Why should I sleep till beams of morn  
— Their light and glory shed?  
Immortal beings were not born  
— To waste their time in bed.*

What has this to do with Kiwanis? Everything! Childhood and

youth are the springtime of life and since we Kiwanians are "dedicated to improving...etc." "You know the thing?"

*Get your bippy out of the bed,  
--- Deeds for kids are your tread.  
Never let it of you be said,  
--- Did not help, must be dead.*

**Spring** to action and Git-R-Dun,  
--- Work to improve young-uns.  
Let us never our moments waste,  
--- So, to our duties haste.

*Help to see all the children thrive.  
--- Grow the youth, bloom their lives,  
Then when they reach adulthood strides,  
--- Their success grows your pride.*

## Human and Spiritual Values: 100 Years

By Dennis Oliver, Human & Spiritual Values Chair



Yes, the objects that have guided this great organization for all these years are 100 years old this year (2024). How ironic that they were written in Denver, Colorado in 1924, and we go back to Denver this year for the International Convention. We suggest our clubs review these objects often with your members.

- To give primacy to the human and spiritual rather than material values of life.
- To encourage the daily living of the Golden Rule in all human

relationships.

- To promote the adoption and the application of higher social, business, and professional standards.
- To develop, by precept and example, a more intelligent, aggressive and serviceable citizenship.
- To provide, through Kiwanis clubs, a practical means to form enduring friendships, to render altruistic service, and to build better communities.
- To cooperate in creating and

maintaining that sound public opinion and high idealism which make possible the increase of righteousness, justice, patriotism and goodwill.

1. Do you know of a school that needs an AED? (Foundation Grant)
2. Who in your community may be a candidate for "Layperson of The Year?"
3. Would your club consider a "Pastor Appreciation Day?"

# Key Leader North is Just Around the Corner!

By Linda Ramsey, Key Leader North Coordinator



On April 26-28, 2024, we will host our 12<sup>th</sup> annual Kiwanis Key Leader Event at Lakeshore Camp and Retreat Center in Eva, Tennessee which is located just outside of Camden, Tennessee along the side of the Tennessee River. This year our goal is to get back up to 60 regular students in attendance, 10 student facilitators, and at least 12 chaperones. We are well on our way to reaching our goals. Currently we have 38 regular student participants registered, 10 student facilitators and 8 adult chaperones. In Tennessee, presently students are coming from South Fulton, Memphis, Dyersburg, Clarksville, McKenzie and Martin. We also have a few students coming from Paducah, Kentucky as well.

Anyone who hasn't registered already needs to register by April 12, 2024. This is a new deadline for us, so we are encouraging everyone to get registered as soon as they can. We haven't been told yet who our Lead Facilitator will be at the time of this publishing.

There will be a meeting for Students Facilitators with the Lead Facilitator on Friday, April 26, at 2pm at Lakeshore.

All participants will check-in at registration between 2 and 4pm that same day. Please remind participants that you know of who are coming to bring their linens; i.e., sheets, a pillow and pillow case or a sleeping bag, a towel and a flashlight. These are the most common items that are forgotten. They also must bring their printed, filled out and signed Medical Form and Human Values Form which are both located on the website, [www.wtnkeyleader.org](http://www.wtnkeyleader.org). There is a complete packing list on the website as well. There is also a brochure which outlines what will take place over the course of the weekend on our website.



If anyone would like to serve as a chaperone, please go ahead and get registered as soon as you can so that we have plenty of time to ensure that your background check goes through. The only cost for a chaperone is \$25 for a background check which must be done once every two years. We will finish at noon on Sunday, April 28,

2024. I encourage parents to come a little early to see the end of the program and the slide show which includes pictures from the entire weekend.

Any high school is eligible to attend Kiwanis Key Leader whether they are in Key Club or not, so if you have children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, or know someone with friends, or someone in 4H or Boy or Girls Scouts or kids that go to your church who could benefit from some leadership training, please encourage them to come. Also, students who are in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and going to be 9<sup>th</sup> graders next year are eligible to attend as well.

This event is open to all of the LaMissTenn District. Before we had this event, I used to take students from Martin, TN to Baton Rouge, LA to attend. I've had some students and chaperones come from Southern Mississippi and Louisiana in the past. So, if you would like to know more about this event, register and come on up. Everyone is welcome, and I promise you that you will be glad you came. If anyone has any questions, please let me know. You can contact me either via email or phone or text.

[Mramsey2@utm.edu](mailto:Mramsey2@utm.edu)

731-225-7729 (cell)



## Get Ready for Key Leader South!

By Milisa York, Key Leader South Coordinator

Today's high school students are a part of what researchers call the loneliest generation in recorded history. What difference could it make if students found their fit and committed themselves to their communities early in their high school experience?

Key Leader by Kiwanis is a weekend leadership program for high school and graduating 8th grade students. Our mission is to inspire young people to achieve their personal best through service leadership. This life-changing event focuses on service leadership as the first, most meaningful leadership development experience. A Key Leader will learn the most important lesson of leadership - it comes from helping others succeed. Participants begin by attending a Key Leader conference, which



is a weekend retreat. Large and small group workshops, discussions and team-building activities take place over the course of the weekend. Students have opportunities to learn leadership skills that will help them to change their schools, communities, and world for the better. While exploring leadership in a whole new way, participants will make amazing new friends and have experiences

they will never forget. Positive, ongoing interaction with other Key Leader graduates offers continuing reinforcement, encouragement, and growth of leadership skills.

Since April 2005, Key Leader has served more than 31,000 students at 630 Key Leader events in 40 U.S. states, 7 Canadian provinces, The Bahamas, Malaysia, Brazil, Cayman Islands, El Salvador and Singapore. The benefits offered through Key Leader are unique in that they focus on service leadership, social-emotional skills, and can be cultivated through student participation in Kiwanis service organizations such as Key Club. Key Leader empowers students to become more caring and confident leaders. Through team-building activities, group discussion, and personal reflection, participants discover the benefits of Service Leadership. The program flows through large and small group sessions, time for personal reflection, interactive activities, "challenge course" activities, and is anchored by several videos, including a collection from "The Collector of Bedford Street," which follows the community leadership of Larry Selman, known as the "Shepherd of Greenwich Village."

Each Key Leader program is led by a qualified and certified Lead Facilitator, who oversees the implementation of the curriculum and leads all large group sessions.



*Key Leader is a weekend for high school and graduating 8th grade students designed to inspire young people to achieve their personal best through service leadership.*

*Continued on page 25*

[WWW.LAMISSTENN.ORG](http://WWW.LAMISSTENN.ORG)



## Get Ready for Key Leader South! Continued . . .

Older students, including previous Key Leader attendees, serve as small group facilitators for activities in groups called "neighborhoods."

Key Leader can be used to fit a variety of needs including freshman orientation, a retreat for student leaders or rising student leaders, or simply as a means to establish greater connections between students and their school community. The registration fee for every student participant is \$250, a student facilitator is \$150, and all adult chaperones are free. Adults attending Key Leader South must have a current Kiwanis approved background check on file with Kiwanis International. There are District Scholarships available for Key Leader Weekend and you may seek sponsors from local Kiwanis Clubs, Corporations, Churches, other Civic Organizations, and Individuals.

Key Leader South will be held from November 1, 2024 – November 3, 2024, at Camp Istrouma. Our goal for 2024 is 75 students with 20 plus adult chaperones. With seven months to work and plan, this goal is attainable, but we need your help to make it happen. It is such a small investment in the life of a child.

Please read the following testimonials from two of our Key Leader

South participants from East Iberville High School in St. Gabriel, LA who attended Key Leader South in 2022:

**Christina Williams – Student Facilitator:** Key Leader was very fun. I enjoyed meeting new people, and I made a lot of new friends. My favorite parts of Key Leader were the slideshow of memories and when we worked in our student groups. I loved how everyone showed love to each other. When it was time to leave, I enjoyed reading all the goodbye letters I received. I cannot wait for Key Leader South 2024!

**Nicolas Martin – Student Facilitator:** My experience with Key Leader was definitely one to remember. In the very beginning of my junior year, I was asked to attend Key Leader as a student facilitator along with two other students from my school. Now of course I had absolutely no idea what I was being offered but I viewed the opportunity as a challenge, and I've never been known for backing away from a challenge. So, I accepted the offer but with hesitation. I was nervous about going as I had never been camping before but nonetheless, I was eager to see what came next. I could not secure a ride to the camp, but I eventually arrived late, which made me more nervous since every-

one was looking at me when I walked in. But I was immediately welcomed with open arms. As the time slowly passed and I started being myself, people started to notice me and could not help but be attracted to me. It showed that I was chosen to be here not only for my great leadership skills but also for my natural personality. On the last day there, we were reminded that our decorated treat bags were a holder for any letters kids wanted to pass around to leave a message they couldn't say or were too shy to in person. I honestly didn't expect to receive any letters because I didn't really get the chance to know anyone. I spent most of my nights creating notes for kids who I noticed didn't have anything in their treat bags to go home with. Once we left, I noticed my treat bag was heavy, so it took me by surprise to see how many letters I had received. I had a total of 38 letters from both students and counselors. Seeing the words expressed to me made me cry tears of joy. I loved how I was able to reach everyone there without having to actually speak to them directly. I loved Key Leader and wouldn't pass up the opportunity of returning.





## Keeping Our K-Kids Busy!

*By Don Eye, K-Kids District Chair*

Greetings from the Germantown Kiwanis Club! Our elementary schools are nearing their spring break and the end of the school year is just around the corner. I encourage you to use the available time remaining to speak with the school staff and advisors to evaluate your Kiwanis programs. Did you have a positive experience with the K-Kids meetings and did you gain or lose members? I have five K-Kids and one Aktion club each month. If we get be-

hind or start taking shortcuts, we do not do justice to the SLPs.

Our K-Kids are busy and impressive with completing at least three projects each year. Some of the projects include the following: supplying snack food for McDonald House kitchen, collecting books for schools that have no library, collecting winter clothing for poorer schools, supporting day care centers, working the food pantry, gathering canned foods for the homeless, selling Boo Grams and Valentine Grams, having an interclub with our sponsoring Kiwanis club, treating support staff at their school, constructing flash cards for each grade level, and more. K-Kids is our most successful SLP program.

Our K-Kid speaker at the District Convention, Lauren Reed, will be speaking on April 8<sup>th</sup> at 5pm Central on ZOOM. She has experienced a wonderful adventure and made us proud.

Also, we started a new K-Kids and Builders Club and reactivated an Aktion Club!



# AKTION CLUB NEWS

## To Seniors with Love

*By Judy Couvillion, Aktion Club Administrator*

Members of the **Hammond Kiwanis Aktion Club** enjoyed making Valentines for senior citizens at one of their February meetings. Aktion clubbers were given folded colored cards, stickers and Magic Markers and were instructed to use their imagination and creativity to decorate the cards. The cards were later delivered to senior citizens who visit the Tangipahoa Voluntary Council on Aging Center in Hammond. The Aktion Club members welcomed the opportunity to use their talents to create cards that brought joy to a large group of senior citizens. Making greeting cards at special holidays is always a joyful activity for the Aktion Club members.



# Germantown Aktion Club Makes a Difference!

*By Linda Fisher, Germantown Kiwanis Club*

The Germantown Adult Aktion Club at Madonna Learning Center is truly working to improve their community. From making blankets for the local animal shelter to valentines for the City of Germantown's first responders, the Adult Aktion Club has had a fun, busy and successful year of service to the community. In just 35 minutes, 15 members were able to assemble 200 bologna and cheese

sandwiches to be distributed by St. Mary's Soup Kitchen in downtown Memphis! For Easter, the club assembled Easter bags for foster children at the Memphis Family Connection Center. Bags contained a toy and Easter candy for children to brighten their day when they come in for counseling and therapy.

Aktion Club members and Kiwanis members love joining together to make a difference!



# Hammond Aktion Club Progresses

*By Judy Couvillion, Aktion Club Administrator*



The Hammond Aktion Club, at a recent meeting, elected new officers for the coming year. The Aktion Club has progressed considerably since its founding twelve years ago and the members have learned how to conduct meetings, elect officers, and help plan activities. Sponsorship of an Aktion Club is one of the Hammond Kiwanis Club's most cherished activities. Over the years the Aktion Club has traveled to such attractions as the Louisiana State Capitol, the LSU Football Operations Building and Tiger Stadium, the New Orleans Audubon Zoo and Aquarium and the Mississippi Stennis Space Center. The club meets every two weeks and special activities are planned for each meeting.

*Pictured from L to R: Roy Blackwood and Terry King, Hammond Kiwanis; Allyson Dronet, vice president; Steven Bloom, president; and Kelsie Wood, secretary; and Ed Gautier, Hammond Kiwanis.*

## Amory Provides “Baxter Bags” for Kids

By Zandra Conner, Dian Wilemon, & Debra Strawbridge, Algiers Kiwanis

Kiwanis of Amory, Mississippi started a Backpack program in 2018. This program was created to assist families in feeding their children during weekends.

During this time, we were small in numbers. The concern was about having enough money and members to accommodate the project.

The steps for this program:

1. Receive referrals from the school liaison
2. Purchase nutritious and easy preparable foods
3. Pack bags to be delivered to the schools by Kiwanians
4. On Fridays, very discretely, teachers put food bags in the appropriate children’s backpacks

We started the program serving only West Amory Elementary School. As of today, our program is serving three more schools to include Hately, Smithville, and West Amory Head Start Schools. Our project is serving over 120 children.

Not only do the members of our club pack bags, but our Key Club and Builder’s Club participate in packing the food bags.

In memory of our once determined member, Mrs. Judy Baxter, we renamed our backpack program Baxter Bags. Mrs. Baxter was the driving force of this program and pushed hard to start the program.

Through fundraising and various donations, we are able to continue our backpack program as we continue to serve the needs of children.



The Back Pack Program was named “Baxter Bags” in honor of Mrs. Judy Baxter.

## Ascension Kiwanis: Doing Great Things

*By Tiffany LaPorte,  
Ascension Kiwanis Club*

The Ascension Kiwanis Club regularly supports various activities of Bluff Ridge Primary School. In February, members volunteered at the Daddy-Daughter Dance and most recently, Ascension Kiwanis assisted with registration during the school's Bowling with Bunny event. We are looking forward to the upcoming BUGs program!

Each month, Ascension Kiwanis members volunteer at Brave Heart, Children in Need. Brave Heart is focused on improving the quality of life for children who are experiencing the trauma of being removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect.

Also in February, Kiwanis Club of Ascension partnered with the Kiwanis Club of Baton Rouge to sponsor lunch for more than 120 local students at the Ascension Public Schools JAG Day (Jobs for American Graduates). The event was held at the Gonzales Civic Center where students participated in nine life skill breakout sessions before lunch and three afterwards featuring auto stations. The JAG mission is to empower young people with the skills

and support to succeed in education, employment and life.

And in March, Ascension Kiwanis members joined more than 200 other Kiwanians in the LaMissTenn District at the Mid-Year Education Conference to learn about membership, fundraising, service projects and club networking. Congratulations to member Donna Leggett on achieving the 2022-2023 Distinguished Lieutenant Governor Award for Division 8E.



*Ascension Kiwanis members at Mid-Year Education Conference with (center) Kiwanis International Trustee Gary Jander and LaMissTenn Kiwanis Governor John Fry.*



## Baton Rouge Promotes Hands-on Literacy for Special Needs Students

*By Joy Hammatt,  
Baton Rouge Kiwanis Club*

The Kiwanis Club of Baton Rouge reads to Mrs. Davis' Pre K class at McKinley Elementary twice a month. The club donates the book read to Mrs. Davis' classroom library. Club members volunteer to help with the follow up activities.

The children in Mrs. Davis' class are special needs students and most are non verbal. The club has discovered that doing hands-on activities keeps the students engaged and has been very successful. Whether it is using puppets, putting beads on pipe cleaners, putting hearts on a tree, or using their sense of touch to match objects that have the same texture, the children seem to really enjoy all the activities.

These children may be teaching us more than we are teaching them! #KidsNeedKiwanis



## Miscavage Awarded Tablet of Honor from Kiwanis Club of Long Beach

*By Howard Lock, Long Beach Kiwanis Club*



Past International Trustee Dennis Oliver presents the Henry W. Nash - Eugene J. Maier Tablet of Honor to the President-Elect of the **Kiwanis Club of Long Beach** Ingrid Miscavage. Region III Trustee Howard Lock presents her with a Tablet Medallion. The Tablet of Honor is the highest honor the District Foundation can bestow. This prestigious award is named after two of the District Foundation's original founding members, both also having served as Governors. The Tablet of Honor provides a giving opportunity through which Kiwanis Clubs can permanently honor Kiwanians. Recipients are presented an engraved "tablet" signifying that a minimum contribution of \$1,000 has been made in their name.

# Dyersburg Pancake Day Helps the Children

*By William Northcutt, Dyersburg Kiwanis Club*

Sponsored by the **Kiwanis Club of Dyersburg**, a special, yearly breakfast satisfied the appetites of hungry crowds. If you walked into Dyersburg High School between 6:30 to 11 a.m. on Saturday morning, February 24th, you would have seen and smelled pancakes cooking on a circular stove. Maker of perfectly cooked pancakes from expertly mixed batter, the made-to-order griddle was procured in 1969 by Dyersburg Fabric's Albert Fowlkes, after whom the breakfast was named this year. Tickets cost \$5, the proceeds going to Kiwanis' program of making the lives of children healthier and happier. The breakfast tradition goes back more than half a century.

Although most of the hungry hoards were locals, some of them had come from across America, one couple even from Hawaii. People were jovial, in a celebratory mood.

Many had been coming to the breakfast for decades. Attendee Judy Hatch said, "I try to attend every year." She and husband Larry Hatch vowed that they would stick to two



*Pancake Day namesake Albert Fowlkes flips pancakes on the griddle for which he secured funds in 1969.*

pancakes each, understandable since those pancakes were light, but big, thick, and topped with syrup and butter, served with sausage. Athalen and Reginald King also said they were going for two. Dyer County Commissioner Doug Singleteary said he would stop at two pancakes because he had to go to a baseball game. Patricia and Larry Williams, who came to see friends, enjoyed their two pancakes. However, Roxanna Morales, a volleyball champ, said she was shooting for three, showing that she was a pancake eating champion too.

Organizers from Kiwanis were pleased with the turnout. Committee Chair Travis Miles said, "Things are going great. We've had a lot of volunteers, many donations." He remarked that McDonalds, Tyson Foods, and Burks Beverage had donated services and goods.

The Albert Fowlkes Pancake Day breakfast is just one of many key fundraisers that have become area mainstays, area favorites. The breakfast having gone well again, Kiwanis of Dyersburg celebrates another year of community successes - all for kids and communities.



## Hammond Kiwanis Cares

*By Judy Couvillion,  
Hammond Kiwanis Club*

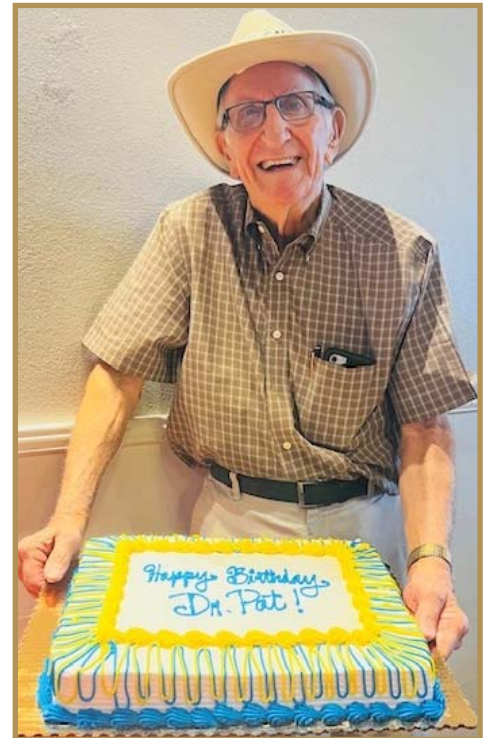
### FEEDING THE LADY LIONS

Collegiate athletic teams that are required to stay on campus during the holidays are always grateful to have a meal prepared for them and served at their practice facility. During the Christmas holidays the **Hammond Kiwanis Club** helped meet the need to “feed the team” by treating the Lady Lions basketball team at Southeastern Louisiana University to a noon meal. The ladies were served pulled pork sandwiches, Cole slaw and dessert. The athletes were grateful for their meal and repeatedly expressed thanks to the Kiwanis Club members for providing a welcome meal.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO A SPECIAL KIWANIAN

The Hammond Kiwanis Club, at its meeting on Feb. 20th, presented

Dr. Pat Settoon with a big birthday cake marking his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. For most of those years Dr. Settoon has been a faithful member of Kiwanis and one of the community’s leading citizens. He was president of Hammond Kiwanis in 1972 and has been a member for more than 50 years. He lifted the spirits of the club’s members as he reminded us just how much Kiwanis means to the community he has served so admirably for so many years in many capacities. Dr. Settoon is retired from Southeastern Louisiana University where he served in many positions of leadership during his long academic career.



## NW St. Tammany Kiwanis Updates

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

**NW St. Tammany Kiwanis** has been busy planning our upcoming 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Giddy Up & Go Kiwanis Car show at Giddy Up Café in downtown Folsom, LA on Saturday April 13th. We have a great day planned with the car show, silent auction, 50/50 raffle, vendor market and jambalaya sales. It should be an amazing day raising funds to help support our local community.

One way we help our community is by supporting our local schools, Folsom Elementary and Folsom Junior High School, throughout the year with funds raised from our school supply drive. These supplies range



from basic needs like pencils and paper to snacks for food insecure students and hygiene products for the school nurses. We recently had another supply drop to restock and the schools to help ensure a successful spring for the students.



## Lake Charles Hosts Spooktacular Coats for Kids

By Steve Ek & Jim Meyer,  
Lake Charles Kiwanis Club

This year, the **Kiwanis Club of Lake Charles** celebrated the 35<sup>th</sup> year of our Coats for Kids project as recently coupled with our Spooktacular Project fundraiser.

This 35<sup>th</sup> year of Coats for Kids, in which coat collection boxes were placed in local schools and businesses, resulted in donations of 1,521 new and used coats that were distributed to thirteen agencies that directly serve those in need. This was a fantastic collection effort by local schools of the Calcasieu Parish School Board, the Diocese of Lake Charles, and the Bishop Noland Episcopal Day Schools. We are indebted to the students, parents, and staff of these great educational bodies. Special thanks is also given to S & M Family Outlet, Energy Transfer Partners, Westlake State Farm Agency, Crying Eagle Brewery, Central Library, Lotte Chemical, and Petro Bowl for their coat collection efforts.

Coats are collected! Now where to clean them? Two years ago Runte Lake Cleaners, owned and operated by Sam Ayaz, with supervision by Floyd Fruge and Tim Davidson, volunteered their

services free of charge to clean all coats collected. This year, this outstanding business cleaned 1,416 used coats that were distributed along with 115 new coats during December, 2023 and January, 2024. Coats for Kids would not happen but for the generosity of Runte Lake Cleaners.

Finally, a few years ago, Kiwanis club member Jim Meyer developed the Spooktacular Coats for Kids Night fundraiser with assistance, generosity, and support of the Crying Eagle Brewery. Each year, the Kiwanis Club of Lake Charles hosts “Spooktacular” night near Halloween at the Crying Eagle. Donors are sought to support agencies that serve the needy, donations of new and used coats are gathered, auctions and drawings take place, and a night of fun, games, and entertainment is held for all ages. This year was an outstanding success with \$32,000 donated and distributed to 10 local charitable agencies. The success of this event is directly attributed to those generous supporters and the Crying Eagle Brewery.

We congratulate and thank all those individuals, schools, and businesses who are so thoughtful of and generous to those in need. We are proud to be part of that in our service with the Kiwanis Club of Lake Charles and all that have made this happen. Join Kiwanis!



Local Charities in the Lake Charles Community received donations from Coats for Kids, totaling \$32,000. On hand to help hand out checks were Div. 12 Lt. Gov. Amanda Fontenot Johnson (Santa Hat left) and Lake Charles Kiwanis President Tori Hebert (center).



## New Orleans Spreads the Love

*By Cathy Simmons,  
New Orleans Kiwanis Club*

### MEALS FROM THE HEART

The Kiwanis Club of New Orleans continued their new partnership with the Ronald McDonald House, through a quarterly program called “Meals from the Heart,” wherein we cook a special meal for the families staying at the house. Fifty meals of baked chicken tenders, dirty rice with sausage, cole-



slaw, and a dessert of delicious muffins were prepared and plated for families to pick up as they return from the hospital.

### DECORATING THE HOUSE

Even Ronald got into the Mardi Gras spirit! We decorated the railings of the porch and balcony with several gross of hanging beads and sparkling masks. Our club tries to bring joy and fun to the families and staff of the house as we do seasonal decorations throughout the year. Spring is just around the corner!

### ANGELS' PLACE SPRING FLING

The Kiwanis Club of New Orleans kicked off springtime for the families of Angels' Place, at their Annual Spring Fling. Families of children with life threatening medical illnesses and their siblings enjoyed a fun afternoon with treats, games like sack race, tug-of-war, egg hunt, and magic tricks with balloon animals!

**#KidsNeedKiwanis**

## Zachary: Caring for the Students

*By MiLisa York, Zachary Kiwanis Club*



Zachary Kiwanis gave out more than 681 BUG awards to students at Rolins Place Elementary, Copper Mill Elementary and Zachary Elementary schools this past month.

Also, members of the Zachary Kiwanis Club along with Zachary Mayor David McDavid, Police Chief Darryl Lawrence, Zachary Fire Chief Danny Kimble and seven members of the fire department traveled to the Zachary Early Learning Center to read *Pete The Cat, Pete's Big Lunch* to the Pre-K children. Each child had their own book to take home!

# North Lake Charles Hosts 9th Annual Negro Spiritual & Gospel Music Sounds

*By Jasmine Abel, North Lake Charles Kiwanis Club*

The Kiwanis Club of North Lake Charles presented their 9th Annual Negro Spiritual and Gospel Music Sounds “An American Phenomenon” on Sunday, February 25th at New Sunlight Baptist Church in Lake Charles, LA.

This concert celebrated and brought awareness to the rich culture of Spirituals and gospel music – folk songs that were composed by enslaved Africans in the 17th century and have been orally passed down through generations.

The concert featured the voices of locals from many congregations. During the concert, short, detailed narratives were also given to contextualize the performed songs.

This event is the Kiwanis Club of North Lake Charles signature project/fundraiser.



“What an honor it was to host such an impactful event during black history month, in the North Lake Charles community. It was amazing to see government officials, community leaders and Lake Charles citizens together in one building, fellowshiping and indulg-

ing in a rich culture that has been passed down from generation to generation. We look forward to seeing what our 10th Annual will bring next year,” said Kiwanis Club of North Lake Charles President Jasmine Abel.



## Opelousas: Kids Need Kiwanis

*By Carrie Richard,  
Opelousas Kiwanis Club*

### LASSIEZ BON TEMP ROULER

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, **Kiwanis of Opelousas** partnered up with Dad and Kids founded by Elliot Mitchell to host the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual pop up Mardi Gras Parade for our SPED students. Mr. Mitchell's vision is for fathers to be more involved in our children's lives. We went to 5 elementary schools within the City of Opelousas. We decorated our float and threw beads and candy to our young people. Our young people were full of smiles and laughter.

We also want to thank our other local supporters for supporting this mission which includes Opelousas Police Department, CASA St. Landry/Evangeline, Elect Judge Aguilard, Joey Richard, Med Express, and Corey Frank with Spoken Red & the Family Tree Information, Education and Counseling.

### HERRITAGE FOLKLORE

On, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Kiwanis Club of Opelousas sponsored 28 of



the 43 students who were awarded a field trip to Heritage Creole Folklife Center in Opelousas, LA. The middle school children, along with members of Opelousas Kiwanis, Staff from Med Express Ambulance Service at GMR, Julius Alsandor, the Mayor of Opelousas and staff with Creswell Middle School were greeted by Mrs. Rebecca Henry, Owner and Founder of the Heritage Creole Folklife Center. Mrs. Henry provided a guided tour of the center speaking about the priceless items in the center and explained about how the center came into existence

as well as her life coming up from a child into adulthood. Ms. Senegal, Principal of Creswell Middle, discussed with students the differences between city, parish and state government in relation to some of the items that were on display in the center. The students were very interested and attentive and participated in the discussion. Another group of students will be attending the Folklore Center soon. Participants from the Opelousas Kiwanis Club were Connie Shakesnider, Gail Thomas and Valerie Arceneaux.



## Pascagoula in Action!

*By Kimberly Howell,  
Pascagoula Kiwanis Club*

### THE DICTIONARY PROJECT

Members of the **Kiwanis Club of Pascagoula** recently traveled to local elementary schools distributing dictionaries to 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> graders throughout the months of January and February.

### TERRIFIC KIDS & BUGS

Pascagoula Kiwanis recognized Terrific Kids at Arlington Heights Elementary, Eastlawn Elementary, Cherokee Elementary and Gautier Elementary Schools. And students were awarded for Bringing up Grades at Escatawpa Elementary School.

### ENGAGING WITH KEY CLUB

Club President Jennifer Foster Brimm, Pascagoula High School (PHS) Key Club Advisor Harvey Barton, and Board Member Jen Robertson proudly represented the Kiwanis Club at the PHS Key Club 2023-2024 induction back in January. And, Kiwanis of Pascagoula invited the PHS Key Club to attend a club luncheon. The PHS Key Club is 39 members strong and doing great work in our community!



Club members, Angela Stewart and Stephanie Packer had a wonderful time distributing dictionaries to all of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes of Moss Point Upper Elementary.



Kiwanis Club members Pam Black and Jen Robertson had a great time recognizing deserving students as Terrific Kids at Arlington Heights Elementary School. (1<sup>st</sup> grade)



Kiwanis Club member Stephanie Packer had a great time awarding BUG (Bringing Up Grades) awards to deserving students at Escatawpa Elementary School.



Pictured at a Pascagoula Kiwanis luncheon are Pascagoula High School (PHS) Key Club Member Elizabeth Fairley, Pascagoula Kiwanis President Jennifer Brimm, PHS Key Club Advisor Mr. Autrey, and PHS Key Club Member Emma Blonde.

## Ponchatoula Gives Care Bags

*By Peronous Clark,  
Ponchatoula Kiwanis Club*

As our unhoused community increases in our town, the **Ponchatoula Kiwanis Club** is always identifying new ways to help. After brainstorming we produced an idea for care bags that people in need can utilize. Our members and local businesses donated such necessity items which included wipes, soap, toothpaste and brushes, deodorant, socks, and towels to go inside the bags. We assembled the bags one afternoon as we were able to have fun at the same time. We partnered with our local police station as a central location for needed people to pick up some as needed. Each police officer will carry bags in the patrol cars to help distribute as well. We decided to make this an ongoing event, as generosity keeps pouring in for the donated items.



## Twin Cities Provides Local Fire Departments with Homeless Bags

*By Kimberly Jackson, Twin Cities Kiwanis Club*

The **Kiwanis Club of the Twin Cities** worked to put together displaced people (aka homeless) bags. Each bag contained personal care items, a bible, snacks, socks, a towel, and blanket. Partnering with the South Fulton Fire Department and the Fulton

Fire Department, the Twin Cities club provided bags for anyone that lost their home to a fire, or any person found to be living on the streets of Fulton and South Fulton. With the mission of Kiwanis being to improve the world one child and one community at a time, the

Kiwanis Club of the Twin Cities wanted to meet a need in the two communities that it serves. Many of the members personally know someone in the community that has lost their home to a fire and the devastation that a family feels at that moment when they lose their belongings is enormous. These bags are meant to bring comfort and a small token to replace immediate items they may need that very day. The club plans to replace bags when needed. Members of both community fire departments were on hand to receive the items at our most recent meeting in February at the New Life Family Worship Center in Fulton, KY.



## Vicksburg Hosts 30th Annual Chili Feast

*By Tom Osburn,  
Vicksburg Kiwanis Club*

The Kiwanis Club of Vicksburg held its 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Kiwanis Chili Feast on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. In 30 years the Club learned a lot about what works and how to streamline the process and maximize the profits. There are no records from the first event held in 1995, but it must have been enough of a success that the Club continued with it.

This year, almost \$20,000 was raised, which is about 95% of the total budget for the club's service account for the year. It was also a way to educate the community about the Club. An Information sheet about the Club activities and its contributions to the community was included with each meal. The reverse side of the sheet contained ads as an additional way of making money. There were four major sponsors who had their name/logo on a label which went on each fold over meal tray.

The Feast requires the support of all Club members as well as the 4 Key Clubs the club sponsors. Club members sold tickets and arranged deliveries. Members pre-cooked the meat and seasonings prior to the feast. Members then worked various times on Feast



*Governor John Fry (left) and First Lady Cathy Fry (right) help Vicksburg Kiwanis members Tom and Donna Osburn (center) at the 30th Annual Chili Feast.*

Day to ensure that the project was a success.

In addition to selling tickets, Key Clubbers were vital to the success of the project as 14 arrived with 9 Kiwanians at the Feast site at 6 a.m. to begin setting up and preparing the pots of chili. Forty more Key Clubbers and 20 more Kiwanians arrived at 8 a.m. to run the serving line which began putting meals together at 9:15 a.m. By 10:45 a.m. over 1,000 meals had been prepared, boxed, bagged, and loaded into 10 Kiwanians' vehicles for delivery. That is about 5.4 seconds per meal!

The club appreciated the help of Governor John Fry, First Lady Cathy Fry and Division 15 Lt. Governor Lori Alles who all showed up to assist.

After the delivery rush, the advertised serving time began at 11 a.m. and continued until 1 p.m. An evening shift of 10 Kiwanians and 3 more Key Clubbers served meals from 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. By the end of the event, 1,750 meals had been served - 120 gallons of chili!



# Share Your Club's News!

By Tiffany LaPorte, District Bulletin Editor

## Submit your article or photographs:

EMAIL: [tiffany@lamisstenn.org](mailto: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. *Please send one Word document along with pictures attached separately 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:

**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  
Louisiana-Mississippi-West Tennessee District of  
Kiwanis International

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Andrew Dozier, *Abbeville, LA*

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