By Patrice Stewart
Kiwanis Kourier editor

The Alabama District of Kiwanis won the top award in Kiwanis International’s Signature Project competition.

The district’s entry was the Alabama National Fair, sponsored for 65 years by the Kiwanis Club of Montgomery. The fair has funneled more than $7.4 million to charities that help children while also helping children enjoy ferris wheels, funnel cakes and fun.

The honor was announced at a June 27 luncheon focusing attention on club signature projects during the 104th Kiwanis International Convention at Disney Resorts in Florida.

The project had already been named one of the top 10 finalists. Those 10

(See FAIR, Page 3)
Greetings to everyone in Kiwanis Land. It’s summertime in Alabama, so you know what that means? It is convention season!

The Kiwanis International Convention just wrapped up in Orlando. The Alabama District Convention will be held Aug. 2-4 in Huntsville.

**ICON honors in Orlando**

The Alabama District was well-represented at the Kiwanis International Convention, with about 40 attending the events at Walt Disney World Resort, Florida. A great time was reported by all.

The biggest news for the Alabama District was taking top prize in the 2019 Signature Project Contest organized by Kiwanis International’s public relations department.

The Alabama National Fair, sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Montgomery, represented Alabama in the competition. It was a great week to showcase an Alabama original since 1954.

The business session on Friday concluded with the election of Gary Cooper, David Hurrelbrink and Cathy Szymanski to the Kiwanis International Board of Trustees. Trustee Peter Mancuso was elected vice president.

Saturday’s closing session included the Alabama District and Kiwanis Club of Montgomery receiving the KIDS (Kiwanis International Distinguished Service) Award. So, lesson learned, save room in your luggage for awards.

**DCON in Huntsville Aug. 2-4**

The 101st Alabama District Convention is set for Aug. 2-4, with members of the Kiwanis Club of Huntsville serving as hosts.

They have worked their tails off to make this a banner year for DCON, and they request that clubs bring their banners and stand to showcase the clubs in Alabama.

Kiwanis Executive Director Stan Soderstrom will be in attendance during the weekend. New trustee and Alabama District Counselor Cathy Szymanski will also attend the Huntsville convention.

(See GOVERNOR, Page 3)
clubs were recognized in Orlando, and then the top three were announced.

Alabama Kiwanians at the luncheon clapped politely as a Louisiana club won third place and an Australia project placed second … and then went wild with applause as the Alabama District was called for first place.

Three Kiwanis Club of Montgomery members — District Governor Ben Taylor and Montgomery Kiwanis officers Sam Johnson and John Hutcheson — took the stage to receive plaques from Kiwanis International President-elect Daniel Vigneron of the Belgium-Luxembourg District.

The Australia District was the second-place winner for the Kiwanis Club of Bendigo’s Children’s Book Box Libraries project.

After a community assessment showed poor literacy rates among children in the Bendigo community, Kiwanians decided to help children learn to read by placing book boxes in places where children visit. The kids can read, borrow, swap or keep the books. The project has been so successful that several other charitable groups have joined the effort.

In third place was the Louisiana-Mississippi-West Tennessee District for the 69th annual Pancake Festival by the Kiwanis Club of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. That club doesn’t have a pancake breakfast; they make it an entire festival.

For 45 years, children have been performing and showing their art after the club found that community children benefit from an opportunity to publicly display their talents to a wide audience.

It’s become one of the largest and oldest juried talent shows in Louisiana, and the club raises nearly $25,000 each year from the festival for service projects.

Other finalists were from Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand-South Pacific, the Philippines, Taiwan and Canada.

Kiwanis Executive Director Stan Soderstrom talked about club signature projects in the opening session: “They are known in their communities because of the impact they have,” he said.

Be sure to bring children’s books to Huntsville and participate in our district-wide service project on Saturday afternoon. We will be putting Kiwanis stickers in donated children’s books, which will then be delivered to the St. Jude affiliate hospital in Huntsville. Our goal is 1,000 books, so don’t forget to bring children’s books with you to Huntsville.

One of my goals as your 2018-19 governor was to let the host town know that Kiwanis was in town. Thanks to Governor-elect Bob Brown and others, this project will serve that purpose. I hope to see you there!

It’s hard to believe my year as Kiwanis governor is coming to an end. It seems like yesterday that I was a lieutenant governor for Brian Rodgers!

Some of you are like me, with your term as a club officer ending as well. Kiwanis members like to say the most coveted pin in Kiwanis is the Past President Pin.

Kiwanians will take that pin and desire something more. Kiwanians continue to recruit new members, brainstorm new service projects and serve the kids of their communities.

Kiwanis members come to their club meetings with the “been there, done that” attitude. Do you understand what I am trying to say?

In the last few months of this year, I challenge you. Are you a Kiwanian or a member?

If you already know you are a Kiwanian, great! Inspire the members of your club to become Kiwanians as well. You will notice the difference in your club’s impact to the community.

The children of Alabama need us now more than ever!
Scott Sims plans to run for district’s vice governor; election in Huntsville

By Patrice Stewart
Kiwanis Kourier editor

The Kiwanis Club of Homewood-Mountain Brook is nominating Division 5 Lt. Governor Scott Sims for Alabama District vice governor.

Sims has been a member of that club since Aug. 1, 2002.

Nominations and elections of officers will take place during the Saturday morning business session at the Alabama District Convention in Huntsville Aug. 2-4.

The letter of nomination signed by Colean Black, secretary/treasurer of the Homewood-Mountain Brook Club, was submitted to the district secretary in May.

“Mr. Sims has conducted himself in the highest of standards throughout his 17 years as a Kiwanian including leading our club as president in 2017-2018 and currently serving as lieutenant governor for Division 5,” Black wrote.

Kiwanis, Key Club honors

She said he has “a long-standing and impressive Kiwanis history,” including the Hoyt Lee Outstanding Kiwanian Award at the Alabama Key Club District Convention in April 2019; the Distinguished Kiwanian Award for recruiting new members at the Kiwanis Midwinter Conference in February 2019; the Presidential Zeller Award from the Homewood-Mountain Brook Club in October 2018; the George Price Service to Youth Award at Alabama Key Club District Convention in April 2017; and the Kiwanian of the Year award from Homewood-Mountain Brook Club in October 2002.

Sims has been a board member, vice president and president for the Kiwanis Club of Homewood-Mountain Brook and is currently immediate past president. He also has served as Kiwanis adviser to the Homewood Key Club.

Sims also was active in Key Club in high school, serving as governor, lieutenant governor and state K-family relations director, Black noted.

Sims, 53, was born in Birmingham but moved to Jasper at age 9 and considers Jasper his hometown.

He graduated from Walker High School there in 1984, after serving as Key Club lieutenant governor and district governor.

“Walker had an outstanding Key Club tradition and remains the oldest existing Key Club in the state,” Sims said.

He attended the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, graduating in 1990 with a Bachelor of Science in Marketing from the Business School. Then Sims studied at Cumberland School of Law at Samford University in Birmingham, graduating in 1993.

Sims is an attorney and shareholder with Sirote & Permutt, PC, in Birmingham.

A Key Club family of 6

His wife, Andi, graduated from Lanett High School in 1986. She served on Alabama District Key Club Board as one of three state Key Club sweethearts. A graduate of Samford University, she is vice president and director of marketing for Hoar Program Management.

All four of their children have been members of the Homewood High School Key Club.

Zach, 24, played football at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, where he earned both a business degree and an MBA. Caroline, 22, just graduated from Belmont University in Nashville. She served as a Key Club lieutenant governor and then as district secretary. William, 19, was elected Key Club lieutenant governor, Governor and International President; he just finished his freshman year at Belmont University. Harrison is 15 and just finished his freshman year at Homewood High.

‘Profound impact’

“Kiwanis had a profound impact on my life as a high school student through Key Club, and it has continued to have a positive impact on my family,” said Sims. “Key Club expanded my world as it gave me a platform where I learned both to serve and to lead. I also learned how to travel and speak and developed skills that benefit me still today.”

He also met his wife through Key Club and even proposed to her years later at an Alabama Key Club District Convention.

Recruiting is ‘a passion’

“As a grateful adult, I knew Kiwanis would be my place of service,” Sims said. “It has been a privilege to give back to the K-Family through leadership at the local club level and now on the district level as lieutenant governor.”

If elected vice governor, Sims said,

(See SIMS, Page 16)

Sims video describes Kiwanis involvement

Scott Sims was asked by his law firm to be featured in a video, “A Charitable Way,” which first aired last winter. Some Alabama Kiwanians saw it and asked to share it with their clubs; below is a link so more can watch.

“When requested to do it, I told my firm I wanted to promote Kiwanis because it was such a huge part of my story. I hope this will be encouraging to you and a reminder of what a difference this organization has made in the life of someone you know,” he said.

Here is the video link: tinyurl.com/scott-sims

Deadline for the next edition of the online Kiwanis Kourier is Sept. 25, 2019
2019 Alabama District Convention
Aug. 2-4, 2019
Embassy Suites, Huntsville

Agenda Summary

Friday, Aug. 2
10:00 - 11:45 a.m. — RIF Advisory Board meeting
Noon - 2:45 p.m. — District Board meeting
3:00 - 5:00 p.m. — Alabama Kiwanis Foundation Board meeting
6:00 p.m. — Dinner

Saturday, Aug. 3
7 a.m. — Hotel complimentary breakfast service starts
7:00 - 7:50 a.m. — Jean Dean Reading Is Fundamental meeting
8:00 - 9:15 a.m. — Opening Session/House of Delegates
9:15 - 9:30 a.m. — Break
9:30 - 10:15 a.m. — Workshop Session 1 (3 simultaneous programs)
  ■ Sustainable Membership Growth
  ■ Impactful Service Projects
  ■ Effective Public Relations
10:15 - 10:30 a.m. — Break
10:30 - 11:15 a.m. — Workshop Session 2 (3 simultaneous programs)
11:15 - 11:30 a.m. — Break
11:30 - 12:15 p.m. — Workshop Session 3 (3 simultaneous programs)
12:15 - 12:30 p.m. — Break
12:30 - 2:15 p.m. — Interclub Luncheon
2:15 - 2:30 p.m. — Break
2:30 - 3:30 p.m. — On-site service project/children’s books
2:30 - 4:30 p.m. — Past Governors’ meeting
6:00 - 6:45 p.m. — Honors Reception (cash bar)
6:45 - 8:30 p.m. — Governor’s Banquet

Sunday, Aug. 4
Hotel complimentary breakfast service starts at 7 a.m.
8:30 - 9:15 a.m. — Memorial Service
9:30 - 10:45 a.m. — Meeting of 2019-20 Board

Bring auction items to convention

A silent auction to raise funds for Jean Dean Reading Is Fundamental and Alabama Kiwanis Foundation will be held at the convention. Bring your items to Huntsville to donate, and turn them in at the auction room at Embassy Suites.

If possible, email your donation form to carol.grimes@envsyscorp.com by July 31. Bring the donation form with each item (the donation form is at alabama.kiwanis.org).

RIF breakfast meeting in Huntsville

Jean Dean Reading Is Fundamental will hold a breakfast meeting Aug. 3 from 7 to 7:50 a.m. in the Marshall Room at Embassy Suites during the convention in Huntsville.

Those who want to attend may bring trays from the hotel breakfast area. Cathy Gafford, executive director of Jean Dean RIF, said she will discuss its 30th year and ways local clubs can continue reading to children after her program is scheduled to end in 2020.

Huntsville convention

(From Page 1)

from Kiwanis International. Kiwanis International Executive Director Stan Soderstrom will address the 12:30 p.m. Saturday Interclub Luncheon.

On Saturday evening, Aaron Ketzenberger, associate director of development for the Kiwanis Children’s Fund, will speak. Also, Cathy Szymanski, KI board counselor, will make remarks and then install district officers and board members (see more about her on Page 17).

Several board meetings will be held on Friday, and then the convention will begin with a 6 p.m. dinner.

Following the 8 a.m. Saturday opening session and elections, Kiwanians can attend three Saturday morning workshop topics featuring tried-and-true ideas from Alabama clubs and leaders. Learn about member recruitment campaigns, new service project ideas (including some that can be done at club meetings), and new ways to communicate what your club is doing in your community.

Pop-up service project

A “pop-up service project” will start at 2:30 p.m. Saturday. Governor-elect Bob Brown asked for a project in which all attendees and their families and friends can participate. Each Kiwanian is asked to purchase one or more new books appropriate for ages 3 to 18, and bring those and other books from their club to Huntsville. (Books can also be mailed to arrive by July 29 to Kiwanis Club of Huntsville, c/o Mike Roddy, 108 E. Inwood Circle, Madison, AL 35758.)

At the 2:30 gathering, Alabama District of Kiwanis bookplates will be placed in each book. The books will be donated to the St. Jude Research Hospital Affiliate Clinic at the Huntsville Hospital for Women & Children and the Huntsville Hospital System. While providing books to hospitalized children and teens, the project also will increase visibility for Kiwanis.

The Honors Reception will begin at 6 p.m. Saturday, followed by the Governor’s Banquet at 6:45.

(See CONVENTION, Page 6)
We want to make this dinner where we will install our new officers and board a ‘banner night,’” Brown said. “Please bring your club banner and a stand for this special event.”

The Sunday morning Memorial Service will begin at 8:30, followed by a meeting of the 2019-20 board. All meals and events will be at Embassy Suites.

The registration form and more convention information can be reached from links at the district website (alabama.kiwanis.org) and the Huntsville club site, tinyurl.com/huntsville-kiwanis.

The Huntsville club asked for registrations to be completed by July 19; they must receive late registrations by July 26 to give meal numbers to the hotel.

The full registration fee of $225 covers Friday evening and Saturday noon meals and meetings. The only meals you can attend without paying the full registration are: Governor’s Dinner Saturday night (a separate reservation is required) and the RIF Breakfast Saturday and Memorial Service Breakfast Sunday (free for hotel guests, others pay at the hotel registration desk).

Hotel reservations for Embassy Suites begin at $144 (includes breakfast and social hour) and can be made by contacting Susan McDougal, (256) 203-4116 or Susan@SuzqzTravels.com.

The Huntsville Kiwanis member who coordinates the Spelling Bee. The county competition lasted 27 rounds; the last 10 rounds had only Erin and Ella left in the competition. At the club meeting, however, the young women quickly out-spelled Huntsville Kiwanis President Marc Byers and West Huntsville Kiwanis Club President Richard Hartz, right. See the story below for more about Erin and the national competition.

**Spelling champ**

Erin Howard became one of the eight co-champions of the annual Scripps National Spelling Bee after winning a county spelling bee sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Huntsville.

Erin attended Mountain Gap School in Huntsville and will be a ninth-grader at Grissom High School in the fall. She won the Madison County Spelling Bee in February and then in March won the Alabama state spelling bee for the third time.

She made her third trip to the national bee outside Washington, D.C., where on May 30 judges declared multiple champions because none of the students had been stumped by a word in 20 rounds.

Forty-two other spellers had been eliminated. Each of the eight winners received $50,000.

In the final 2019 round, Erin correctly spelled “erysipelas” — the name of a disease characterized by a skin rash.

AL.com reported that Erin sighed her relief when, in one round after another, she was asked to spell a word that she knew.

“Yeah, I have no poker face,” she said. “None whatsoever. You can tell when I know a word, and you can tell when I don’t know a word.”

**Concentration**

**She wins Huntsville club’s event, goes on to be national co-winner**

Erin Howard became one of the eight co-champions of the annual Scripps National Spelling Bee after winning a county spelling bee sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Huntsville.

Erin attended Mountain Gap School in Huntsville and will be a ninth-grader at Grissom High School in the fall. She won the Madison County Spelling Bee in February and then in March won the Alabama state spelling bee for the third time.

She made her third trip to the national bee outside Washington, D.C., where on May 30 judges declared multiple champions because none of the students had been stumped by a word in 20 rounds.

Forty-two other spellers had been eliminated. Each of the eight winners received $50,000.

In the final 2019 round, Erin correctly spelled “erysipelas” — the name of a disease characterized by a skin rash.

AL.com reported that Erin sighed her relief when, in one round after another, she was asked to spell a word that she knew.

“Yeah, I have no poker face,” she said. “None whatsoever. You can tell when I know a word, and you can tell when I don’t know a word.”

**Convention**

(From Page 5)

“We want to make this dinner where we will install our new officers and board a ‘banner night,’ ” Brown said. “Please bring your club banner and a stand for this special event.”

The Sunday morning Memorial Service will begin at 8:30, followed by a meeting of the 2019-20 board.

All meals and events will be at Embassy Suites.

The registration form and more convention information can be reached from links at the district website (alabama.kiwanis.org) and the Huntsville club site, tinyurl.com/huntsville-kiwanis.

The Huntsville club asked for registrations to be completed by July 19; they must receive late registrations by July 26 to give meal numbers to the hotel.

The full registration fee of $225 covers Friday evening and Saturday noon meals and meetings. The only meals you can attend without paying the full registration are: Governor’s Dinner Saturday night (a separate reservation is required) and the RIF Breakfast Saturday and Memorial Service Breakfast Sunday (free for hotel guests, others pay at the hotel registration desk).

Hotel reservations for Embassy Suites begin at $144 (includes breakfast and social hour) and can be made by contacting Susan McDougal, (256) 203-4116 or Susan@SuzqzTravels.com.
Azalea City’s thanks to Chester Feagin

Saying goodbye to your Kiwanis club friends is not easy — especially when you are a charter president with almost 38 years of shared service and memories.

That has been the dilemma for Chester C. Feagin Jr. this summer.

The charter member of the Azalea City Kiwanis Club in Mobile will turn 94 in August, and he and his family decided it was time for him to move to Gardendale, Alabama, to live with his daughter Cherie and her husband.

Fortunately, the Alabama District helped form a Kiwanis Club in Gardendale two years ago, and it is ready to welcome Feagin.

Past District Governor Keith Graham and wife Dee Dee, both members of the Azalea City Kiwanis Club, held a June 18 reception at their new home to honor their friend and his years in the club. Past and present members came to visit with Feagin before his move to North Alabama.

Dee Dee Graham said they wanted “to recognize the great achievements and long-term membership of our charter president, Chester Feagin. He is very dear to all of us and was one of the biggest supporters in all of the projects in which we participated.”

She noted that Feagin, a World War II veteran, was a Distinguished President and past lieutenant governor who had 36-plus years of perfect attendance. He is a Hixson Fellow and was awarded the Tablet of Honor by Azalea City in recognition of his service to the club.

‘Leads by example’

“He consistently leads by example and has out-funded our members at our annual golf tournament,” she said.

In 2018, Azalea City established the Chester Feagin-Azalea City Kiwanis Scholarship in recognition of his “leadership and unwavering support for all things Kiwanis.” This year the first $1,000 scholarship was awarded to a student from the Mary G. Montgomery Key Club.

“The Kiwanis Club of Gardendale is blessed to have such a seasoned new member. We wish them many happy years with Mr. Chester,” she added.

Fellow club member Irving Silver said Feagin “played an active and integral part in just about all of the club’s successful achievements over the past three and a half decades.

“Chester was never bashful in asking someone to support and contribute to the countless community service projects of the club. It seldom took long for anyone to get to know Chester, and those who did soon became lifelong friends with him,” Silver said. “His infectious smile, his always positive, can-do attitude and his inspiring leadership will truly be missed by his legions of loving friends in Mobile.”

Other friends chimed in with similar comments on their Facebook group, mentioning the “wonderful legacy” he is leaving the club.

Feagin responded that they “are truly the greatest, and I am so proud to have been a part of you for almost 38 years. I love each and every one of you from the bottom of my heart. God bless.”
Gadsden club luncheon celebrates centennial, recalling impact on area

By Patrice Stewart
Kiwanis Kourier editor

The Kiwanis Club of Gadsden celebrated its centennial at its luncheon meeting July 10, highlighting many of the people who led the club in a strong community influence during its first 100 years.

The charter members and past presidents were listed in the 100th-anniversary luncheon program, along with the club history. After the Kiwanis logo birthday cake was served, about 20 past presidents shared memories and talked about what makes their club long-lasting and outstanding.

Service was frequently mentioned — especially the Pancake Day, an annual civic and social event since February 1958. Club leaders decided to try pancakes after losing money on a magic show, and they have flipped pancakes ever since and contributed more than $1.1 million to help children and organizations in Etowah County. Scholarships are given annually to graduating seniors, too.

Members of their Service Leadership Programs help out at Pancake Day, too. That’s the Gadsden State Community College Circle K, nine Key Clubs, eight Builders Clubs and two K-Kids Clubs, plus an Aktion Club.

The Gadsden group figured out how to show their colors and help businesses display their patriotism, too. Putting out flags (and taking them down and storing them) for many holidays every year has turned into a mutually beneficial fundraiser — and some youth groups help with that project, too.

The Gadsden Kiwanis Christmas Parade is an enjoyable annual event the club sponsors to the delight of children. And family members of all ages enjoy gatherings at the recently renovated Kiwanis Pavilion at Noccalula Falls Park, where the city proclamation for the club’s 100th birthday will join other Kiwanis memorabilia on display.

Jim Stivender, who served as president in 1962, the earliest of those attending, spoke first. While he is no longer active, he still pays dues and is proud of his 60-year membership pin. “This Kiwanis club meant a lot to me, and it meant a lot to this community,” he said.

Jack Roberts, who was president in 1982-83, said it was a great experience for him to be mentored by the older members. “They just took the young fellows under their wings. I enjoyed going to district and international conventions, too — the Gadsden club was well-known throughout the state and Kiwanis International.”

Rish Wood, club president for 2001-02, presided over this section of the program, calling the former leaders to the

(See CENTENNIAL, Page 16)
The Kiwanis Club of Gadsden celebrated its 100th anniversary at lunch on July 10. This history is based on the book “History of Alabama Kiwanis,” written by Bob McCurley. He is an Alabama past Kiwanis governor and a past president of the Kiwanis International Foundation.

Friday the 13th is a superstitious day of any month to many people, but not to those faithful citizens of Gadsden on June 13, 1919. On that date, T. Jeff Bailey and District Governor Andrew J. Arrant of Birmingham made the first move in organizing a Kiwanis Club in Gadsden.

Bailey was a field representative of Kiwanis International, with the responsibility of organizing Kiwanis clubs in Alabama and Florida. Andy was a member of the Kiwanis Club of Birmingham and the first district governor of the Alabama-Florida Kiwanis District.

Fifteen men gathered in the office of Judge William J. Boykin in the Stocks Building that June 13 and accepted the invitation of Kiwanis International to organize the third Kiwanis club in Alabama. The two existing clubs were in Mobile and Birmingham.

It was quite an honor for Gadsden to have been chosen the city in which a Kiwanis club was to be organized. On the editorial page of the Gadsden Evening Journal, the people of Gadsden were congratulated for having received this honor.

On Wednesday, July 2, 1919, the first regular meeting of this group was held at the Printup Hotel, and prospective members were invited to attend. The meeting was held at 9 o’clock in the evening, and several members of the Kiwanis Club of Birmingham were present, as well as a large group of local men interested in learning more about the function of a Kiwanis club.

**Organized July 14, 1919**

The next meeting was held on Wednesday, July 14, 1919, at which time the required 50 members had (See GADSDEN, Page 10)
been approved, and that is the date the Kiwanis Club of Gadsden, Alabama, was organized, according to Kiwanis International records.

Regular weekly meetings were held each Wednesday, and on Dec. 10, 1919, the Gadsden club received its charter from Kiwanis International at a gala affair, attended by all the city fathers, club members, guests and their wives.

Arrant presented the charter to the Gadsden club’s first president, William J. Boykin, and Bailey welcomed the new club into Kiwanis International and wished it much happiness and success in the years to come.

The club did not continue holding its regular meeting at the Printup Hotel for long, because the ladies of local churches immediately saw the chance to serve the Kiwanis Club and pick up a few dollars for their church work.

The club then voted to alternate weekly with the Methodist and Presbyterian ladies’ organizations. In doing this, they chalked up one of their first projects, that of giving aid to local organizations.

First project: Boy Scouts

The first real project of the club was to help organize Boy Scout troops in Etowah County. The Boy Scout movement was just getting started in the county.

From that time, the Kiwanis Club of Gadsden has never stopped working with the Scouts and many other worthwhile projects.

In 1919 Gadsden boasted a population of 17,000 people, and saw an occasional steamboat make a trip there from Rome, Georgia. Electric streetcars were the main mode of transportation from the Coosa River to the Southern Railroad’s passenger station in Attalla.

The Etowah County Courthouse stood on the corner of 4th and Broad streets. A few horse-and-buggy carriages were in use, and a public watering trough for the animals was located in front of the courthouse.

Since those days, Gadsden has shown tremendous growth, and the Kiwanis Club believes it has contributed its share of the projects that have enriched the community.

Meeting locations change

In the late 1920s, the Reich Hotel was built, and the club began meeting in its beautiful ballroom. The Reich Hotel continued to serve as the meeting place for the Kiwanis Club until 1978, when the hotel was converted into an apartment complex.

Since then, the Kiwanis Club has met in the Civic Center, at the Gadsden Mall, in the Hardin Center for Cultural Arts, and now in the Gadsden Museum of Art.
Gadsden centennial luncheon

Friends were reunited and new acquaintances made at the July 10 luncheon celebrating the Kiwanis Club of Gadsden’s 100th anniversary. Members, guests and Alabama District officers attending got a look at memorabilia and heard the city proclamation and past presidents’ recollections while enjoying cake and candy inscribed with “100.” (Photos by Patrice Stewart)
Decatur’s George Mills goes back to Normandy on 75th anniversary

Kiwanian George F. Mills returned to Europe this summer to observe the anniversary of D-Day — almost 75 years after he arrived there as a U.S. Army infantryman during World War II.

However, Mills, who recently joined the Kiwanis Club of Decatur at the age of 97, doesn’t think of himself as a hero.

He and other American soldiers came ashore on Omaha Beach in Normandy, France, on June 29, 1944, which was 23 days after Allied forces’ D-Day invasion.

Facing enemy fire

They soon encountered fire from the German enemy. But his Company E, 109th Infantry, 28th U.S. Army Division, helped liberate Paris later that summer.

He was injured and captured in December. Shrapnel hit him above his right eye. A German doctor treated his injury, but he and other prisoners of war were marched for months. Many died of starvation and disease. On April 13, 1945, American troops liberated them. The war ended after Germany surrendered in May and Japan surrendered in September.

Matthew Burley, a fellow recipient of the Purple Heart, told The Decatur Daily that Mills is “a national treasure,” one “who has given us the life we are enjoying.”

But Mills said the true heroes died overseas.

‘Went over there to do a job’

“I was just one of 16 million who went over there to do a job,” he said — “to get rid of a machine that was trying to corrupt the world. I know what those who sacrificed went through. They wanted to come home as bad as I did. They didn’t get the chance.”

Mills’ 98th birthday was May 23. On D-Day, June 6, he was back in Europe as part of a trip sponsored by a group called Forever Young Senior Veterans.

Their agenda included a ceremony at Omaha Beach, visits to museums and memorials, and a bus tour of Paris.

He and two other participants, including 99-year-old Sherwin Callander of Madison, Alabama, were interviewed on “CBS This Morning” on June 5, with the American Cemetery behind them during the television coverage.

“I think all the young people need to really know what happened 75 years ago and prepare themselves for what’s going to happen ahead of them,” Mills said, “because if we don’t know what has happened to us, we don’t know what’s ahead of us.”

Spring training

Governor-elect Bob Brown (front center) planned a spring gathering for his group of lieutenant governors to prepare for the 2019-20 Kiwanis year with the assistance of District Secretary Tammy Driskill, Membership Chair Elise Hearn and others.

“With a team this talented, success is inevitable,” Brown said. They will be installed during the Saturday evening Governor’s Banquet at the Aug. 2-4 District Convention in Huntsville. They will take office Oct. 1.
Mobile club hosts luncheon for DYW national finalists

The Kiwanis Club of Mobile sponsored a luncheon June 18 for the 2019 national finalists in the Distinguished Young Women Scholarship Program. Members of the Downtown Mobile Kiwanis Club joined them for the luncheon honoring young women from every state who were in Mobile for this annual competition. The two-week schedule of events culminates in the preliminaries and finals during which the young women compete for scholarships. While in Mobile, the finalists participate in community service, spend time in rehearsals, attend events such as the Kiwanis luncheon, and participate in some fun challenges, such as the traditional raw oyster eating competition. At the Kiwanis luncheon, they each told their hometown and future plans and received handmade photo frames personalized for each state winner. “Our future is bright with these young women leading the way,” said Kiwanian Darrell Butler. On June 28, Dora Guo of Illinois was named Distinguished Young Woman of America for 2019 at the 62nd national finals in Mobile.

Building clubs in Florida story time

Alabama District Immediate Past Governor Armand St. Raymond of the Kiwanis Club of Birmingham (back row, second from right) and other members of the Eye of the Tiger eKiwanis Club met in Davenport, Florida, to open two new clubs just before the Kiwanis International Convention at Walt Disney World.

Gardendale story time

Warm summer days at the Gardendale Farmers’ Market have given the Kiwanis Club of Gardendale an opportunity for service and raising awareness. Members have been holding 9:30 a.m. Thursday story times at the market, reading to children while also publicizing their Kiwanis club and service opportunities to prospective members.
Ozark rewards students who improve grades

The Kiwanis Club of Ozark has been involved in several projects recently, including selling sponsorships for its June 30 Radio Day fundraiser on WOAB-FM 104.9.

The club presented a check to the local Boys and Girls Club, which it partners with on the BUGS (Bringing Up Grades) program to recognize students who bring up their grades.

The Ozark club’s annual Kiwanis scholarship was awarded to Mathew Siegfried, who plans to attend Auburn University.

Members also help regularly with the Brown Bag food project.

Anniston gives agencies $12,000 for children

The Anniston Kiwanis Club is excited to announce that, through our “Young Children Priority One” (YCPO) program, 21 local agencies that represent and help children in our community received checks from our club totaling $12,000.

If you attended our Pancake Day, and/or purchased pancake tickets in March, pat yourself on the back as you assisted us in raising these funds. Representatives from the various agencies attended our club meeting to receive their checks, express their gratitude, and tell members how their respective agencies plan to use the monies to benefit children in our community.

We also gave two Key Club members scholarships. We have started our Bike Project and will be working to give bicycles to children at Christmas.

Gadsden scholarships awarded to 14 students

On May 1, the Gadsden Kiwanis Club presented academic scholarships to 14 students:

- Gordon Isbell $1,000 — Anne Roberts
- Nelson Thomas $1,250 — Anna Grace Gardner
- Jimmy Howard $1,250 — Mattison Molock
- Hurst/Dennis $1,250 — Sun Chen
- Academic $1,000 — Lauren Simpson, Mackenzie Blevins, Alexa Goodman, Kennedy Carter, Rachel Bonner, Sarah Hicks, Aaron Rakestraw, Molly Frost, Jovie Edward, Ansley Hicks.

The Gadsden club also is celebrating its 100-year anniversary (see story, photos and history on Pages 8-11).

Fort Payne will serve pancakes at Boom Day

On Sept. 21, the Fort Payne Kiwanis Club will be serving pancakes at the Fort Payne Boom Day Heritage Celebration.

Oxford to sell peanuts to raise funds in fall

Oxford Kiwanis Club is planning its peanut sales fundraiser for this fall. If you would like to get peanuts, contact Christopher Fuller.

—Compiled by Glenda Selman, Division 7 lieutenant governor

Next Kiwanis International Convention is June 18-21, 2020, in Indianapolis, Indiana
Speakers at the Kiwanis International Convention included (from left) Daniel Vigneron, KI President-designate; Tammy Chang, M.D.; and Jim Collins.

Convention speakers say to keep your promises and find purpose

By Patrice Stewart
Kiwanis Kourier editor

More than 40 Alabama Kiwanians represented the district at the 104th Kiwanis International Convention June 26-29 in Orlando, where the temperature was hot and the speakers were hotter.

Kiwanians filled the convention center at Disney’s Coronado Springs Resort, at times joined for speakers by Circle K International members who held meetings at another Disney hotel.

The Disney magic included Mickey and Minnie Mouse welcoming convention attendees, along with Anna from the Disney movie “Frozen,” complete with a little snow falling inside, and magician Justin Willman with some amazing tricks.

10 million Promise Cards

All K-Family members seemed to enjoy the opening session talk by Alex Sheen, the young founder of a nonprofit whose T-shirt says it all: “Because I said I would.”

“A lot of people don’t keep promises any more,” he said, so he created “Promise Cards” to help remember and remind. “Society needs to be reminded that promises still matter and a handshake still means something,” he said.

Sheen believes people are 46 percent more likely to fulfill a promise if they share it with someone else. That’s where Promise Cards come in; he has distributed 10.3 million of them to 153 countries — including hundreds at the Kiwanis convention — and described their accountability programs.

He has 884 high school chapters, 170,242 newsletter subscribers, and 123,005 Facebook followers.

“I get thousands of Promise Cards and messages every day from all over the world,” said Sheen, who used to work at a software company. Some promises are about losing weight or stopping smoking, and some youth make promises such as “I will get to know kids who sit alone at lunch.”

Read more about this at his website: becauseisaidiwould.com. “You can pretend to care, but you can’t pretend to show up,” Sheen said.

‘Good to Great’

Jim Collins is the author of six books, including “From Good to Great,” which Kiwanis President Polyl Lat began talking about last year as his theme.

Collins has spent 25 years researching what makes great companies tick (similar principles may be applied to civic/service groups) and founded a management laboratory for CEOs and leadership teams. Here are some of his quotes on “Good to Great”:

“The good-to-great companies made a habit of putting their best people on their best opportunities, not their biggest problems.”

“Expenditure energy trying to motivate people is largely a waste of time … if you have the right people on the bus, they will be self-motivated.”

“The purpose of bureaucracy is to compensate for incompetence and lack of discipline — a problem that largely goes away if you have the right people in the first place.”

“We found that for leaders to make something great, their ambition has to be for the greatness of the work and the company, rather than for themselves.”

“Will you settle for being a good leader, or will you grow to become a great leader?”

Finding meaning, purpose

Key Club International President Emily Rice introduced Tammy Chang, M.D., a former Key Club member who talked about how Key Club and Kiwanis changed her life, from a shy girl to a young woman who can give

(See SPEAKERS, Page 16)
Speakers
(From Page 15)

speeches. “The Kiwanis job is to prepare young people for the future,” she said — “to develop meaning and purpose which they need along with knowledge and skills.”

She ran for Key Club International trustee and won, plus she met a guy on the board whom she later married. Now both are family doctors. She wants to break the cycle of poverty and poor health among adolescent mothers and their children.

KI President-designate Daniel Vigneron of Belgium was the closing speaker. “I come before you as I prepare to take the next step in our organization,” he said, and he asked for everyone’s help in “taking Kiwanis to new heights.”

Vigneron lived in Africa as a child, returning to Europe for college, but he “remembers (his) African roots.” He said Kiwanis “has a commitment still to keep” in seeing the rest of the nations rid of maternal-neonatal tetanus, a goal of the Eliminate project. Many of those are in Africa, he noted.

A new Kiwanis club has been opened in Madagascar. “The board has adopted a new plan to accelerate growth in African nations,” Vigneron said.

He wants to be sure everyone makes their clubs interesting and welcomes new members.

“Let your actions speak louder than words,” Vigneron said. “There is no room for judgment and discord.”

Centennial
(From Page 8)

microphone. Those who served in recent years talked about building on projects that were started long ago — and quibbled over who had the most proceeds from Pancake Day.

“I am a Kiwanian because of what we support and what we do,” said Wade Acton, 2013-14.

“It’s about the children, not us, and about giving our time and talents,” said Immediate Past President Gil Isbell. He led the club nearly 50 years after his father, the late Gordon Isbell, held that post.

Kevin Yates, the 2011-12 president, said he was proudest of these three accomplishments from the time when he served: The foundation was started, the flag program began, and he persuaded Lamar Smith to return to the duties of club secretary.

Jennifer Jackson from 2015-16 said she tried to make meetings fun, with games and prizes. “My favorite parts of Kiwanis are friends and fun … and the memories.”

A few recalled chilling experiences

Old photos and programs were displayed during the Gadsden Kiwanis Club’s centennial lunch on July 10.

or complaints.

“As president, I was in the Christmas Parade on the coldest day of the year; it was 17 degrees,” said Glenda Selman, 2010-11. Like Isbell, she got involved with Kiwanis because of her dad. The late Andy Chaffin led the Gadsden club in 1977 and later served as a governor of the Alabama District. He tirelessly promoted Builders Clubs for middle-school students and served as Kiwanis International Builders Club chairman.

Wayne Owen, 1986-87, said one year when he was operations chairman for Pancake Day, they got a complaint that the man preparing the batter was smoking a cigar and knocking ashes into the mix. He said he didn’t do anything, because he figured the cakes would cook up about the same as usual.

Tom McKenzie, 1983-84, remembers working his first pancake day shortly after moving to Gadsden with Alabama Power Co. “Back then we had to slice the sausage,” he recalled. “I worked over 40 Pancake Days and always enjoyed the fellowship.”

Bob Sisson, 1997-98, said he was proud to help start the Nelson Thomas Scholarship Fund, named for the 1958 president.

A highlight of Dennis Adams’ 1991-92 term as president was taking over the Christmas parade from the city and initiating the sale of banners.

Sims
(From Page 4)

he will focus on membership growth as he climbs the ladder toward governor. “Recruiting new members has been a passion for me at the local club level. I am proud to be a Kiwanian and fully believe in our mission. Inviting people to Kiwanis is an easy ask for me. I want to share the experience with as many people as possible, and the more Kiwanians we have, the more children we help.

“Also, I will be passionate about strengthening our relationship with our sponsored youth programs,” he said. “With my background, I think I am well-positioned to make sure our SLP programs are supported in a way that they can reach new heights.

“I am also aware that the children can sometimes teach the parents, and so I think as Kiwanians we need to be open to seeing if we can learn from what has made Key Club so successful on the state level as their membership continues to increase.”

“Society needs to be reminded that promises still matter and a handshake still means something.”

—Alex Sheen
By Patrice Stewart
Kiwanis Kourier editor

Peter J. Mancuso of North Bellmore, New York, was elected vice president of Kiwanis International in the June 28 business session during the 104th annual Kiwanis International Convention held at Disney’s Coronado Springs Resort and convention center in Florida.

The vice president traditionally moves up to president-elect and then president.

Daniel Vigneron, Howald, Luxembourg, was elected president and Art Riley, Westminster, Maryland, was voted president-elect at the convention in the Orlando area. Their new duties will begin Oct. 1.

Also, three new trustees were elected for the United States and Pacific Canada Region: Gary “Coop” Cooper, Fayetteville, North Carolina; David W. Hurrelbrink, Kansas City, Kansas; and Cathy Szymanski, Erie, Pennsylvania.

Vigneron has been a member of the Kiwanis Club of Vielsalm in Belgium for more than 32 years. He served twice as club president and once as governor of the Belgium-Luxembourg District. He also served as Kiwanis International-European Federation president and is a former Kiwanis International trustee.

He follows Florencio “Poly” Lat, Metro Manila, Philippines, as president.

Riley began as a member of Key Club and has continued as a member of the Kiwanis Club of Westminster, Maryland, for 39 years. Additionally, he is a member of the Centennial Internet Club and the Kiwanis Club of State Line, Maryland. Riley’s leadership has been demonstrated as a Key Club lieutenant governor and numerous positions within the Capital District, which he served as governor in 2007-08.

During his tenure on the Kiwanis International Board, Riley was counselor to 12 Kiwanis districts and traveled to more than 30 districts. He and his wife, Vickie, participated in a site visit to Cambodia for The Eliminate Project.

New trustees
The three new trustees from the United States who will join the Kiwanis International board Oct. 1 will bring along diverse abilities.

Gary “Coop” Cooper is a financial professional by trade and has served as president of Mortgage Bankers Associations, as well as chairman and president of the Greater Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce and past board member of the Cumberland County Partnership for Children. He and his wife, Debbie, both are members of the Fayetteville, North Carolina, Kiwanis Club, one of the 10 largest clubs in Kiwanis. He was the 2014-15 governor of the Carolinas District and has served with distinction at club, division and district levels.

Dave Hurrelbrink is a member of the Kiwanis Club of Kansas City West in Kansas. He and his wife, Pat, have two children and four grandchildren.

He believes that sharing one’s talents and resources for positive change are the right steps to improving our communities. Along with his many Kiwanis activities, he diversifies his volunteer work; you may find him volunteering at the Kansas Agriculture Hall of Fame or driving a tractor and pulling a wagon to chauffeur youth and adults on hayrides.

He enjoys it all, whether helping children at his club’s Bike Rodeo, fitting donated bike helmets on students at the Kansas State School for the Blind, working with Key Club, filling food boxes, raising funds for the $250,000 pledged toward improvements at a 4-H camp also used by the Kiwanis Key Leader program, or helping build new clubs in communities such as Holton and Norton County.

Coming to Alabama
Newly elected trustee Cathy Szymanski, a member of the Kiwanis Club of Erie, Pennsylvania, for 18 years, will attend the Alabama District Convention in Huntsville Aug. 2-4 as KI’s new board counselor for the coming year.

(See ELECTIONS, Page 18)
KI resolutions address child safety, nondiscrimination at convention

Several amendments and resolutions were on the 2019 Kiwanis International House of Delegates’ business agenda in Orlando.

Delegates approved a Safe Kids Resolution proposed by the Kiwanis International Board. The resolution puts into writing something all Kiwanians believe: All children deserve to be safe.

Also, delegates overwhelmingly approved an amendment to add a nondiscrimination clause into the Kiwanis International Bylaws.

Several speakers addressed the proposed amendment from the floor, and before passing it was revised to include prohibiting discrimination based on age or sex including sexual orientation and gender identity. The amendment was submitted by the Kiwanis Club of East Geauga, Ohio.

A second proposed amendment, which was submitted by the Michigan District Board, would have allowed delegates to abstain from voting for the complete number of trustee offices to be filled. The amendment failed to pass.

(If there are three openings on the Board of Trustees, a delegate must continue to vote for three people, not one or two, for the vote to be counted.)

A new requirement for vice president, submitted by the Kiwanis Club of Venice, Florida, would have required Kiwanis International trustees to have at least a one-year absence from the Kiwanis International Board before subsequently serving in the offices of vice president, president-elect, or president. The amendment failed.

An amendment calling for a new trustee seat to be created for a member under the age of 50 was withdrawn. Submitted by the Kiwanis Club of Springfield-Downtown, Illinois, its purpose was to establish a new seat on the Kiwanis International Board to be held by a person who is age 50 or under at the time of election.

A Family Membership Status amendment failed to pass. The amendment would have permanently adopted a new family membership status that would provide a 50-percent discount on Kiwanis International dues and fees for qualifying members.

That proposed amendment was submitted by the Pacific Northwest District and co-sponsored by the New England and Bermuda District Board, the Ohio District Board, the Southwest District Board, the Texas-Oklahoma District Board and the Kiwanis Club of North Brunswick, North Carolina.

Email news and photos of club projects to the Kiwanis Kourier, kiwaniskourier@gmail.com
Early elected to CKI board in Orlando

These Alabama District Circle K members have their mouse ears on for their trip to Orlando and the Circle K International Convention for service, education, fun and friendships. The convention was held June 26-29 at Walt Disney World’s Contemporary Resort. Some sessions and speakers were shared with Kiwanians, who were meeting at the same time at Disney’s Coronado Springs Resort and Convention Center. Alabama District Governor Zarien Morris had the honor of singing the National Anthem during the CKI convention opening session. He and Communications Officer Wamia Samad were selected as group leaders for CKIX2019 in Orlando. Troy University received a Growth Enhances Membership (GEM) Award. Tana Early from the Alabama District (right photo) was elected to the Circle K International Board of Trustees during the convention at Walt Disney World. She served as a lieutenant governor in Alabama for 2018-19 and has been secretary-treasurer of the Alabama District. She will take a seat at the CKI board table for 2019-20. Kiwanians may remember her in the role of Miss Scarlet in the murder mystery entertainment at the Midwinter Conference. “Tana will continue to do great things! Her best is yet to come,” said Peck Fox, Circle K administrator for the Alabama District. Her Circle K friends said Early “has made a huge impact in CKI on both the club and district level, and we are very excited for her and look forward to seeing all the great things she achieves in the next year.”

Soderstrom: Think beyond service — think impact

Kiwanis International Executive Director Stan Soderstrom challenged convention delegates to think beyond service and consider Kiwanis clubs’ long-term impact.

“Service is picking up trash at a park,” Soderstrom said, “or doing a good deed for an elderly person in your neighborhood.

“These are good things — but temporary things,” he said during the House of Delegates session at the KI convention in Orlando.

“That’s why I’d like to challenge us to think of Kiwanis not as a community-service organization — but a community impact organization. It’s impact that helps make us a part of people’s lives from an early age.”

Examples of Kiwanis service with impact include:

■ Service Leadership Programs where club members mentor kids, serve as examples and help youth develop skills that will last a lifetime. Youth programs also prompt students to begin their own journeys of service and impact.

■ The Eliminate Project that has reduced by half the number of yearly deaths from MNT since Kiwanis joined the effort in 2010.

■ The success of the campaign to eliminate Iodine Deficiency Disorders with 86 percent of the world’s population now having access to iodized table salt, decreasing these disorders among vulnerable populations.
New trustee coming to Alabama District Convention

At the Orlando Kiwanis International Convention are, from left: Alabama District Secretary Tammy Driskill; Georgia District Secretary Alexia Lieber; Georgia District Governor-elect Andy Pipkin and wife, Kathy; newly elected Kiwanis International Trustee Cathy Szymanski, who has been designated KI’s board counselor to the Alabama, Georgia and Michigan districts for the coming year; Alabama District Governor-elect Bob Brown and wife, Mary Lynn; Michigan District Secretary Gregory Smith; and Michigan Governor-elect Sarah Kew. Szymanski will attend several district conventions, including Alabama’s meeting in Huntsville Aug. 2-4, where she will install our 2019-20 officers and board.

Adventures at Disney Springs and Gatorland

During the International Convention, many Kiwanians visited Disney Springs, a district with cars turned into boats, boats turned into restaurants, dinosaurs, Disney stores and more. District Secretary Tammy Driskill snapped the photo at left of Lt. Governor Mary Hoerlein, Past Governor Armand St. Raymond and Governor-elect Bob Brown and wife Mary Lynn in Disney Springs. She also took the albino alligators’ photo at Gatorland, where visitors get to hold baby gators and see flamingos. At top right are district secretaries at the three-district dinner they planned at Paddlefish, a Disney Springs restaurant; from left are Mary Vaughn of Missouri-Arkansas, Andrea Raycraft of Illinois-Eastern Iowa and Tammy Driskill of Alabama.

Email news and photos of club projects to the Kiwanis Kourier, kiwaniskourier@gmail.com
Photos by Patrice Stewart and others
Head to Huntsville for the Alabama District Kiwanis Convention Aug. 2-4, 2019

Photos by Patrice Stewart and others
Photos by Patrice Stewart and others

K-Family Service Day at RIF’s book warehouse in Opelika is planned for Oct. 5, 2019
Support Jean Dean Reading Is Fundamental by volunteering and donating
Clubs, budget now to send students to Key Leader weekend in 2020

Photos by Patrice Stewart and others
Deadline for the next edition of the online Kiwanis Kourier is Sept. 25, 2019

Photos by Patrice Stewart
Kiwanis Gala in Orlando

Several Alabama Kiwanians attended the Kiwanis Gala evening with dinner and music on the last night of the International Convention in Orlando. From left are Don Felder, former lead guitarist of the Eagles, playing “Hotel California”; Mary Hoerlein of Auburn, Tammy Driskill of Gadsden and Armand St. Raymond of Birmingham; Woody Grayson of Huntsville with wife, Denise; and Marc Byers of Huntsville, with Mary Hoerlein in the foreground. (Photos by Tammy Driskill)

Key Club gov gets Distinguished honor

Alabama District Key Club members had a great experience at the Key Club International Convention July 3-7 at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront. Some of the group opted for an extended tour including the sights of Washington, D.C., and the Six Flags America theme park. Alabama’s Mikaila Oglesby (far right) received a “Distinguished Governor” award during the Key Club International Convention. She served as Alabama District Key Club Governor for 2018-19. She is with Marla Penley Hines, a Key Club adult board member, who said she is “so proud of you and the love, patience, generosity and tenacity you showed us all this past year.”

Bring silent auction items and children’s books to donate at Huntsville DCON Aug. 2-3