

Kiwanis

Nebraska-Iowa District

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Kiwanian District Bulletin

December '08-January '09

Governor Don's Message

As Kiwanians, we often do not know whether what we are doing to help our children and our communities works.

In the past few weeks, I have been reading articles about the Von Maur shootings which happened in Omaha a year ago. The troubled young man that did the shootings and killed himself was living only a block from my home.

I never knew him. Why? Was it because we did not have a Kiwanis program where he could get involved? Were there no Terrific Kids program, no Bring Up Grades program in his elementary school? Was it because there was no K-Kids or Builders Clubs where he went to school? Either there was not a Kiwanis program available, or perhaps, there was not a Kiwanian to get involved with Robbie.

I remember another young boy who lost his father at an early age. An only child, he became shy and withdrawn. One day, he was invited to try out for a baseball team. Shyly, he went to the tryouts. A Kiwanian took the young boy by the hand and led him over to the area where the other boys were. He was accepted. He did not know at the time that every child that came out was accepted.

That Kiwanian took the young boy under his wing and mentored him, both in baseball and in life – providing the father figure he so sorely needed. The young boy grew up and became a Kiwanian and the 2007-08 Lt. Governor of Division 20. His name is Bill O'Donnell. Bill will tell you today that the Kiwanian that took his hand that fateful day literally changed his life.

Why do we need to grow our Kiwanis family? So we have more people and more programs to touch the troubled youth rather than suffer the consequences of a Robbie Hawkins. We don't need to grow so we can reach some magical number. That is not why I ask people I meet to join me in Kiwanis. I ask them to make a difference in a child's life.

Last summer, the Bellevue Kiwanis Club invited the two young girls who had attended Camp OK to address our club meeting. After telling us about their experiences, I asked the mothers if they would like to add anything. One mother rose. She had brought three other children in addition to the camper to Camp OK. She thanked the club for sending her daughter to camp.

She explained that her husband had lost his job last year and they were squeaking by. Her daughter would not have been able to attend camp without Kiwanis. Then she pointed to another daughter and said that she was in the third grade and had received a dictionary through Past Governor Mark Holmer's Kiwanis dictionary project. And she pointed to her son and said that he had participated in the Bellevue Kiwanis' swimming lessons.

One family, in trouble, touched in three ways by Kiwanis involvement. That is why we need to build our Kiwanis family in this district to 15,000 members.



So, when you are asked to bring a friend to a membership roundup, or to send a letter to someone you know to invite them to your Kiwanis club, remember the three young children and the shy little boy that were helped by Kiwanis. And remember, that perhaps, if there were more Kiwanis services, we could have touched Robbie Hawkins earlier in his life and perhaps prevented the tragedy.



Governor Don Glenn

Kiwanis Miracle League Field

By Frank Murphy, District Secretary

On Saturday, October 25, 2008, the Des Moines Kiwanis was awarded the 2008 Iowa Award for Character Counts in the business/organization category for their work on the Miracle League Field.



Figure 1: Members of Des Moines Kiwanis gather at the Character Counts In Iowa festivities. Pictured left to right are (Doris &) Don Wiebold, Melinda (& Dan) Berte, Steve (& Barb) Siemens, Carol Stone, Ed (& Cherie) Linebach, Sherry (& Dennis) Felton, Jan Burch & Bob Mitchell

The award recognizes individuals and organizations that best exemplify the Six Pillars of Character - trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Jan Burch, a Kiwanian and vice president of the Kiwanis Miracle League in Des Moines said, "We were thrilled when told of this recognition! Eighteen of us were able to attend the awards banquet Saturday night--a wonderful affair."

Thanks to the vision of the Des Moines metro area Kiwanis Clubs and spearheaded by Des Moines Kiwanis (Downtown), the Kiwanians committed to raising \$150,000 toward the project for "naming rights", a goal which was reached in January 2008. The total cost for the Miracle League Field is over \$1.2 million.

The Kiwanis Miracle League at Principal Park opened Sunday, September 28th in Des Moines, next to the home of the Triple-A Iowa Cubs. A Miracle League Park allows children with a wide range of disabilities - from ADHD to blindness and spina bifida - to play ball. Surrounded by a dozen Shrine clowns, free food and hundreds of supporters, all the players wore broad smiles on opening day.

The field is made of rubberized turf that prevents injuries and can



(Continued on page 7 - Miracle League)

Nobody Asked!

Mary Villalba, Past Distinguished Governor, Rocky Mountain Kiwanis District
(Reprinted with permission of Kiwanis, Rocky Mountain District.)

Nobody asked the speaker at our club to join us the following week and to become a member, so that speaker never came back.

Nobody asked the shy man who stumbled upon the lunch meeting if he would like to join us in the reading we do for Head Start each week, so he didn't.

Nobody asked the wife of the long-time member who died recently if she would like to be a part of the organization her husband valued so highly, so she sat home alone.

Nobody asked what the new member did for a living, or how many kids she had or what she liked to do when she wasn't volunteering or working, so she stopped coming.

Nobody asked the man who was so busy with kids, church, work, and life, if he wanted to put an umbrella over all of that and join with others who could give him some help, so he kept on doing what he was doing, and it never occurred to him that a Kiwanian might help him.

Nobody asked me, but I think we all need to remember.....**JUST ASK** ... That's what it's all about!

Governor's Cruise

First Lady Linda and I would like to personally invite you to join us on a cruise to the Southern Caribbean with Princess Cruises. We chose Princess because of our personal knowledge of their uncompromising dedication to quality and service.



There is still time to sign up for the cruise from February 15th through 22nd. We depart the day after Valentine's Day (*think about that as a Valentine's Day present!*) and fly to San Juan, Puerto Rico.



There we will board the Caribbean Princess and sail to Barbados. From there, we sail to St. Lucia. Linda and I have spent time on St. Lucia and have found it to be a wonderful tropical retreat. Visit the Pitons or swim in the crystal clear water.

Then it is on to Antigua where we will spend a day, then on to Tortola and finally St. Thomas. There you will have a wonderful opportunity to shop or sightsee. Then it is back to San Juan. The whole trip, you will be with your Kiwanis friends.

For information, please contact Tracey Domgard at the following:

FUN TOURS

4720 Baldwin Avenue
Lincoln, NE 68504
Toll Free (800) 742-7717
In Lincoln, (402) 466-1776

We look forward to having you join us on this fun trip.

Don and Linda Glenn

Defibrillator Used at School: Parents Notified

By Michaela Saunders, Omaha World-Herald Staff Writer
(Reprinted with permission of Omaha World-Herald)

A sixth-grader at Westside's Paddock Road Elementary [Omaha, Nebraska] is recovering after she collapsed at school and was revived by staff with an automated external defibrillator [AED] Tuesday afternoon [October 21st].

Families of the 268 student at the school, at 3535 Paddock Road received an automated message Wednesday afternoon from the principal. The message explained what happened Tuesday at dismissal time.

Peggy Rupprecht, a spokes-women for the Westside schools, said the girl came back into the building after afternoon safety patrol and collapsed in the entryway in front of the main office at about 3:40 p.m. Tuesday.

Because it was just after dismissal time, Rupprecht said, many students saw staff working on their schoolmate.

The girl was taken by ambulance to a hospital. It is unclear what caused her to collapse. Rupprecht said the girl was undergoing more tests Wednesday.

Counselors were available at the school for students who had questions about what they saw, and the principal updated students and staff on the girl's condition. The district did not release her name to the news media.

Only five of the Westside district's 10 elementary schools and its two secondary schools had AEDs on hand. The one at Paddock Road had not been used before and was donated by the Kiwanis Club of Omaha Westside.

Rupprecht said that there has been discussion, but no action, well before this week about providing the machines in all schools. OPS [Omaha Public Schools] has the machines in all of its buildings, largely because of the work of a father whose son died and would have benefited from them.

Lukas Rix, Circle K Nebraska-Iowa District Governor

"Hello fellow Kiwanians! I am Lukas Rix the Nebraska-Iowa District Governor for Circle K. I am currently a Junior attending Wayne State College majoring in Business Management.

Whether it has been through service, leadership or just meeting a new friends, Kiwanis has offered me endless opportunities to grow as an individual.

This is why I dedicate many hours every week to keep my district board and the members of the Nebraska-Iowa District informed of ways that they too can benefit from the Kiwanis Family.

I am looking forward to the second half of our year, because we have our annual District Convention coming up on Feb 27th- Mar 1st in Cedar Falls, Iowa.

If you have questions about Circle K please visit our website at www.nicirclek.org. Or contact me at governor@nicirclek.org"

When Someone Cares

Jim Terry, Utah-Idaho District of Kiwanis
Human & Spiritual Values Chairperson

The other day I came across a 1994 article about a speaker who was the vice-president of Kiwanis International. He had been introduced to the audience as the owner of a successful business in Illinois, and a respected leader in his community who had now risen to fill one of the highest offices in the international service organization.

He told of his birth as a twin in a small industrial city nestled in the granite mountains of Vermont. His immigrant parents had come there from northern Italy to work in the granite quarries, but after a serious injury his father moved the family to a small truck farm.

When his twin sons were only 3, the despondent father, who had become an alcoholic, took his own life, leaving his wife who spoke no English to care for a 7-year-old daughter and the twins.

Unable to take care of the farm, the mother moved her family into a nearby city, but could only afford a small home near a river and on the other side of the railroad tracks. During these years, of the Great Depression, times were hard, and often there was little or no food. Vagrants frequented the railroad yards, and often would break into the home, causing the children to run and hide from them.

Shortly after the family moved into the home the area experienced one of the worst floods in Vermont's history and the home was destroyed along with its meager contents. No one helped the struggling family. They were left alone to cope with life.

When the twin brothers were old enough to pull a wagon, they sold soft drinks and chocolate milk to the workmen in the granite quarries. Often, older boys chased them away, broke the bottles, and called them derogatory Italian names. During the winter months, they sold candy bars in the offices and work areas near the quarries.

On the day before the twins were to celebrate their 12th birthday they decided to sell some candy bars to get enough money for a small birthday celebration. It was winter, and there had been considerable snow. As the boys started to cross the railroad tracks, one of them slipped and before he could get up he was run over by a moving train and killed. "No one will ever know the trauma of that accident that killed my brother," the speaker quietly said.

The newspaper in the city carried the story with the headline, "Twin Killed in Train Accident." A man came to their home and, because the mother could speak no English she called her son to find out what the man wanted.

He explained that he was the Boy Scout leader of one of the local troops. He had read about the accident and wanted the young man to join the Scout troop. After listening to the man, the young boy told him he couldn't afford to join because he didn't even have enough for the 5 cents dues.

The Scout leader persisted and said not to worry about the dues or other costs because he would take care of them. He just wanted him to come and be with other boys.

Shaking and frightened, the young recruit went with the man to the meeting, and found friendship and people who cared. "My 12th birthday was the first time in my life that I felt somebody cared about me," he said.

He stayed in the Scout troop, even though he had to work at three jobs while going to high school. As he spoke, he said he had been registered in Scouting now for 50 years and was most grateful for what the Boy Scouts of America had done for him.

He told of finishing high school, being drafted into the military during World War II, of his marriage, settling down in his wife's home town in Illinois, developing his business, rearing his family, and serv-

ing in various scouting positions.

And yet, he said, he harbors one regret. He never took the time to write a letter of gratitude to the man who came to his humble home and cared enough to invite him to join a Scout troop.

"In the next 24 hours," he said to his audience, "take 10 minutes to write a grateful note to the person or persons who may have helped you. It could be one of the most gratifying notes you have ever written."

I think that is good council for us today. Whether it be through Scouting, Kiwanis, or in some other way, we should take the time and thank those who have reached out to us. May we also be the person reaching out to help a child who is in need, and give our support to those organizations that sponsor programs that help children.

One Can Make a Difference

Have you ever heard someone comment that they are too old or infirm to be of assistance in serving the children and their community? I want to tell you about a Kiwanian who has gone above and beyond to help his club.

Don has a medical condition that has restricted him to a walker. His wife, Mary Jane, drives him to his 7:00 a.m. Kiwanis meetings each week. She has attended enough times that she joined the club. She helps Don as he advises the club's K-Kids Club.

For the past few years, the club has been involved in Paint Up Nebraska and has taken on one home to paint each year. We were at the house on the Saturday morning when up drove Don and Mary Jane.

Don got out of his car, and stood with his walker. He had a lawn chair in one hand.

He slowly made his way over to where we were painting and, set up his lawn chair. He seated himself and said, "Hand me a brush, I can paint the bottom." This is one dedicated Kiwanian.

When the sign-up sheet to ring bells for the Salvation Army comes to you and you hesitate because you know it will be cold; when the chairperson asks for volunteers for the highway clean up, remember Don and the house painting.

2008-09 Calendar of Events for Nebraska-Iowa Kiwanis

Feb 6	District Board of Trustees Meeting, Bellevue, NE
Feb 7	Midyear Conference, Bellevue East High School, Bellevue, NE
Feb 14-22	Governor's Tour, Southern Caribbean Cruise
Feb 27-1	Circle K District Convention, Cedar Falls, IA
Apr 4	Kiwanis One Day
May 1-2	Lt. Governor Training
May 12	Kiwanis Club of Des Moines, 90th Birthday Party
Jun 25-28	Kiwanis International Convention, Nashville, TN
Aug 14-16	NE-IA District Convention, Holiday Inn Central, Omaha, NE
Oct 16-18	Iowa Key Leader Camp
Nov 7-9	Nebraska Key Leader Camp

Midyear Conference

NE-IA Kiwanis District



Date: Saturday, February 7, 2009
Location: Bellevue East High School
1401 High School Drive
Bellevue, Nebraska 68005

Escape the boring winter blues and attend the Midyear Kiwanis Conference in Bellevue, Nebraska. Not only will you learn more about Kiwanis, you'll learn why you want to be more involved in Kiwanis, learn ideas for service to your community and youth, meet Kiwanis leaders from other communities and have some fun!

Agenda (Tentative)

- 7:30 Registration
- 8:30 Kickoff and Keynote Speaker
- 10:15 Breakout Sessions
 - Leveraging Kiwanis Growth
 - Kiwanis Foundations
 - Bridging the Generation Gap (Service to Youth)
 - Fund Raising Strategies
 - High Impact Community Service
 - Service Leadership
 - K-Club and Circle K
 - K-Kids and Builders Club
 - Working with Special Needs & Aktion Clubs
 - Club Leadership Education
 - Kiwanis Online Resources
- Noon Noon Luncheon
- 12:45 Breakout Sessions (continued)
- 2:00 Awards Presentations
- 3:00 Closing Speaker

Registration (Two Options)

- Online at www.ne-ia.kiwanisone.org and pay with credit card - or -
- Mail the registration form below and pay with a check.

Registration Cost

- \$50 for Kiwanis member registration (Includes Lunch)
- \$40 for Guest registration (Includes Lunch)

Registration Deadlines

Register online or mail the attached form by February 1st
After February 1st, register at the conference

Overnight accommodations for Friday, February 6, 2009 at:

Bellevue Settle Inn & Suites
2105 Pratt Avenue,
Bellevue, NE 68123
Tel: 402-292-1155



Hotel rates (not including taxes) up to January 6th are:

- \$65 for a Queen (after January 6th, the rate is \$74.95)
- \$70 for a Double Queen (after January 6th, the rate is \$79.95)
- \$85 for a King (after January 6th, the rate is \$94.95)

Call the hotel directly for reservations and tell them you are with the

2009 Midyear Conference Registration Form

Club Member Name

Partner or guest, if attending the sessions

Mailing address

City, State, ZIP

Phone Number

Club Name

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Total</u>
Kiwanian registrations (Includes Lunch)	_____	\$50.00	\$ _____
Guest Registrations (Includes Lunch)	_____	\$40.00	\$ _____
Total Enclosed:			\$ _____

Mail this form or register online up to February 1, 2009 only. After February 1, please plan to register at the conference. The registration desk will open at 7:30am on Saturday, February 7, 2009. No refunds will be accepted after February 1st. For mail registrations, please make checks payable to "NE-IA Kiwanis District" and send registration form and check to NE-IA Kiwanis District, 501 Raider Drive, Williamsburg, Iowa 52361. If you have any questions, please call Frank Murphy at 319-331-9926.

Key Leader 2008 Weekend

Contributed by Paul Lytle, Lincoln Southeast Kiwanis

Key Leader weekend at the Greta 4H Center must be experienced firsthand for one to know the true benefits this excellent program provides those in attendance. If you have not had the opportunity to do so, don't let next year's Key Leader weekend pass you by.

A most amazing transformation comes while observing the 80-100 youth, ages 15-18, from their arrival to their departure from Key Leader weekend. Watching the transformation of strangers into friends from Friday evening-to Sunday noon is truly amazing. Reading about it cannot convey what you experience from participating in this wonderful Kiwanis event.

Ron Petsch, currently serving as the Nebraska-Iowa District, Governor-Elect, needs to receive recognition and credit for jump starting the Key Leader program for our district. From Ron's tireless efforts and dedication to the program, the Key Leader program for our district has graduated more than 300 youth from this premier leadership-building program.



To be sure, the program has benefited from many volunteers over the years who have contributed time, energy, and money to the success of the program. You and your club have probably contributed in some form or another, and for your support and efforts, you deserve a gratitude of thanks.

From humble beginnings at the first Key Leader camp outside the small community of Ashland, Nebraska, to its current event location outside Gretna, Nebraska, at the Gretna 4-H Center, Key Leader continues to grow. The 2008 event had nearly 100 participants which included adult chaperones and attending students.

Preparation for this event begins early in the year, and it remains a success due to the efforts of the District Chair, and the efforts of every individual Kiwanis Club in our district. We rely heavily on your clubs' support and ability to locate students to sponsor for each event. Your sponsorship is truly making a difference, one child at a time.

About three weeks prior to the event, the District Chair makes a trip to the Gretna 4-H center to meet with the camp directors, discussing needs and the layout of the room (e.g., tables, chairs, meeting area, cabins, etc.) to ensure all facility and eating arrangements are formalized.

This is done in coordination with Kiwanis International. From this point forward, there is a flurry of e-mails, phone calls, reminders and last-minute checks to help ensure all participants are ready for the big day to arrive.

Volunteers arrive early Friday morning to begin the task of preparation for the Key Leader weekend. Literally, car loads of supplies are brought to the camp, unloaded and distributed to the volunteers for assembly and distribution.



Tables are put in place, note books assembled, and the welcome team is ready to receive early arrivals of student facilitators. Student facilitators lead their neighborhoods (small groups of students) in the welcoming process and during the training secessions. A student fa-

cilitator is generally a returning student familiar with Key Leader weekend.

At 4:00 p.m., the pace picks up as more students arrive. The lead facilitator has completed the orientations with the student facilitators, and camp is becoming a flurry of activity. 5:00 p.m. check-in becomes ordered and fast paced. After having visited their cabins and dropped off their gear, students are directed to their respective neighborhoods for a "get acquainted time" with their assigned student facilitator.

By now, most of the students have arrived and it is time for dinner. Professionally trained Chef, Tom McManahan, has prepared some of the best food around. Tom makes certain dinner is wholesome, tasty, and beautifully prepared. Certainly not what one normally considers camp food.



By 6:45 p.m., Key Leader training is now fully underway. Warming up exercises, followed by ice-breaker drills, pave the way for a fun filled evening of intensive learning. With notebooks in hand, the evening unfolds as students learn what it means to be a Key Leader.

At 11:00 p.m., the students are given an opportunity for a little free time, and instructed to be in their cabins by 11:30 p.m. For the chaperones, 12:00 midnight comes none too soon, followed by "lights out." With luck, each chaperone, along with their respective students (5-9 per room), will be able to sleep until 6:00 a.m.

With 5 to 10 individuals per cabin and one shower, there is not a lot of time to get ready to arrive by 8:00 a.m. for breakfast, and another long, intense day of learning.



Saturday evening brings together all participants to enjoy a late evening bonfire. This is a welcomed time after a long day for intensive training and an afternoon rotational schedule for a trust course (ropes course). The ropes course is a leadership-building event that utilizes student's skills and team-player skills.

This also includes a fast trip down a zip line! As the bonfire dies down and the cool evening air settles in around the camp fire, it is time to retire to the cabins around 11:30 p.m. Lights out again at midnight.



(Continued on page 6 - Key Leader)

(Key Leader - Continued from page 5)

Sunday morning brings another day of learning. By 11:00 a.m. a member of the volunteer staff has produced a DVD that highlights the events of the weekend leadership camp.

With parents now arriving to retrieve their sons and daughters, the video is underway. Laughter and tears ensue as the students, chaperones, leaders and parents relive a whirlwind meaningful leadership weekend.

Time again to pack up for next year. The camp empties, and as the last student leaves, a peaceful calm comes to those who await their turn to leave.

It is the individual Kiwanis clubs, the leadership directors at International, and the countless volunteers that deserve thanks for the forward-looking mindset to allow these Key Leader camps to continue.

A Key Leader, according to the International handbook, is built on "The Five Key Leader Principals: 1) Personal Integrity, 2) Personal Growth, 3) Respect, 4) Building Community, and 5) Pursuit of Excellence"

These five principals follow the Key Leader "Mission Statement," which, from the Kiwanis International Key Leader Handbook, reads as follows: "The mission of Key Leader is to inspire young people to achieve their personal best through service leadership."



For now, Key Leader has come to a brief point of rest, to be resumed again next year.

The question to ask is not when is the next Key Leader Camp, but rather, will you and your club be there as a sponsor, volunteer or in some meaningful capacity that exemplifies the Kiwanis motto "Make a difference. Change the world one child and one community at a time." What will you do?



District Key Club Midyear "Take the Plunge"

The Annual District Midyear meeting for Key Club was held at the Marriott Hotel in West Des Moines, Iowa on November 15-16. The gathering attracted 53 Key Club members from Nebraska and Iowa plus District Administrator Glenn "T.J." Tjaden. Also in attendance were Key Club assistants, Jenny Gruber and Tina Potthoff.

"Take the Plunge" was the theme of this year's meeting that opened at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday with a welcome from NE-IA Kiwanis Governor, Don Glenn. Key Club Governor Erich Sneller presided over the program and introduced guests.

Curtis Strubinger, the Key Club International Trustee for NE-IA was on hand to greet the participants. Richard Rowe was the guest speaker who talked about "Is Your Life a Puddle or an Ocean." Mr. Rowe encouraged Key Club members to create ripples that would make a large impact in the lives of others.

Ice-breaker events followed the guest speaker, and then all participants enjoyed a pizza dinner. Following dinner, one of the breakout events was to create a structure from newspapers that would support its own weight.

The criteria was that all members of the building group could comfortably fit underneath the structure and exit without the structure failing.

Another activity was for Key Clubbers to work in groups to define specific goals and projects for Key Club. A dance was held between 9:00 - 11:00 p.m. in the ballroom. Curfew was at 12:00 midnight.

The following morning was a continental breakfast followed by a session for each Key Club Area to meet with their members present, review Key Club procedures and develop plans for their Area.

During the morning session, Governor-elect Ron Petsch welcomed the group. That was followed by a presentation from the Downtown Des Moines Kiwanis Club about the construction of their Miracle League baseball field for disabled and handicapped children.

The total project cost is over \$1.2 million dollars and was organized and built inside of one year. This has been an enormous project for the Des Moines Kiwanis Club, but one that has brought the community together.

The Midyear concluded with groups of students doing skits about attributes important to Key Club. These included topics such as teamwork, trust, and respect. These events concluded the 2008 Key Club Midyear.

Bring Up Grades in North Platte

The Kiwanis Club of North Platte, Nebraska sponsors a Bring Up Grades [BUG] program for 3rd-grade children at Lincoln Elementary School. The seven children in the picture were presented "BUG" pencils, a "BUG" certificates and "BUG" T-shirts on December 4th at 1:30 p.m. by Doris Craig.

This is the second year that Kiwanis has sponsored the "BUG" program at the Lincoln Elementary School. Representing the North Platte Kiwanis club were Doris Craig, advisor for "BUG", Rex Cross, Lt. Governor of Division 24, and Ford Craig.



(Miracle League - Continued from page 1)

be navigated with wheelchairs. The park also has a concession stand, bleachers and an outfield fence plastered with ads from local sponsors, just like its Little League counterparts.

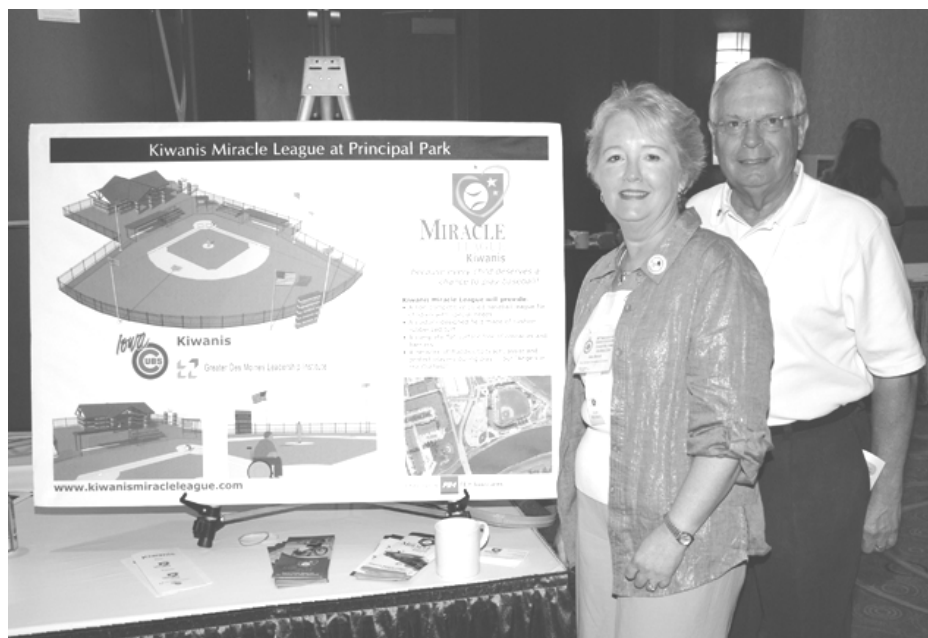


Figure 2: Jan Burch and Bob Mitchell talk about the Miracle League Field at the Kiwanis District Convention in Coralville

Presently there are over 200 Miracle League Organizations across the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico, 90 with rubberized fields, and 110 fields under construction. The Miracle League serves over 85,000 children and young adults with disabilities. The Kiwanis Miracle League at Principal Park is the first field in Iowa — hopefully more will follow!

All special-needs children from 5 to 18 years old are eligible. The rules differ greatly from Little League and are written to ensure a positive experience for children who rarely get a chance to play ball. Rules include:

- Every player bats once each inning (no more than 3 per game)
- All base runners are safe
- Every player scores a run before the inning is over (last one up gets a home run)
- Community volunteers serve as ‘buddies’ to assist the players
- The game ends in a tie--each team and each player wins every game



“Buddies” assist Miracle League players. These buddies are mainstream children and adults who love kids and include youth groups, service clubs like Kiwanis and volunteers. As a result, parents, children and volunteers are all brought together – special needs and mainstream alike - in a program which serves them all through service to children with special needs.

Members of Des Moines (Downtown) Kiwanis learned about Miracle Leagues in early 2007 and proposed the project to all the metro area Kiwanis Clubs. All agreed that they should take on this project--after all, over 3000 kids (ages 5 - 15 in Polk, Warren, and Dallas Counties) have disabilities that prevent them from playing baseball, let alone organized baseball on teams, like little league.

The Kiwanis Club of Des Moines organized a steering committee and began the planning process. The first task was to find a site, as well as assemble all the needed legal and tax-related documents necessary for non-profit organizations.

Thanks to a unique partnership with the Iowa Cubs, the Miracle League Field is located downtown, right across from Principal Park on Third Street, and on the Meredith Trail/Principal Riverwalk. The Cubs lease 24 acres from the City of Des Moines, which means Kiwanis Miracle League will be leasing its land from the Cubs and the City.



The Cubs have committed \$25,000 per year for annual grounds upkeep, maintenance, and security. Kiwanis anticipates a long and mutually satisfying relationship not only with the Cubs, but also the relationship of the Cubs with the kids who will be playing.

Meanwhile, Kiwanis became aware of the possibility of another unique partnership. The 2007-2008 class of the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute was searching for a "class project". Ultimately, the class selected the Kiwanis Miracle League Field as its “class project”. The class committed to raising the necessary funds to design and build the concession/restrooms (\$210,000).

Various members of the class worked on the project—from fundraising to design to construction to public relations and league/volunteer development. Other funding has come from grants and local donations.

Jan Burch said, “Recreational sports are an important tool in helping children with special needs become "mainstreamed." They can come, whether they are in a wheelchair or a walker ... and just know that they can have fun," said Burch.

Our club has done so much in the last couple of years...we do feel like we are making a difference in our community...and we are doing it with character! Our Kiwanis Miracle League Field has certainly been good for us, but so have many of our other projects -- reading to ELL kindergartners [English Language Learners] at Greenwood Elementary School, sending 40-50 kids to camp each summer, honoring metro Des Moines' top academic seniors each year, sponsoring 3 K-Kids clubs and 1 Key Club, etc., etc., etc.

Further information regarding Kiwanis Miracle League at Principal Park can be found on the website at www.kiwanismiracleleague.org.

Kiwanis Cares

Last year, the spring and early summer fury of Mother Nature was widespread across the Nebraska-Iowa District as floods and tornadoes caused incredible damage and destruction. In response, 2007-08 Governor Mark Holmer issued an appeal to the clubs of the NE-IA District to create a Disaster Response Fund. Over \$15,000 was raised.

The intent of this appeal was to provide Kiwanis Clubs in effected areas some dollars that they could turn over to an entity, (a family, organization, institution, program or agency), that had suffered or was dealing with significant loss. It was a way for the District to say "Kiwanis Cares."

A few clubs and individuals designated their funds for the Little Sioux Boy Scout Camp in western Iowa, which was hit by a tornado and resulted in the death of four young scouts and destruction of several buildings.

The remaining dollars, \$14,158.62 to be exact, was divided equally among 42 district clubs, each receiving a check for \$337.11. Linda Van Horn, our District Foundation Treasurer for 07-08, handled the receipt of funds and the issuance of the checks. These checks went into the mail on September 28 under a cover letter by Governor Holmer.

Good things occurred as a result of these checks. Here is a sample.

- In Cedar Falls, Iowa the funds were used to help pay for new furnaces in homes that had lost theirs in the flood.
- In Lexington, Nebraska the entire check went to a local food pantry to restock shelves depleted in the aftermath of the disaster.
- The Greater Waverly, Iowa Club donated its check to a fund that will buy Christmas presents for children and families hit hard by the flooding.
- Two youth agencies located in the flooded out area of Cedar Rapids, Iowa received help through the Disaster Response Fund to help them resettle and relocate. One, a Boys and Girls Club which serves in a predominantly lower income area, had moved all the things on the first level to the second floor gym as a precaution. The rampant river also engulfed the second floor.
- Byron Held, Lt. Governor in Division 2, said the Charles City (Iowa) clubs gave their checks to the Brothers Keeper Fund, administered by the churches of that community. It went to "help



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flood victims as well as families/individuals who for various reasons have fallen through the cracks of our government assistance programs. Funds have mainly gone for rent, utilities and food. Our main concern is with families with young children"

Kiwanis Cares. Once again the members of the Nebraska-Iowa District have stated this clearly.

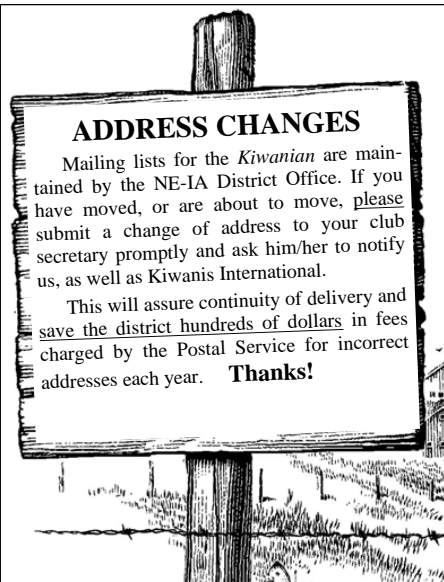
2007-2008 Past Governor Mark Holmer

Words of Wisdom

- You can't live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you. - John Wooden
- You are successful the moment you start moving toward a worthwhile good. - Charles Carlson
- Everything comes to him who hustles while he waits. - Thomas A. Edison
- Always listen to experts. They'll tell you what can't be done and why. Then do it. - Robert Heinlen
- I don't know who my grandfather was; I am much more concerned to know what his grandson will be. - Abraham Lincoln (Gross, *Lincoln's Own Stories*)
- You cannot define talent. All you can do is build the greenhouse and see if it grows. - William P. Steven
- Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you would rather have talked. - Mark Twain
- There is no limit to what can be accomplished if it doesn't matter who gets the credit. - Ralph Waldo Emerson
- In 100 years, it won't matter what house you lived in, what car you drove, or even what your clothes looked like. What will matter is that you made a difference in the life of a child. - Dr. Forest E. Witcraft
- Eighty percent of success is just showing up. - Woody Allen
- There is a wonderful mythical law of nature that the three things we crave most in life - happiness, freedom, and peace of mind - are always attained by giving them to someone else. - Peyton Conway March
- We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give. - Winston Churchill

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