

Hats & Hugs

By Maggie Gunther, District Chair, Hats & Hugs

Q: Many of our clubs in the division have, collectively, hundreds of stuffed animals collected. Many, however, seemed puzzled as to how to DISTRIBUTE them. Any suggestions? ~ Lt. Governor, Division 1

A: It is great that your clubs have collected so many items!!!!

Nancy's intent for this project was to get the animals in to the hands of children in distressed situations-period. She was not concerned where they went as long as they are local to your community/club. As such I do not have a comprehensive list of distribution sites. In my travels promoting the project, I have acquired bags of animals that I need to distribute - I am with you!

Here is what I suggest - choose a few possible places to distribute the animals and contact your local emergency responders, Police, Firefighters, EMTs, or a Domestic Violence/Runaway Child shelter, even a children's hospital/pediatric ward and ask if they would like the animals.

They will let you know if they already have enough or if they only have enough room to take 20-30 pieces at a time vs. hundreds. Once you have contacted the appropriate groups and know where the animals will be going, take the project to the next level.

One specific place hats can be given is at a local American Cancer Society office. Each office has a "gift closet" where they have wigs, scarves and hats they distribute for free to cancer patients who visit, just call and ask because they also have limited space.

I have a custom tag template, which can be printed on to business card paper (the kind you buy at an office supply store) that says the animals/hats were donated by the Kiwanis Club of _____. The tags can be affixed to the animals with some colored ribbon. Don't forget to give the stuffed animal a hug so it will be the bearer of Kiwanis Love (The Hugs Part of Hats & Hugs). Please let me know if you need the template - e-mail me at maggiemunther@hotmail.com.

You can even invite representatives from all of the agencies receiving the animals to attend a club meeting and present the animals to them - or you could ask to do it at their location. I have recieved pictures of Kiwanis clubs presenting the animals at various locations including firehouses and children's hospitals. It is very sweet.

You can also use this opportunity to invite representatives of the benefiting agencies to attend a Kiwanis meeting, social or service project so they can see what Kiwanis is all about and ultimately you can ask them to join your club.



Club Newsletters

By Alan L. Dill, District Chair, Club Newsletters

Thank you...Thank you...Thank you for responding to my requests and sending issues of your newsletters. Because of your responses, we together have set all kinds of records within the Florida District. As of May 2009, I am receiving weekly or monthly newsletters from 175 Clubs or 58.3% of the Florida District. In addition, we have received newsletters from 12 Divisions or 44.4% of the 27 Divisions, which is outstanding. This year for the first time we will be awarding "Outstanding Editor Awards" to the three best Division Newsletters.

Good communication is one of the important tools that can help turn an ordinary club into a very successful one almost overnight. The Club newsletter along with e-mail, Club website and internet newsletters are the fastest and most proficient ways to communicate with members. In some clubs like ours (Gulf Beaches) the Public Relations Chairman is also the Newsletter Editor. This dual role has helped to publish a better newsletter and also can create a better image of the Club and Kiwanis in the community. Good Club newsletters just don't happen - they are created, and the 175 publications I have received are proof of that.

It's not too late to submit your newsletters by e-mail to adill2@tampabay.rr.com or send printed newsletters to: 248 - 144th Av East, Madeira Beach, FL 33708. If you have questions you can call me anytime at 727-397-8102.



Kiwanis Public Relations

By Stephen P. Cummings, District Chair, Public Relations

I have traveled the state as your Public Relations Chair attending Zone Conferences, from Pembroke Pines to Lake City, and sharing my powerpoint presentation at District Conventions, from Marco Island to Jacksonville, teaching the members a variety of techniques to gather new members and advertise your events.

From newspapers, radio and email to billboards and local cable television alerts, clubs can create interest in their activities and leverage the number of people that they can target.



Still, the most effective way of selling newcomers on Kiwanis is by utilizing the personal touch by word of mouth.

Although it seems easier to reach people by all our modern means of slick technology, you lose the personal bond that can be created by asking a co-worker or neighbor to join you at a meeting. Let's face it! People are going to be reluctant to join unless WE ASK.

Don't assume that a person has no interest or a local merchant does not have the inclination to get involved with Kiwanis. ASK!! The worst that they can say is no. And if they do, ask them a month later. No really means yes.

It is no surprise that our District's membership has been decreasing, but we have no one to blame but ourselves. We do great things at Kiwanis and we must provide an opportunity to sell our organization to others.

Make the commitment to find one new member per year and our District's membership will double!

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Let's Get Busy

By Edie McConville, District Chair, Finance and Fundraising

Everywhere I go I hear the same story "the woes of the economy – it's too hard to raise money. We have to cut back, we are losing members. We need to focus on membership first." My answer is this: Do both at the same time. Raise money and get new members while motivating your current membership. Here's my step by step recipe for SUCCESS.

- Identify your project and bring the idea to the full membership, not just the Board Members or Fundraising Committee. Choose a project that the majority agrees on. Maybe this is the year to try something new. Form a committee and include new members. Make sure the chair or leader is enthusiastic about the event. A positive attitude will bring positive results.
- Enlist the assistance of your sponsored youth – K-Kids Builders Club, Key Club, CKI and Aktion Club. Remember they benefit too. We need money (\$\$) to keep these programs going. They have more energy than many of us and they can help sell tickets.

Make it a K-Family affair.



- Go the extra mile! If it's a Pancake Breakfast or Spaghetti Dinner use tablecloths, decorate, provide take-home centerpieces. Balloons around a room make it festive and aren't too expensive. Make it special - add music. Include baskets or prizes to raffle off. Use raffle tickets that require a person's name and contact phone #. Invite politicians during election time - they love the exposure and usually bring several supporters (more ticket sales). Remember no political speeches or endorsements. This is a Kiwanis fundraiser for the benefit of the children of the community. Plan a yard sale/bake sale /craft sale

and turn it into a neighborhood party. Whatever event you plan to do make it Bigger Better Faster. HAVE FUN! This will attract new members, and people tend to spend more money when they are having a good time.

- Follow Up – Each of the raffle tickets you sold will provide you with a potential member for you to contact. Call them, thank them for their support and reinforce the benefit their contribution made. Remind them of the fun everyone had at the event and ask them to a meeting. Send thank yous to sponsors. Send pictures and press releases to local newspapers. Set this up well in advance of the event. Leave no detail overlooked – make this a special event.

Now, I need your help. I have traveled the state and also have received monthly reports on Fundraising Activities. My goal is to compile all this information on the different fundraising projects and share this among all the clubs. I am happy to report Governor-Elect Donna Parton has selected me to continue as District Chair of Finance and Fundraising. Please help me by sharing your ideas using my email address ediemcconville@yahoo.com.

We have approximately 280 clubs. Let's channel these resources to share information and help each club raise the money and membership needed to truly make a difference in a child's life.

In these economic times, with families losing jobs or suffering cutbacks, school supplies, school uniforms and after school activity fees are hardships for many this year. This is what we DO, this is who we ARE. LET'S GET BUSY!

For more fundraising information, Edie may be contacted at 561-308-1690 or ediemcconville@yahoo.com.



YCPO – A Must for Your Club!!!

By Dr. Celia Earle, District Chair, YCPO

YCPO refers to the Young Children Priority One program established by Kiwanis International in 1990. This program focuses on partnering with Health Departments and other groups, in an effort to address the developmental needs of young children from prenatal to age 5. This program covers the critical developmental years of a child, and failure to address health and other related issues at this stage could lead to the loss of a child. Babies are born with their mothers' immunity, which diminishes up to age 2. Unless they are immunized, they could be exposed to life-threatening diseases. Also, during this early period, most of the baby's brain development occurs. This development can be disrupted by certain activities including shaking a baby vigorously (Shaken Baby Syndrome), not reading, talking, or singing to the baby, and failing to expose the baby to other stimulating activities such as building blocks. The YCPO program addresses these issues via the four areas that it covers. These are Maternal and Child Health, Childcare and Development, Safety and Pediatric Trauma and Parent Education and Support.

What is not appreciated or understood by many Kiwanis clubs is that Kiwanis International considers this program to be so important that it requires each club to perform at least two YCPO projects each year.

As we seek to change the world one child and one community at a time, a YCPO project is the ideal way to start. Healthy babies lead to healthy children and ultimately, healthy adults.

For more information, Celia can be reached at (954) 217-6067 or cearle@prnie.com.



Kiwanis Education

Richard Wongsam, District Chair, Education

This is the last article for this Kiwanis year 2008-2009 and I want to thank Governor Mark Taylor and Governor Dave Liddell for the opportunity and confidence they placed in me to select me as the Education Chair for the Florida District for the past two years. I have learned a lot in this position and I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to these outstanding leaders and the members of the Florida District as you all have shown me a lot of love and appreciation for what we accomplished during this time. I believe that we have offered more training opportunities to our members than ever before. Beginning with the Lt. Governors and District Chairs training, followed by Club Leadership Education (CLE) for all incoming Presidents and Secretaries and others who want to hold an office in the future and then came our District wide Education Days where all Kiwanians were invited to share in this exchange of information. If you attended the District Conventions you were exposed to close to 50 workshops and Table Top displays by all the District Chairs. Never has so much information been made available to our Kiwanis family members. All in all, I believe that we had two incredible Education years.

The teamwork during the past two years was unbelievable and every District Chair is to be commended for their cooperation. Thank you all for making my job so much easier than it could have been, and to the District Staff, You Are The Best!

Florida Kiwanians, continue to lead this Kiwanis organization by promoting our clubs and club growth and always have an open heart to help those that are in need. God Bless.



Kiwanis Growth

Eddie Lee, Growth Coordinator

A few years back, a class of Lt. Governors rallied around the call "Fourth Quarters Ours! Fourth Quarters Ours!" The point was to motivate each other to finish the year strong. That class finished about as strong as could be expected, their efforts propelling the Florida District of Kiwanis to first place in Kiwanis International. Now, a few years later we are in a fourth quarter again, and again the cry goes out for all of us to finish strong. This year we have failed to meet expectations relative to membership increases. In fact we have lost, to date far more members than we anticipated. There are several factors why we have come up short of our goals, not the least of which is the uncertain economic situation. If we want, we can certainly find an excuse, but rather than do that why not look at our situation from another perspective. We can offer new members opportunities for service not typically found. As governments and other organizations face budget cuts that curtail and eliminate services they normally provide they look to groups like Kiwanis to fill the gap. What a terrific opportunity to serve! Now more than perhaps any time in our lives is the time to be bold, reach out to the opportunities available to us and add significantly to our service legacy. First things first. We have three more months left in this fiscal year, plenty of time to enact the Four = One membership program. Teams of four recruit one new member before September 1st. Have

a Special Guest Day, it will increase your visibility in the community and most likely give you new members. There is only one reason why a club can not recruit at least one member per month the next three months. They don't make it a priority. Governor Dave has asked each club to recruit a new member each month as part of Kick Start, his idea to set Governor Elect Donna up for 2009-10. Nearly half of the clubs in the Florida District sit at a zero in terms of membership increase/decline. One member, just ONE member and your club will most likely end the year with a positive membership AND qualify as a distinguished club. ONE member!

Please do all you can to help us finish strong, we need the extra hands for service. This issue marks the end of three years of intense involvement in membership growth for me. I have enjoyed most every moment. Based on the experience I had of being in every Division and over one-half of our clubs, above all else, the one thing I would ask you to do is this... Pick a reliable Club Membership Committee Chair, insist that there be a three person committee that meets at least once a month at a time other than your club meeting day, and craft a plan to better retain and recruit members, then work the plan. Make your

membership committee accountable as well as all the officers and Board members. Growth is everyone's responsibility. Clubs that have an active membership committee, with a plan, grow. It's not rocket science, when all else fails... ASK someone to join Kiwanis. I thank Governors Donna Batelaan, Mark Taylor and David Liddell for letting me serve on the growth team. I am hoping to have some additional responsibilities next year and for certain I will be assisting in new club building. Lead by example, recruit a new Kiwanian today.

