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The Kiwanis Club of Orillia, 1924 - 2024



Kiwanis®

The Kiwanis International Mission

Kiwanis empowers communities to improve the world by making lasting differences in the lives of children.

Defining Statement:

Kiwanis is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to improving the world one child and one community at a time.

The Kiwanis International Vision

Kiwanis will be a positive influence in communities worldwide – so that one day, all children will wake up in communities that believe in them, nurture them and provide the support they need to thrive.

The Objects of Kiwanis

The six permanent Objects of Kiwanis International were approved by Kiwanis club delegates at the 1924 Kiwanis International Convention in Denver, Colorado. Through the decades, they have remained unchanged.

TO GIVE PRIMACY to the human and spiritual rather than to the material values of life.

TO ENCOURAGE the daily living of the Golden Rule in all human relationships.

TO PROMOTE the adoption and the application of higher social, business and professional standards.

TO DEVELOP, by precept and example, a more intelligent, aggressive and serviceable citizenship.

TO PROVIDE, through Kiwanis clubs, a practical means to form enduring friendships, to render altruistic service and to build better communities.

TO COOPERATE in creating and maintaining that sound public opinion and high idealism which make possible the increase of righteousness, justice, patriotism and good will.



Dedications

To those sixty individuals who, fifty years ago, believed implicitly that by uniting their efforts they could perform an unselfish service to their community and established the Orillia Kiwanis Club Inc. these following reflections are dedicated.

(1974)

And to all of those thousands of members, who, over the 100 years since the founding of the Orillia Club, have served their community while enjoying the camaraderie of membership in the Orillia Club.

(2024)

PREFACE TO THE ORILLIA KIWANIS CLUB'S 100-YEAR BOOKLET

The Orillia Kiwanis Club, over its 100 years, has had a permanent home for only a few short years. A result of this is that there is no permanent collection of records, including of meetings, decisions made, and by whom. This may change now that much of the business of the club is being done on computers, hopefully with files saved.

The Orillia Packet & Times, I am told, had an extensive set of archives that would have contained many articles and even advertisements that would have detailed Kiwanis Club activities and events over the years. Unfortunately, in November of 2017, when Metroland Media purchased the local newspaper—along with a number of others, including the Barrie Examiner—they did so to close it down, laying off all employees. Dave Dawson, current editor of OrilliaMatters.com and a former Packet & Times employee, reports that all of the newspaper's archives were simply “dumped.” Thus the records of the newspaper, founded in 1926 from a merger of two other papers, no longer exist in an easily searchable form.

I should note there are microfiche records at the Orillia Public Library that will yield information about the local Kiwanis club, but only through a very time-consuming search.

A few copies of the 1974 booklet chronicling the club's activities from inception in 1924 to 1974 still exist and some of the information to be found in this booklet has come from that source.

Credit must go to former Kiwanian, Bruce McRae, for his superb research and the resulting “Origins: The Kiwanis Club of Orillia, 1924-1930.” I am in possession of a binder of these articles and now have the files. Thank you, Bruce, for the wonderful view of early Orillia during the first years of the founding of the Club in 1924. I trust that this material will find a home at the Orillia Museum of Art & History.

Most of the new material in this booklet celebrating the 100 years of the Orillia Kiwanis Club has come, therefore, from requests to club members to search their memories and personal files for information about who made what happen where and when—and how. Gathering this information has been challenging at times, but also has opened many doors to why Kiwanis Club members do what they do. Many of the accounts come in language that reveals the passion, the empathy, the community spirit and sense of pride that motivates these service club members.

The mandate of the Kiwanis Club of Orillia is to “serve the children of Orillia and area” and the club members have been doing so since the club's founding in 1924. For a service club to continue for a century—one hundred years—is a tribute to those members.

Those who read through this booklet will be introduced to a number of the current, 2023-24 members who, under the leadership of President Paul Ross, will be preparing to celebrate “100 years of serving the children of Orillia” on June 1, 2024 at a gala event at Casino Rama. I hope you will enjoy meeting them and celebrate the accomplishments of the Orillia Kiwanis Club in the process.

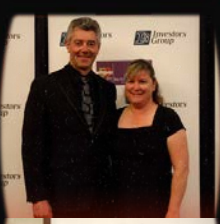
In recording the memories and thoughts of current Kiwanis Club members for this booklet, it is my hope that both the history and the spirit that drives Kiwanians will be evident to readers. Enjoy.

-- Fred Larsen, writer



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The 100th anniversary of the Kiwanis Club of Orillia is an opportunity for celebration and reflection.

Though I have not been a member of the Kiwanis Club for very many years, I am struck by the spirit of volunteerism and fellowship I find there. The membership is a wonderful group of people that enjoy each other's company while working hard for the good of children and youth in our community.

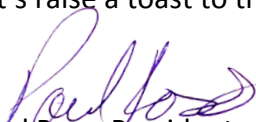
To commemorate our 100th year, we have chosen two important initiatives:

1. Twenty-five years ago, Kiwanis Orillia built a skateboard park for the Club's 75th anniversary. It is an enduring monument to what a dedicated group of people with a variety of skills can accomplish. This year, we will be adding a sunshade and looking at other upgrades to the skatepark for our youth to enjoy for the next 25 years.
2. The second initiative involves reviving the Easter Seals program, which provides support to children and youth with special challenges. The Club will once again be providing funding and volunteer commitment to their very worthwhile programs. Our keynote speaker at the gala, Kevin Collins, President & CEO of Easter Seals Ontario, was one such child. It is our honour to work with him on this initiative.

Our fundraising comes down to one huge event each year—the November Kiwanis auction. Planning for this year's event is already well underway. It is a huge effort that involves the entire Club membership along with spouses, friends, family and, of course, the community businesses that provide such generous donations.

This core funding makes the Club's programs possible. To name just a few, the 66th Annual Music Festival (2024), the T-ball program for 5, 6 and 7-year olds each spring, the 4H sponsorship, the Children's Safety Village in our schools, and the clothing outreach program. To learn more about all our programs, see our 100th Year Anniversary Booklet.

To celebrate this remarkable journey of the past 100 years, let's raise a toast to the Kiwanis Club of Orillia!


Paul Ross, President
Kiwanis Club of Orillia



CONGRATULATORY LETTER: KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT BARANKO



March 2024

Mr Paul Ross
Kiwanis Club of Orillia
PO Box 184
Orillia ON L3V6J3
Canada

Dear President Paul,

Congratulations to your club as you celebrate your 100 anniversary. I hope the last year has been a good one for your members and that you are excited about planning future projects.

Good plans start with input and ideas. Each of us has a unique background or story. Get everyone involved and use those differences to create new goals. Big or small, your service projects do make a difference. They are a bright light that can lead to happier kids. Children discover what they can do and accomplish, with a little help from Kiwanis mentors.

We need more people like us, people who have come together to lift kids and communities. Think about why you joined Kiwanis and invite others to see what we do. Introduce them to your members so they feel the sense of support and teamwork that we encourage.

I send my best wishes as you celebrate your anniversary. I ask you to use your energy to be the best club you can be and to shine the light that is Kiwanis!

Yours in Kiwanis service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Katrina Baranko'.

Katrina Baranko
2023-24 President

CONGRATULATORY LETTER: PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU



PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

2024

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to offer my warmest greetings to everyone marking the 100th anniversary of the Orillia Kiwanis Club.

Kiwanis Club members are known and respected around the world for their dedication to improving the lives of children, one community at a time. This milestone offers a wonderful opportunity to reflect upon the history of your organization, to celebrate its many accomplishments, and to set goals for the future.

I would like to thank the members of the Orillia Kiwanis Club, past and present, for their generosity of spirit and commitment to making a difference. You can take pride in knowing that your contributions are helping to build a better Canada for us all.

Please accept my wishes for a memorable centennial celebration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Justin Trudeau".

The Rt. Hon. Justin P. J. Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada



CONGRATULATORY LETTER: PREMIER FORD



Premier of Ontario - Premier ministre de l'Ontario

June 1, 2024

A MESSAGE FROM PREMIER DOUG FORD

I want to extend warm greetings to all the members of the Kiwanis Club of Orillia as you celebrate your club's 100th Anniversary.

I am a big believer in the power of community. Communities offer strength, the joy of fellowship and a helping hand in times of need. We're fortunate to have Kiwanis Clubs throughout this great province to harness this force. Many children have benefited from the good work of the Kiwanians and from the organization's community service and charitable drives, both at home and around the world.

I want to thank the members, past and present, of the Kiwanis Club of Orillia for the time and energy you have devoted to many worthwhile projects. Know that you are making the world a better place.

As we build a strong and resilient province, Kiwanis Clubs and other civic organizations will play vital roles in keeping our communities strong and engaged.

Best wishes for many more successful years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Ford".

Doug Ford
Premier

CONGRATULATORY LETTER: MAYOR MCISAAC



Office of the Mayor

T: 705-325-2447
F: 705-325-5178
mayor@orillia.ca
orillia.ca
50 Andrew St. S., Suite 300,
Orillia, ON L3V 7T5

February 9, 2024

Paul Ross
President
The Kiwanis Club of Orillia
P.O. Box 184
Orillia, Ontario
L3V 6J3

Dear Mr. Ross:

Re: 100th Anniversary Congratulatory Booklet

On behalf of City Council and all citizens of Orillia, I am delighted to extend our warmest wishes and congratulations to the Orillia Kiwanis Club on the occasion of your 100th anniversary. For a century, your club has been a pillar of our community, working tirelessly to serve those in need and improve the lives of all who call Orillia home. The Kiwanis Club holds a special place in Orillia as the first service club, and we are grateful for your contributions to the community, including working and supporting other community groups.

As we celebrate this significant milestone, I want to express my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you for your hard work, dedication, and unwavering commitment to our community. May you continue to be a beacon of hope and a force for good in Orillia for many years to come. We congratulate you and your members on this significant milestone. May you continue to be an integral part of our community for years to come.

Sincerely,

Don McIsaac
Mayor



100 YEARS OF KIWANIS PRESIDENTS

1924	W. O. Tudhope	1925	W. C. George	1926	G. L. Guy
1927	R. H. Starr	1928	T. D. Brown	1929	Dr. R. E. Hipwell
1930	W. A. Quibell	1931	J. C. Wallace	1932	J. G. Harvie
1933	Dr. S. J. W. Horne	1934	A. C. Harris	1935	W. S. Frost
1936	G. A. Watson	1937	J. H. Tyler	1938	H. R. Comkpin
1939	G. M. Pinkerton	1940	Dr. E. W. Devine	1941	E. E. Steacy
1942	J. C. Maxwell	1943	Dr. J.C. Hill	1944	A. T. MacDonald
1945	G. A. Fitzpatrick	1946	J. B. Garry	1947	R. W. McIntosh
1948	L. Boddy	1949	C. L. Whitney	1950	R. E. Long
1951	W. W. Fowler	1952	Dr. A. Asselstine	1953	J. W. Clarke
1954	T. H. Caldwell	1955	C. O. Parnaby	1956	G. E. Boice
1957	L. J. Cassidy	1958	J. W. Davies	1959	J. Austin Cook
1960	S. R. Oldham	1961	M. R. Dickey	1962	Les D. Clarke
1963	Don Crawford	1964	Robert Hipwell Jr.	1965	Norm Davis
1966	Frank Gold	1967	Dr. Don Richardson	1968	Jim Crutcher
1969	Vern McKinnon	1970	Andy St. Germain	1971	Larry Temple
1972	Jim Crutcher	1973	Sherm Fysh	1974	Bruce Waite
1975	Stan Jordan	1976	Don Reid	1977	Harold Moore
1978	Bill Gordon	1979	Bill Swinimer	1980	Al Hockin
1981	Bill Wood	1982	Jerry Wink	1983	Bob Brown
1984	Bill Hamilton	1985	Ron Thompson	1986	Dr. Walter Bulas
1987	Jack Harber	1988	Charles Kelly	1989	Ron Sattler
1990	Dr. Larry Booth	1991	Dr. Lynn Carter	1992	John Atkinson
1993	Roy Pearn	1994	Bob Johnson	1995	Graham Downard
1996	Rick Barnes	1997	Murray Maw	1998	Gerry Vrieswyk
1999	Dr. Lawrence LaFrance	2000	Bob MacDonald	2001	Bruce McRae
2002	Mike Bunn	2003	David Breckles	2004	John Waite
2005	John Mayo	2006	Doug Downey	2007	Chris Rostance
2008	David North	2009	Rob Town	2010	Susan Thomas
2011	Tim Timpano	2012	Carol Ivey	2013	James Maxwell
2014	Nicole McCahon	2015	Chuck Burton	2016	Ben Cole
2017	Stephanie Pegelo (nee. Worthington)	2018	Peter Head	2019	Fred Larsen
2020	Korine Keyzer	2021	Mark Burns	2022	Heather Breckles
2023	Stephanie Hunter	2024	Paul Ross		



Being a member of the Orillia club has resulted in several long-term friendships that would otherwise not have existed for me. At the same time, we've been able to make a real contribution to the community.

-- Ben Cole



KIWANIS CLUB OF ORILLIA, 2024

CLUB OFFICERS, 2023-24

President:	Paul Ross
Past President:	Stephanie Hunter
President-Elect:	Tobias Whelan
Vice-President:	Amanda Tevelde
Treasurer:	Jennifer Man
Secretary:	Stephanie Pegelo

DIRECTORS, 2023-24

Charles Kelly, 1st Year
Chris Marinakos, 1st Year
Heather Breckles, 1st Year
Lawrence LaFrance, 1st Year
Peter Borutski, 1st Year
Debbie Trickey, 2nd Year
Maria MacDonald-Ross, 2nd Year
Miranda Chaffey, 2nd Year
Robert Marck, 2nd Year

KIWANIS TREASURERS – 1974 TO 2024

1974 to 1977 – Mel Greer, CA
1978 to 1981 – Harold Moore, TD Bank
1982 to 1988 – Jim Doolittle, CA
1988 to 1990 – Terry Hehn, CA, Partner at Dunwoody & Company (Now BDO Canada)
1991 to 1993 – John Mayo, CA, Huronia Trust, (Now BMO Nesbitt Burns)
1994 to 2000 – Mike Bunn, CA, Grant Thornton, Chartered Accountants
2001 to 2003 – Tony LeBlanc, Branch Manager, TD Canada Trust
2004 to 2007 – Ben Cole, CA
2008 to 2009 – Tim Timpano, LLB, Downey, Tornosky, Lassaline & Timpano
2010 to 2014 – Ben Cole, CA
2015 to 2018 – Matthew Dixon, CA
2019 to 2024 – Jennifer Man, CPA, CA

“

I first joined Kiwanis for business reasons. I wanted to connect with other business people to increase my business. I soon found out Kiwanis was so much more. It is the many things we do for the community, it is the laughs we share at our meetings, it is the lifelong friendships I have made.

-- Mike Bunn

”

“

I joined Kiwanis when I came back to Orillia. I was fortunate to grow up in this very supportive community and I wanted to give back. I checked out all the service clubs at the time and found the perfect combination of a great group of people serving a wonderful cause -- kids! Thirty-four years later I am proud to say the club remains strong, fun and contributes vitally to the fibre of Orillia.

-- Lawrence LaFrance

”

CURRENT KIWANIS CLUB MEMBERS, 2024

Breckles, Heather	Carnahan, Brad	Kelly, Charles	North, Dave	Tisi, Danielle
Borutski, Peter	Chaffey, Miranda	Keyzer, Jack	O'Neill, Richard	Town, Rob
Bosco, Marnie	Cole, Ben	Keyzer, Korine	Parker, John	Trickey, Debbie
Brennan, Wes	Collins, Kevin	LaFrance, Lawrence	Pegelo, Stephanie	Van Kessel, Steve
Brown, Bob	Dixon, Matthew	Larsen, Fred	Prichard, Jason	Waite, Bruce
Bulas, Walter	Downey, Doug	MacDonald-Ross, Maria	Robinson, Robert	Whelan, Tobias
Bunn, Mike	Haskins, Don	Man, Jennifer	Ross, Paul (Pres.)	Wink, Jerry
Burns, Dave	Head, Peter	Marck, Robert	Stevens, Scott	
Burns, Mark	Hunter, Stephanie	Marinakos, Chris	Tevelde, Amanda	
Burton, Chuck	Jenkins, Matt	Mayo, John	Timpano, Tim	



Pictured above: back-row, Lawrence LaFrance, Dave Burns, Stephanie Hunter, Fred Larsen, Don Haskins, Stephanie Pegelo, Rob Town, Korine Keyzer, Ben Cole, Heather Breckles, Jason Pritchard, Chris Marinakos, Peter Borutski, Amanda Tevelde; front-row, Charles Kelly, Bruce Waite, John Parker, Paul Ross, Bob Brown, Mike Bunn, circa 2024.



Pictured above: new members Dan Pegelo, Chris Marinakos, Amanda Tevelde, Danielle Tisi, Miranda Chaffey, Tobias Whalen and Scott Stevens, circa 2023



Pictured above: longtime members Bob Brown, Walt Bulas, Charles Kelly with Stephanie Hunter, President, circa 2023.

KIWANIS CLUB COMMITTEES, 2024

Music Festival Committee

Kiwanis Club Members:

Don Haskins	President
Stephanie Pegelo	Registrar
Jennifer Man	Treasurer

Non-Kiwanians:

Amanda Stanton	Artistic Director
Terry Therien	Chairperson/Secretary
Alex Andrews Rose	Adjudicator Co-Coordinator
MJ Van Pypen	Adjudicator Co-Coordinator
Rosemarie Freeman	Donations Coordinator, Public Relations
Mayumi Kumagai	School Liaison
Sylvia Taylor	Volunteer Coordinator

Auction Committee

Co-Chairs:

Dave North
Stephanie Pegelo

Members:

Debbie Trickey
Don Haskins
Heather Breckles
John Mayo
Jennifer Man
Maria MacDonald-Ross
Peter Borutski
Tobias Whelan

Speaker Committee

Bruce Waite
Chris Marinakos
Danielle Tisi
John Mayo

100-Year Gala Committee

Co-Chairs:

Bruce Waite
Stephanie Pegelo

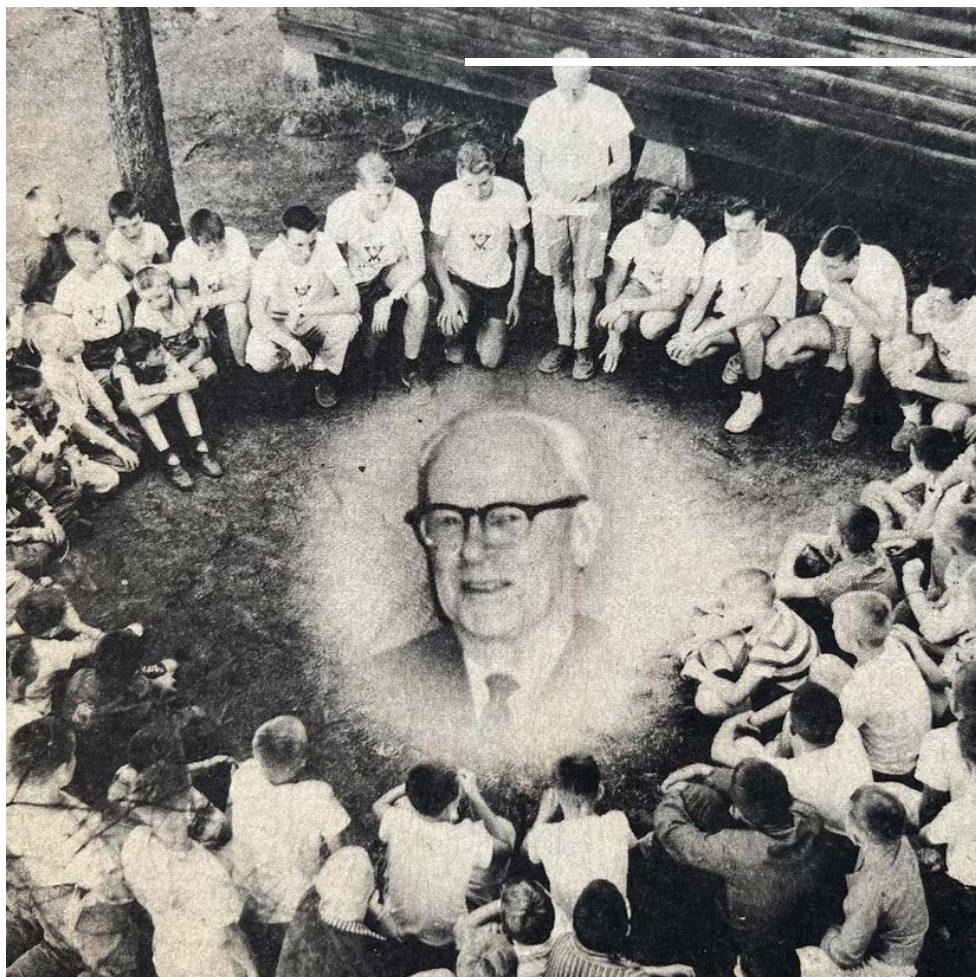
Members:

Amanda Tevelde
Ben Cole
Debbie Trickey
Heather Breckles
John Mayo
Maria MacDonald-Ross
Marnie Bosco
Miranda Chaffey
Paul Ross
Peter Borutski
Stephanie Hunter

100th Anniversary Book

Amanda Tevelde
Bruce Waite
Fred Larsen

Pictured below: Skid Watson (standing) at his best, surrounded by young people at YMCA's Camp Summerland.



“

I joined the Kiwanis Club to serve the community and to honour my father who was a member of the Kiwanis Club of Corning, New York. I thoroughly enjoy the interaction with other members, who are quite entertaining, e.g. Skid Watson, Jack Harber. Etc.

--Walt Bulas

”

KIWANIS AWARDS

Kiwanis Club of Orillia – Our “Legion of Honour”

The Kiwanis Club of Orillia, at each Annual President’s Night dinner, seizes the opportunity to recognize members who demonstrate the spirit of Kiwanis with their efforts and leadership throughout the preceding year(s). Our major awards and their recipients over the years are shown below. Each person named represents countless hours serving the club and the community. Thank you, all of you, for your service to our community.

Mel Osbourne Fellowship Recipients

The Kiwanis Foundation of Canada has created an award which honours Mel Osbourne, one of the founders of the Canadian branch of Kiwanis International. Membership in the Fellowship is given to Kiwanians and other community members who have contributed to the growth and work of Kiwanis with the community’s children. This award is not presented annually, but on occasion to celebrate truly special service to our Club and to the Kiwanis family by our members. Their service and dedication is remembered and honoured by being named to this prestigious society. Non-member community winners of the award on this list are noted by asterisks (**)

Blair Bailey**	David Breckles	Heather Breckles
Bob Brown	Dr. Lynn Carter	Const. Gerry Dwyer**
Bill Hamilton	Jack Harber	Jack Keyzer
Korine Keyzer	Bob MacDonald	John Mayo
Kevin Moore**	Dave North	Francois Tisi
Bruce Waite	Susan Waite**	Jerry Wink
Stephanie Pegelo		



Pictured above: Marnie Bosco, the 2023 Legion of Honour recipient, with Stephanie Pegelo.



Bruce Waite and Jerry Wink were the first recipients of the Mel Osbourne Award from the Orillia Club. Since then, they have been honoured often for their many services to the club over the years. Bruce has been a member of the Orillia Club for 55 years, while Jerry has been a member for 50 years as of January 2024. Together, they have been exemplars of the Kiwanis spirit expressed by the Orillia Club.

Pictured to the left: Bruce & Susan Waite and Jerry & Marion Wink.

Skid Watson Award Recipients

This award was created to honour one of our members, G. A. “Skid” Watson. Skid was the general manager of the Orillia YMCA for decades after WWI. His motto was “A man can accomplish almost anything if he cares not who gets the credit.” It is in that spirit that this award is presented. In 1979, Skid, having joined the Kiwanis Club of Orillia in 1925 after attending the Club’s Charter Evening the previous year, was the first recipient.

1979. G. A. “Skid” Watson	1994 Bob Alkema	2009 Francois Tisi
1980 Les Stringer	1995 Roy Pearn	2010 Bob MacDonald
1981 Tom Parish	1996 Lawrence LaFrance	2011 Paul Lavigne
1982 Brian Wilkinson	1997 Jerry Wink	2012 Stephanie Pegelo
1983 Greg Mulligan	1998 Bob MacDonald	2013 Tim Timpano
1984 Bruce Waite	1999 Wayne Boshier	2014 James Maxwell
1985 John Morton	2000 Gerry Vrieswyk	2015 Marnie Bosco
1986 Charles Kelly	2001 Bob Bodkin	2016 Doug Downey
1987 Mansell Chapman	2002 Chris Rostance	2017 Steve & Marni Van Kessel
1988 Jack Keyzer	2003 Mike Bunn	2018 Korine Keyzer
1989 Bill Hamilton	2004 John Mayo	2019 Dave North
1990 Jamie Powell	2005 Kelly Lassaline	2020 Jennifer Man
1991 Dan Skinner	2006 Dave & Heather Breckles	2021 Don Haskins
1992 Kirby Wagg	2007 Ben Cole	2022 Stephanie Hunter
1993 Bob Johnson	2008 Carol Ivey	2023 Maria MacDonald-Ross

George McVeigh Spirit Award Winners

George was a member of our club who took on responsibilities with a smile, and that made it a pleasure to work with him to accomplish our tasks. Soft-spoken, with a gentle wit, he made all in his presence feel just a little better. After his untimely death, the club created this award to honour members who exude the same spirit.

2014 Joanne Watson
2015 John Mayo
2016 Dave North
2017 Korine Keyzer
2018 Lawrence LaFrance
2019 Stephanie Hunter
2020 Don Haskins
2021 Kiwanis Music Festival Committee
2022 Bob Brown
2023 Peter Borutski



Pictured above: Maria MacDonald-Ross, the 2023 Skid Watson Award Recipient.

The “Special K” Award

In that special Kiwanis “spirit of fun,” the club each year presents one more award at the annual dinner—the Special K Award. This battered cup is given to the member of the club who has made the biggest blunder or goof-up during the year’s activities. As members are fond of noting, however, “you can’t make any mistakes if you’re not doing anything.” Accordingly, the winner of the award each year is often a person who has been in the thick of the club’s activities. The basis of this award’s presentation is often hilarious—as a few examples of the award’s recipients show.

The award was first presented in 1981 to Tom Hussey. After spending hours setting up for the live auction at the Roller Skating Place—from midnight to 5 a.m.—an exhausted Tom decided to try on a pair of skates and take a couple of spins around the floor. Shortly after, he was admitted to the hospital emergency ward with a broken ankle.

Others have won for sleeping in on the morning of the auction while having the only key to open the Roller Rink doors for the dozens of Kiwanians waiting to get in. John Waite won his award for driving a tall van full of items for the auction out of a laneway onto West Street and taking down an entire block of Christmas lights and decorations erected that morning by a City of Orillia crew.

The award is presented in fun and is accepted sheepishly. The one positive about winning is that you get to choose the next year’s recipient from the several nominations from members. Some past winners who are still current members are Bob Brown, Mike Bunn, Peter Head, Rob Town, Marnie Bosco, Dave North and Fred Larsen. Lawrence LaFrance, Bruce Waite and John Mayo have each been awarded the Cup four times (and counting?).

Pictured to the right: Outgoing President Peter Head introduces the “Special K” Award and invites “nominees” to come up to be introduced, Charles Kelly, Bruce Waite, Fred Larsen and Lawrence LaFrance. Bruce Waite turns out to be the winner - for his fourth honour! Congratulations, Bruce - and to all the nominees. President’s Night, circa 2019.



KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

Kiwanis began as a national organization with the forming of a club in Detroit in 1915. When the first club was formed outside of the United States in Hamilton, Ontario in 1916, the organization became international.

The first International Convention was held in Detroit in 1917, with two countries represented. Representatives at the 1973 Montreal Convention were present from over 40 countries. Today there are over 8,300 clubs in more than 85 countries of the world and more than 537,000 adult members.

The structure of Kiwanis International begins at the club level. Members join a particular Kiwanis club or clubs. Each club is clustered with other clubs in an area to form a division. The Orillia club is a member of the Huronia Division which is one of several divisions that make up the Eastern Canada and Caribbean (E.C. & C.) District. There are currently 49 Districts and Provisional Districts in the organization.

Each Division elects a Lieutenant-Governor each year and each District elects a Governor. Together they form the decision-making body of each District. Members Sherm Fysh, Bob Macdonald, John Parker, Carol Ivey and Stephanie Pegelo of the Orillia Club have served Division 8 as Lieutenant-Governors in past years.

Each Club has its elected officers (President, Past President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary) and Directors. The Orillia Club, for continuity, elects four First Year Directors and four Second Year Directors. Together, these officers and Directors serve the Club as its decision-making body, meeting monthly to consider Club business.



Pictured above: Bill Price and Carol Ivey enjoying the Kiwanis Auction. Carol was President in 2012 and also served as Lt.-Governor of Division 8 (Huron).



Pictured above: President John Waite hosts Governor Joanne Murray and Lt. Governor Gary Levine, circa 2004.



Pictured above: President Korine Keyzer and Board of Directors: (back row) Fred Larsen, Mike Bunn, Mark Riczu, Robert Marck, Jennifer Man, Stephanie Pegelo, Stephanie Hunter, Don Haskins, (front row) Dave North, Heather Breckles, Korine Keyzer and Mark Burns, circa 2020.

'BIRTH' OF THE KIWANIS CLUB OF ORILLIA (from 1974 book)

BIRTH NOTICE: "At Orillia on June 23rd, 1924, to the Kiwanis Club of Barrie, a daughter, the Orillia Kiwanis Club.

**Obstetrician, Kiwanian Dr. Bill Lewis.
Mother and daughter doing well."**

The above notice appeared in Barrie's weekly paper announcing to all and sundry that a new Kiwanis Club was safely launched in Orillia.

The Barrie Club, an infant club itself, was to prove to be a very prolific parent, bringing into the world no fewer than five new clubs. Besides Orillia in June of 1924, there followed Midland, also in 1924, Owen Sound, in July 1925, Collingwood in May 1946, and later Kempenfelt Bay in 1961—truly a remarkable record.

The first meeting of the Orillia club was held at the Y.M.C.A. on March 10, 1924. This was an organizational meeting which was attended by eighteen members of our parent club along with Mr. Marshall, Field Secretary of the Kiwanis Club of North America. There were sixty soon-to-be members of the Orillia Club.

After a tasty meal, supplied by the Women's Auxiliary of the Y.M.C.A., and a singsong led by E.A. Ryan of Barrie with George Chalk of Orillia at the piano, the election of officers was conducted and the elected officers, directors and committee chairman duly installed by Mr. Field. The Orillia Club was ready to go to work.

The Charter was presented at an evening meeting held at Orchard Point Inn on June 23rd by E.G. Tanguay Governor of O.Q.M District. Present for the ceremony were representatives from Barrie, Midland, Lindsay, Toronto, Peterborough, Hamilton and Kitchener.

The programme was under the direction of our mother club, Barrie, with Dr. Simpson presiding. An address of welcome to visiting Kiwanians was given by the Rev. N.H. McGillivray and responded to by A. McCallum of Barrie.



Mr. Tanguay presented the Charter to W.O. Tudhope, our club's Charter President. Other presentations included a gavel by James Brodie, on behalf of the Barrie Club, a silk Union Jack by Blake Halloday, Toronto, Lieutenant Governor of the District, and a Visitors' Register from the Kitchener club, presented by Wm. Mills, a former resident of Orillia.

The evening was brought to a close by the singing of Auld Lang Syne and our National Anthem.

Orillia had become the 24th Kiwanis Club in Canada and the first service club in Orillia."



I joined the Orillia club because of family history. Tom Breckles, David's dad, introduced David to Kiwanis as a child. Then David became a member and introduced me to a great group of people. The social aspect, and the knowledge that we are making a real difference to the children and youth in our community kept me in the club!

-- Heather Breckles



KIWANIS CLUB OF ORILLIA, 1924

CHARTER OFFICERS

W.O. Tudhope, President
W.C. George, Vice President
A.C. Harris, Secretary
Geo. Rapley, Treasurer
J.W. Mercer, Dist. Trustee

CHARTER DIRECTORS

R.H. Starr
A. Weatherwax
D.A. McNabb
Gordon Millar
Dr. W.H. Hunter
Dr. C.G. Kirkpatrick
Wm. J. Boyle

CHARTER MEMBERS

Anderson, Dr. John L.	Farwell, Ed. B.	Kirkpatrick, Dr. Kirk	Pearce, Chas. L.
Bacon, Pierce W.	Frost, Will S.	Lewers, Richard T. W.	Price, Boe H.
Beaton, John Lewis	George, W. Cecil	Lloyd, A. James	Quibell, Bill A.
Blackburn, Fred J.	Gilroy, Perce A.	Macnab, Don. A.	Rapley, Geo. A.
Blackstone, George A.	Good, Ed. H.	Macnab, Godfrey E.	Starr, Ronald H.
Boyle, Billy J.	Guy, George L.	Madden, George T.	Stover, Peter
Brown, Robert A.	Harvie, Dr. Horace	Mercer, James W.	Swinton, Robert
Brown, Tom	Harvie, Dr. C. Albert	McGillivray, Rev. N.H., Padre	Therrien, James
Carter, Archie T.	Harris, Albert C.	McIntyre, Archie C.	Tudhope, Mel. B.
Chalk, George	Hinds, J. Ed.	McPhail, Neil	Tudhope, Will. O.
Dick, Clifford	Horne, Frank H.	Millar, Gordon	Vollans, Fred. W.
Donaldson, T. Ossie	Hunter, Dr. W. Harold	Miller, Jack C.	Weatherwax, Andy
Doolittle, Lorne W.	Janes, Charlie B.	Mullins, Stanley H.	Wainwright, Dr. Claude
Dunbar, Randolph C.	Jones, Charles B.	Mundell, John A.	Webb, Edw. E.
Eaton, Ed R.	King, Thos. G.	Patterson, Rev. J.R., Parson	Wood, Ed. C.



“

When we moved back to Orillia, I wanted to get involved in the community and help improve it any way I could. Kiwanis was the answer. It is great to have... hands-on involvement in our projects.

-- Mark Burns

”

Pictured to the left: Skid Watson at the Kiwanis Picnic, circa 1937.

THE 2024 CLUB—100 YEARS LATER

Members of the 2024 Orillia Kiwanis Club come from a wide variety of business backgrounds—construction, accounting, investment banking, real estate, retail businesses, service organizations—even charitable organizations. The club also features a number of retired members, who continue to work through the club to strengthen the Orillia community's support for children and young people.

There are currently 47 members, but over recent years the club membership has consistently numbered between fifty and sixty. The COVID 19 pandemic hit membership hard. In-person meetings became impossible during 2020 and 2021, though Presidents Korine Keyzer (2019-20) and Stephanie Hunter (2020-21) continued meetings via ZOOM and thereby carried on the work of the club during this dark period. The club's main fundraiser—the Annual Mammoth Auction—was canceled in 2020, but returned in November, 2022 as an online auction. In November of 2023 it once again re-emerged as a live auction at ODAS Park's Roller Skating Place.

The club's tradition over its 100 years has been to gather for lunch meetings every Monday at noon (with the exception of holidays). The 1974 booklet records that the first meetings were held at the YMCA, after which they "moved to Archie Carter's Candy Shop, later known as Carter's Restaurant." Regular meetings continued at Carters until "their disastrous fire in 1962, which not only destroyed the building but also all Kiwanis records." After the fire, the club met at "the new Sundial Restaurant" until they moved to the Birchmere for several years.

Other meeting locations were the Holiday Inn, Kiwanis House, Couchiching Point, the Howard Johnston, Theo's Eatery, the Masonic Lodge and Kelsey's. Since January of 2024 the club has been meeting in the beautiful surroundings of Creative Nomad Studios' second floor room on Mississaga Street West. For over a decade, Dave North has sent out a "Weekly Bulletin" that recaps each meeting's events, including a summary of business and the speaker's topic. (Thanks, Dave.)

Late in September of each year, a President's Night is held to celebrate the accomplishments of the concluding presidential term and to pass the gavel to the incoming President and his or her Executive and Board of Directors. The Kiwanis Executive includes the Past President, President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. In addition, four "first year directors" and four "second year directors" assist the Executive in making decisions for the club's members. A commitment to a major, multi-year expenditure will require a vote of approval by the membership at a lunch meeting.

The Club website highlights the variety of projects and financial support provided by the club to the community and its various charitable organizations—all focused on the welfare of the community's children and youth. In addition, members help with the Salvation Army kettles at Christmas, collect donations at the Santa Claus parade—anything to help the community. Over recent decades, support of children's services at the OSMH has also been a priority of the Club.

Kiwanis members have fun. Whether it's winter or summer or Auction time in the Fall, club members enjoy getting together socially. A trip to a baseball game, a party at Dave North's, an outside winter campfire—all are opportunities for Kiwanians to get together. It is the social aspect of Kiwanis that brings members into the club and keeps them there—along with the warmth of feeling that comes from supporting the children and youth of the Orillia community.

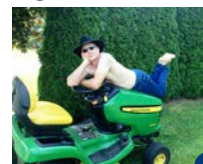
As we enter our second century of service, may the Kiwanis Club of Orillia continue to thrive.



My funniest memory is of Ben Cole. During his President's Night speech, he showed a photo of himself shirtless, posed on a riding lawnmower, for a future Kiwanis calendar.

He said he wanted to be "Mr. July."

--Jennifer Man



WOMEN AND THE ORILLIA KIWANIS CLUB

For much of its history, Kiwanis Club International, like many other service clubs in North America, was a “men-only” organization. It wasn’t until the late 1970s and early 1980s that the issue of admitting women to Kiwanis clubs was raised at the international conventions.

Jerry Wink remembers hearing the beginnings of the discussion several years before delegates to the Annual Convention finally made the decision to admit women as members.

“I had the pleasure of attending International Kiwanis conventions in Toronto (1979), New Orleans (1980) and Minneapolis (1981). The number one item on the agenda at each of these was whether to allow women to join. The arguments went on for hours and members on both sides of the debate were spirited to say the least. It was at the convention in Ozark, Alabama in 1987 that the vote finally passed to allow female members.”

Even before this decision by Kiwanis International, many, if not most, of the wives of members of the local Kiwanis Club played key roles in the success of projects over the years. Susan Waite was the Coordinator of Volunteers for the Kiwanis Music Festival for over 25 years. Wives delivered gift baskets, manned the Salvation Army kettles, organized the annual kids’ Christmas Party—and so much more.

The Orillia Kiwanis Club didn’t make the move to enlist female members until the early nineties. Jerry notes, “The first female in the Orillia Kiwanis Club was Linda Murray who, I believe, joined in 1992. For some time, she was the only woman member. I think Susan Thomas might have been our second. Some other names that come to mind from the past include Kelly Lassaline, Carol Ivey, Marilyn Watson, Joanne Watson, Nicole McCahon, Rosemary Hodge, Kim Kargas, Lisa Madden, Josie Man a, Sylvia Reagan, and Michelle Thompson.”



Pictured above, left to right: Bruce McRae, Michael Martyn, Sue Thomas, and John Mayo, circa 2010.

The first woman President in the club was Susan Thomas in 2010 (Pictured above). In the fourteen years after that first, six other women members have served as President—Carol Ivey (2012), Nicole McCahon (2014), Stephanie Pegelo (2017), Korine Keyzer (2020), Heather Breckles (2022) and Stephanie Hunter (2023).

The contributions of women members to the Orillia Kiwanis Club since their admission to membership has been enormous. In 2024 it goes without saying that they are, and have been for many years, huge contributors to the success of the Club.

From the perspective of 2024, looking back, it’s hard to understand that it took some eight years of discussion before Kiwanis International men made the decision to welcome women as members. Better late than never, guys!



Pictured above: President Stephanie Hunter (bottom right) Pictured with some of the women of Kiwanis; back-row, Debbie Trickey, Miranda Chaffey, Amanda Tevelde, Marnie Bosco, Maria MacDonald-Ross, Korine Keyzer, Jennifer Man; front-row, Stephanie Pegelo, and Heather Breckles, President’s night circa 2023.

FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES OVER THE YEARS

The 1974 Booklet describes the Club purchasing 50 acres of land near Sadowa in 1953 and planting 15,000 trees to be sold as Christmas trees when grown. After the trees were sold, the Club sold the land to the Township and the profit from the venture was “earmarked to be available for needy students to further their education . . . When the Dominion government adopted the practice of lending money to students, the club discontinued doing so, and the money involved was put to other uses.”

One of the early popular enterprises was the “Winter Skating Carnival” started in 1927—“a gala occasion preceded by a parade through town . . . During the evening the capacity house would be entertained by a broom ball game between two costumed teams of Kiwanians, a parade around the rink in which many picturesque and humorous costumes vied for the prizes offered, and many other skating events.”

“The club also organized New Year’s Eve dances, sponsored outstanding choirs, soloists and concerts. ‘The Village Fair,’ generally held in the Market Square, was a popular event for many years. There followed raffles, radio bingo, and the sale of roses.

More recent events are described below:

The Great Mississauga Street “Tennis Ball Tumble”

In 1996 we made the decision to purchase our Fire Safety House. To help pay for this, we devised a rather unique fundraising event which ran in September of 1996 and again in 1997. Each year the club sold tickets that corresponded to 3000 numbered tennis balls. On the day of the event, the balls were loaded into one of Jack Keyzer’s front end loaders and dumped onto Mississauga Street just below Peter St. The balls were trapped in a wooden shoot just below Matchedash Street with the first ball in being the winner of \$1,000.

The revenue from these events netted us just under \$30,000 which helped pay for our new trailer—which was delivered in time for the club’s 75th year anniversary in 1999.

As an aside, we let the Kiwanis club of Huntsville borrow the balls for their fundraising efforts for two years. As one might imagine, the effort of sorting the balls on their return to ensure each one was accounted for was the challenge. One member recalls this as “the worst idea we ever had.”

A Boat Raffle

Korine Keyzer says her dad Jack recalls that, at one point in the 90’s, the Orillia Club did a boat raffle. He believes Kiwanis worked with and purchased the boat from Orchard Point Marina. Jack towed the boat around “everywhere” selling tickets on the boat. All club members were selling tickets. The Club did really well with the event, and there was a lot of media.

Kiwanis Bingo at the Geneva

Bingo at Geneva was always an event that raised great money. Korine Keyzer remembers as a teenager in high school going with dad Jack to work the Bingo on Friday nights. Starting in 1989 the Kiwanis Club ran the late bingo at the old Geneva Theatre every second Friday night. The decision to take on this fundraiser did take its toll on our membership as a number of members felt that we were taking money from the poor and consequently left the club. The majority of the members believed that bingo would happen without us and that at least all the money we raised would go back into the community.

Another objection? “You had to change your clothes and shower when you got home.”

Brenda Barnes, the wife of member Rick Barnes, ran the bingo each time with the help of Kiwanis members. Bingo basically stopped a year or so after Casino Rama opened in 1996.

Jerry Wink estimates the Club may have made as much as “\$50,000 a year” from Bingo. He remembers, “It was reported at our 75th Anniversary that bingo had raised \$475,000 ‘to date.’”

Sunshine Superwash Charity Car Wash and BBQ

A Kiwanis press release on September 10, 2014 reported on a successful event:

“Sunshine Superwash held their first “Charity Car Wash and BBQ” on Saturday, September 6, 2014 between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. in support of the Kiwanis Club of Orillia. Kiwanis members were on hand to greet customers. Sunshine Superwash owner Ted Hewett subsequently presented a cheque to Nicole McCahon, Kiwanis President and John Beck, Kiwanis member. Funds raised helped Kiwanis to complete many important projects: the Kiwanis Children’s Safety Village, the annual Kiwanis Music Festival, \$40,000 to the expansion of the local YMCA , the Laws of Life Essay Writing Contest, the Kiwanis Skateboard Park, Kiwanis T-Ball League, Kiwanis Terrific Kids Program, high school Scholarships, support for Big Brothers Big Sisters Basketball Tournament, \$100,000 to the Orillia Soldiers’ Memorial Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and many more.



Pictured above: Nicole McCahon, Ted Hewett, and John Beck.

“

Like a lot of members, I joined for the fellowship that Kiwanis provides, as well as the opportunity to give back to our community.

-- Charles Kelly

”

The Radio Auction

In 1950 the club organized and adopted the “Radio Auction” method of raising money. The auction became a profitable venture that continued as an annual event into 1974.

Eventually the Radio Auction evolved into the Kiwanis Club’s Annual Mammoth Auction at ODAS Park.



Pictured above: Champlain Seniors Harry Barons, Bill Price and Bob Burns man the auction boards for the live auction, circa 2010.

Easter Seal Campaign

It was during the 1970’s that “Rusty’s Marathon” began. Rusty Draper, the popular CFOR broadcaster, suggested he stay on air “for sixty continuous hours” broadcasting on behalf of all the crippled children in Ontario. The marathon became an annual event, anchored by Rusty’s wide popularity across the area. People came from near and far to participate in the event. The proceeds also grew, eventually raising \$20,000 for Easter Seals in 1974.

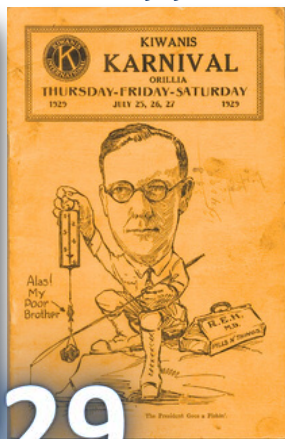
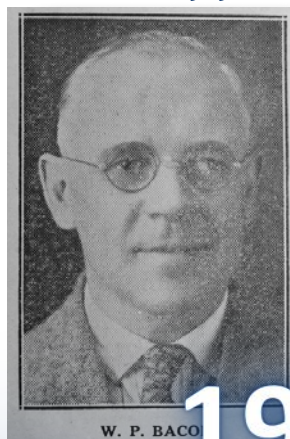
“

I joined Kiwanis so I could be part of the Auction. I was a Rotarian for 20 years and was tired of selling tickets to raise money for the club. The Kiwanis Auction made sense to me as a major fundraiser for the club.

-- Peter Borutski

”

W. P. Bacon, President, circa 1929 Kiwanis Karnivall circa 1929*



Leo Cassidy, President, circa 1955*



25th Anniversary Programme, circa 1949*



Manning the Live Auction boards, circa 1944*



1924

1929

1955

1944

1949

1928



Skid Watson original name tag, circa 1928

1950



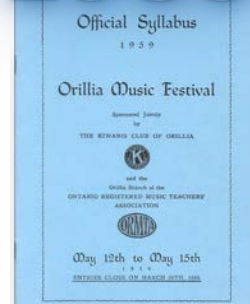
Common Sense, circa 1950*

1930s



Kiwanis Club Members, circa 1930s*

1959



Music Festival Program, circa 1959*

*Special thank you to the Orillia Museum of Art & History for the historical photos

Launches of Children's
Safety Village, circa 2009



2009

Kiwanis Bucket Brigade, Orillia
Santa Clause Parade, circa 2023



2023

Golden "K" Champlain Senior
Kiwanis Club, circa 1983*



1983

Orillia Children's Choir sings at
the Mammoth Auction, circa 2010



2010



1966



2006



Kiwanis Convention,
circa 2006

2017



President's Night,
circa 2017



2022



Kiwanis Launches
Hospice Orillia's Youth
Equine Bereavement
Program, circa 2022

2024

KIWANIS MAMMOTH AUCTION

The Kiwanis Annual Auction started out as a Radio Auction in 1950. Club members would approach local merchants to donate items, a numbered list would be printed in the Packet & Times, and we would set up, first at CFOR Radio Station on West St., and later at the Russell Pontiac Showroom on the main street to receive bids by telephone.

Bob Brown, Auction Chair in 1981, thought the Club could raise substantially more money with a live auction. ODAS Park's Building 1 became the site. Revenue increased from around \$5,000 in 1980 to \$15,000 in 1981.

In 2004 we made arrangements with the Orillia Agricultural Society to use their new Roller Rink. This allowed many larger items to be displayed and auctioned off. Club members would gather the items over the several weeks before the auction dates. We took possession of the roller rink at midnight Friday, and five hours later, we were set up. The auction ran for two days – Saturday and Sunday. It was a great success

The auction has evolved over time. Some years, we had a substantial number of pieces of art donated by local artists. For a few years, we accepted used goods. However, it turned out in many cases we were just cleaning out people's attics and basements, with donations of TVs and fridges that didn't work. Also, hauling these items up and down steps was tough on some of our older members.

So during the past several years, we have auctioned off only new items. Many years, local radio stations have broadcast live from the auction. We have had children's areas set up where they could do crafts, have their faces painted, and give their parents some time to enjoy bidding on the items. Pancake breakfasts were provided for several years for those bidders who arrived early. Each year, the event provides many mishaps and laughs, and is a wonderful introduction to service club work for new members. The Orillia business community support has also been our strength.

During the pandemic years of 2021 and 2022, rather than cancel the event, the club went to an online auction. In 2023, there was a "hybrid"—a five-day online auction followed by a live auction at the fairgrounds on Saturday. For 2024, the Club is going back to a live-only format.

For years, the auction has been the club's sole fundraising project. Its success is critical to the Orillia Kiwanis Club's running of the many club programs that support the youth of our area.



Pictured above: Jim Wilson, Mike Davenport, Bob Brown, circa 2011.

Over the years, the auction was reduced to one day. Voucher boards and silent auction tables were added to deal with gift certificates and smaller items. Saturday was "All Hands on Deck" as it required - and still does - a substantial commitment by the entire club membership, along with family members.



Pictured above: a large crowd gathered for the live auction, circa 2018.

KIWANIS INTERCLUBS

Kiwanis has a long history of interclubbing—when each club in our Division attend a meeting or other function of another Kiwanis Club. For several years in the 70s and 80s, the Orillia Club aimed to visit each club in our Division every year, and encouraged each club to make a return visit.

For many years, the Orillia Kiwanis Club hosted an annual Curling Bonspiel. Over 120 Kiwanians from clubs near and far would descend on Orillia for a full day of competition, followed by an evening of fellowship at a banquet at the Birchmere Hotel. This counted as an interclub for fifteen different clubs.

In 1951 a group of Kiwanians from the club in Austintown, Ohio came up to a cottage in the area and dropped in to our club meeting. The next year, they returned again and invited us to visit them. In 1953, Orillia Kiwanis President Bill Clarke and a group that included the Mayor, chartered a DC3 and flew to Austintown. Upon arrival, they were greeted by a high school marching band and taken to the meeting by a parade of cars which included a fire engine and a police escort. After that experience, up to a dozen Orillians would make the annual trip.

This back and forth interclub continued until 2003 and was recognized by Kiwanis International as the longest continual interclub in history during its 50th year in 2002. Joe Lane from Austintown was the driving force for the entire time, missing only one trip to Orillia during this 51-year run. After his death in 2002, the Austintown Club made one more trip to Orillia, but, without a new leader, the string ended.

Our trips to Austintown were the highlight of many Orillian's Kiwanis year, leaving early Friday morning for the six-hour trip by cars, vans and RVs. For a couple of years, we had a huge executive motorhome compliments of one member's employer. Most of us golfed and played cards. Often we attended a high school football game – with 15,000 spectators.

The Saturday night steak fry hosted by Paul Snyder was legendary and a trip to Sammy Jordan's bar was also mandatory. The trip ended with our attendance at their Monday noon meeting, at which we often provided the guest speaker.

Members of the Orillia Club who went on some of those interclub trips to Austintown have fond memories of the good times they had.



An RV interclub group in Ohio

Pictured above (left-right): Dr. Lynn Carter, Walt Bulas, and Jack Harber. Note golf clubs.

The photo also captures long-time members who remain in the club; Walt Bulas, 52 year member, Bob Brown [in blue shirt], 50 year member, and Jerry Wink [in red], 50 year member.

“

Kiwanis was a huge part of my childhood and I am now a very proud third-generation Kiwanian. Even my career choice was influenced through Kiwanis (by Kiwanian and funeral home owner, Joe Lane of Austintown, Ohio).

-- Marnie (Waite) Bosco

”

“

I love working in our community . . . and setting a positive example for my own kids. One of my favourite parts is that my girls can come to events we support and see the difference a few hours can make in the lives of others.

-- Maria Macdonald-Ross

”

KIWANIS AND THE ORILLIA 4H CALF CLUB

The 1974 booklet celebrating the Orillia club's first fifty years notes a close relationship between the club and the local farming community. In 1926, Kiwanians, among others in the city, were celebrating "Alfalfa Day" with a banquet "attended by 155 farmer guests." The following year, the farming community hosted "Kiwanians and their ladies at a banquet held at Lakeview House on Sparrow Lake."

The current relationship between the Orillia Kiwanis Club and the local 4H Calf Club is older than the Kiwanis Music Festival. It started in 1950 when "the Orillia Calf Club, sponsored by the Kiwanis Club, was formed." On December 11 that year a meeting was held "at which time prizes and awards were presented to the members." The Orillia Kiwanis Club has happily sponsored and supported the 4H Calf Club since.

The reciprocal nature of the relationship has been a constant. 4H members and their parents are invited to a Kiwanis club luncheon every December, at which prizes and awards are given out to the 4H members. Not to be outdone, the 4H Club invites Kiwanis members and families to a fall corn roast at a local farm.

John Mayo, a current club member, has been a key part of this relationship over several years and remains so to this present day. He notes, "I took over the Chairing of the Kiwanis / 4H relationship around 2006 from Kiwanian Larry Booth. Larry, a local veterinarian and long-time Kiwanian (President in 1990), had a close relationship with the agricultural community and chaired the event for many years."

"In my early years of Chairing, from 2006 to 2012, the summer BBQ was typically hosted by one of the 4H families at their farm property. Around 2013 we switched venues, and over the past ten years we have alternated the BBQ location between Big Curve Acres (Henry and Reta Regelink) in Oro Medonte and the Hewitt Fun Farm (Trevor Hewitt) in Severn."

The strength of the Orillia 4H Calf Club, Mayo notes, has been the tremendous continuity of leadership provided by Kevin Moore. Kevin and his brother Trevor, third generation farmers, operate the Moore dairy farm. This past year represented Kevin's 38th year at the helm. In recognition of Kevin's long term, outstanding leadership of the 4H Club, he was awarded the Mel Osborne Fellowship by the Club in 2011



Pictured above: David Doyle and Kevin Moore, 4H Co-chairs.

The December Kiwanis / 4H luncheon is an event that, to this day, celebrates our local agricultural families and the accomplishments of their sons and daughters.

The annual challenge to Kiwanis members to "learn something new about farming" results in some good fun at the event—and yes, often shows how little most of us do know about today's farming challenges and the new technologies now in use. Needless to say, the young 4H members are revealed to be both knowledgeable and skilled—and dedicated to their farming roots. The Orillia Kiwanis Club is proud to support them.

“ You'll never meet a more polite and well-mannered group of young people anywhere. You get the sense that they have that commitment, responsibility, work ethic and humility that comes with growing up on a farm. This is one of my favourite things we do as a club, and I hope it continues for many years to come.

-- Dave North

ORILLIA KIWANIS MUSIC FESTIVAL

In 2024, the Orillia Kiwanis Music Festival celebrated its 66th year, making it the second-longest-running project of the Orillia Kiwanis Club. The Kiwanis 1974 booklet commemorating the first fifty years of the Orillia Kiwanis Club contained information about the first years of the Festival, noting that “a Kiwanis Club bulletin dated May 14th, 1959, heralded the first Orillia Kiwanis Music Festival,” a result of the determined efforts of Dr. Tom Green and Bill Hume, members, “to get together with local music teachers to promote and organize this venture.”

The note in the booklet continues: “The first festival had over 300 entries and lasted three days. This worthwhile project has grown until it now lasts for three weeks and has had almost 1,000 entries . . . Following each festival, a concert is held in the Opera House with outstanding contestants as participants.”

The article goes on to note the wide support in the community for the Festival—the businesses and individuals who provided financial aid, several churches for the use of their assembly halls, the many volunteers who give of their time, CFOR (the local radio station for many years) for its support and participation, the school teachers, the many pupils who have taken part and their parents—and the many Kiwanis members who also volunteer their time to help with the Festival. Some Kiwanis members have also participated as contestants.

The Music Festival in the past fifty years has continued to see widespread community support. The 2023 Festival, for example, featuring program ads from 53 local companies.

Kiwanis members, the Champlain Seniors’ Club (formerly Golden K), St. James Anglican Church, St. Paul’s Centre (the main venue for the Festival over many, many years), the Orillia Opera House, the Stonegate Inn, and local music teachers and teachers in both elementary and high schools in the area—all have provided the Music Festival with support over the years.

The goals of the event are unchanged since its beginning: to celebrate the art of teaching and [the] study, composition and performance of music; and



2013 Festival Committee: Chuck Burton, Jeffrey Moellman, Stephanie Pegelo, Marnie Bosco, Anna Proctor, Blair Bailey, Mayumi Kumagai, and Isabel Theiss.

Of special note: Blair Bailey (seen in the picture above) served as Artistic Director of the OKMF for 25 years, stepping down in 2019. Thank you, Blair, for exemplary service to music in our community and to the Kiwanis Music Festival.

to foster and promote in young people a lifelong interest and appreciation for music as a basic human experience. Typically, the Festival takes place in the three weeks after the Easter weekend, while the “Festival Encores Concert” (formerly “Stars of the Festival”) takes place each May at the Orillia Opera House.

The COVID 19 pandemic that hit in March of 2020 ended the unbroken chain of “live, in-person” Kiwanis Music Festivals in Orillia, though the organizers, led by Artistic Director Amanda Stanton and Kiwanian Don Haskins, rapidly changed gears to a virtual platform for the festival for three years where participants submitted their entries by video for adjudication as opposed to in-person performances. In the spring of 2023, the Festival returned to live performances.

One consequence of the pandemic was a reduction in the numbers of young people participating in the festival. It is the hope of organizers that the return to live performances will see an increase of participants toward the numbers realized previously - as many as 500 musicians and singers.

THE KIWANIS MUSIC FESTIVAL SHAPED LIGHTFOOT'S LIFE AND CAREER

(Thanks, Wikipedia!)

Gordon Lightfoot was born in Orillia, Ontario, on November 17, 1938, to Jessie Vick Trill Lightfoot and Gordon Lightfoot Sr. who worked at a local dry cleaning business. He had an older sister, Beverley (1935–2017). His mother recognized Lightfoot's musical talent early on and schooled him to become a successful child performer. He first performed publicly in grade four, singing the Irish-American lullaby, Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral, which was broadcast over his school's p/a system during a parents' day event.



Pictured above, a young Gordon Lightfoot attended St. Paul's United Church, circa 1947.

As a youth, he sang in the choir of Orillia's St. Paul's United Church under the direction of choirmaster Ray Williams. According to Lightfoot, Williams taught him how to sing with emotion and how to have confidence in his voice. Lightfoot was a boy soprano; he appeared periodically on local Orillia radio, performed in local operettas and oratorios, and gained exposure through various Kiwanis music festivals.

The first of Lightfoot's 170-odd appearances on the Massey stage happened when he was just 13 years old, after he won a Kiwanis competition, he told The Canadian Press.

"It was a beautiful thing to stand there unamplified, accompanied by a piano. I remember the thrill of being in front of the crowd. We had a lot of people in there. And it was a stepping stone for me. I was getting somewhere," he said. At 17 he returned to perform as part of a barbershop quartet.

As a teenager, Lightfoot learned piano and taught himself to play drums and percussion. Lightfoot performed extensively throughout high school at Orillia District Collegiate & Vocational Institute (ODCVI), and taught himself to play folk guitar. He was also an accomplished high school track-and-field competitor and set school records for shot-put and pole vault, as well as playing the starting nose tackle on his school's Georgian Bay championship-winning football team.

In 1964 he appeared at the Mariposa Folk Festival (and again in 1965) and began to develop a reputation as a songwriter. Ian and Sylvia Tyson recorded "Early Mornin' Rain" and "For Lovin' Me"; a year later both songs were recorded by Peter, Paul and Mary.

The rest, as they say, is history. Lightfoot enjoyed a career that led him to be regarded as "Canada's troubadour."

In mid-April of 2023, Lightfoot's declining health caused him to cancel the remainder of his 2023 tour. He died in Toronto on May 1st, 2023, at the age of 84. The Mariners' Church in Detroit (the "Maritime Sailors' Cathedral" mentioned in "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald") honoured Lightfoot the day after his death by ringing its bell a total of 30 times, 29 for each of the crewmen lost on the Edmund Fitzgerald, and the final time for Lightfoot himself.

After his death, a series of tributes took place in his hometown of Orillia, one of them previously planned. On May 6, the local opera house hosted Leisa Way & the Wayward Wind Band, a previously planned show that paid tribute to Lightfoot that became a memorial show of sorts. It sold out after his death.

A day later, a public visitation was held at St. Paul's United Church that drew more than 2,400 people. As in Detroit, the church bells at St. Paul's rang 30 times, 29 to honor the crew of the Edmund Fitzgerald and once for Lightfoot.

On May 8, 2023, a private funeral was held for Lightfoot at St. Paul's United Church, before he was buried next to his parents at St. Andrew's and St. James' Cemetery.

The Orillia Kiwanis Club is proud to have been a part of Lightfoot's life. Rest in Peace, Gord.

An additional recollection of the Lightfoot - Kiwanis connection from Steve Van Kessel:

"For the 2016 auction, I approached Jeff Gilbert at Gilbert Guitars with the idea that if he could get us an Epiphone Hummingbird acoustic guitar at his cost (a guitar similar to the 12 string guitar on the cover of the album 'Sundown'), I would see what I could do to get it autographed by Gordon Lightfoot. If successful, this would be a co-donation from Gilbert Guitars and 112 Records (my record label).

"Jeff approached his Epiphone rep and they were gracious enough to supply not just one, but four guitars for a price less than Jeff's cost. I reached out to Lightfoot's office, Early Morning Productions, in Toronto, and had a conversation with Anne Leibold, Gord's office manager.

"I asked to talk to Gord, but she informed me that he was currently in the U.S. on tour. I explained the idea to Anne, being sure to mention Gord's history and involvement with the Kiwanis Music Festival when he was a young boy. I also explained everything that our Kiwanis Club does to support children in Gord's hometown of Orillia. She thought that Gord would like the idea. She said to bring the guitars down and leave them with her, and she would explain it all to him when he returned, then call me and let me know the outcome.

"After the call, I went to Alley Cats Music & Art and purchased a few Lightfoot albums, thinking we might be lucky enough to have him autograph them as well while the marker was in his hand.

"I brought everything down to Early Morning Productions and had a great visit with Anne. A few weeks later, I received a call from her telling me that Gord happily signed everything and it was all ready for pickup.

"Mike Bunn volunteered to go down and get everything. Unfortunately Gord wasn't there when Mike arrived, but he and I talked afterward about how much we both enjoyed the experience of being in Gord's office and seeing the trove of memorabilia and history scattered, piled and hanging on walls. It transported us both back to the 60's and 70's.

"We auctioned off two of the guitars in 2016. The winning bidders were Jim Wilson and Bill Swinimer. A third guitar was auctioned in 2019. The final guitar was held until this past year—2023—when it was purchased by the winning bidder, Chad Cooke."



Pictured to the right: a Gordon Lightfoot autographed guitar.

KIWANIS T-BALL

Orillia's Kiwanis Club T-Ball program has been in operation since the early 1980's providing children aged 4-7 with a six-week schedule of organized sport. The goal of the program is always to accept as many children as possible.



Pictured above: Coach Paul Ross, Kiwanis President, with his team, circa 2023.

The concept is simple. Hit the ball off a tee and run the bases. Scoring is not important and all games end in a "tie."

The goal is to have participation with no pressure. The emphasis is on fun while the children learn coordination skills and how to throw a ball. Along the way, of course, they also learn teamwork and sharing as they play the games.

The program runs every spring in May-June and has used Monsignor Lee, David H Church, Orchard Park schools and Couchiching Park as locations for the program. In 2023 we accommodated 72 participants with six Kiwanis "coaches," but the program has had well over 100 children signed up some years.

Rob Town, current leader of the program, remembers Jack Keyzer being the lead in 1986 when Rob first volunteered. Jack reports the program first started at Regent Park school. A few years after that, Town became the organizer of the program.

While the Global Pandemic cancelled T ball for two years in 2020 and 2021, it was a welcomed return in 2022.

The season ends with trophies for each participant, popsicles and a team photo. All this for a \$20 program fee. Town and his fellow coaches would say that the T-ball program is one of the best values in sport.

Many thanks to the volunteers who make this a successful Kiwanis program.



Pictured above: Coach Don Haskins, Kiwanian, with his team, circa 2023.

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Even if we are the "best kept secret" we are making a difference in the lives of children and youth in the Orillia area.

-- Don Haskins

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KIWANIS TERRIFIC KIDS PROGRAM

Terrific Kids is a fantastic example of the Power of Kiwanis. Business people get together to network and serve the community under some structure—and good things happen!

Orillia's version started in 2001/2002 at Regent Park elementary school. Mike Bunn was our president at the time. John Mayo, while a member of the Cambridge Kiwanis Club, had chaired their Terrific Kids' program in 1997-98. The idea for the program had been brought to the Club there by Kiwanian Bob Marts, whose wife taught in the same school as Marg Mayo.

The Cambridge program appears to have run in only the one school and there is no current evidence that it is still in place in that city.

The Orillia Kiwanis program started with two goals: first, build library resources in schools; and second, build student self-esteem through a recognition program in the school which would feature an annual award ceremony. These remain the main goals of the current program.

In 2001 John Mayo had been asked to be an in-school mentor in the Big Brothers program at Regent Park. He was in the school on a weekly basis. Principal Paul Bertholet and librarian Gail Foreman immediately embraced the idea of the Terrific Kids program. The original budget for the program—initiated at Regent Park—was \$500.

Mayo contacted Don Ross, then the owner of Manticore Books, and set up a book-buying line of credit that allowed Gail Foreman to come into the store and pick out the books to be used in the recognition program. In the spring of 2002, the program was launched.

President Mike Bunn and Mayo attended the school awards assembly on June 13, 2002, and the Orillia club's Terrific Kids Program was launched. John Mayo chaired the program in 2002-03, Lee Pigeau in 2004, Lisa Madden from 2005-2007 (who really built the program), followed by Kathy Lee from 2008 to 2013, by which time the program was in 11 local schools.

The Terrific Kids program is now in 15 local schools. You will often see the bumper sticker—"Parent of a Terrific Kid" with the Kiwanis logo—when driving Orillia's streets.

Several aspects of the program make it significant: all teachers and custodians in the school participate in the selection process; students are chosen for the book awards based on good citizenship and zest for learning; the books become a permanent record in the school of each student's accomplishment; the school library is expanded; librarians enjoy their annual trek to Manticore to select books; and finally, the June ceremony is an enjoyable activity for many Kiwanians to attend and participate in.



Pictured above: Bruce Waite, Kiwanian, with Terrific Kid recipient Elle, circa 2018; and Amanda Tevelde, Kiwanian, with Terrific Kid recipient Abby, circa 2023.

In summary, the Terrific Kids Program meets all the criteria that sum up the Kiwanis Club's reason for being: serving the community, focusing on children, and, with a reasonable budget, creating an engagement program for members.

In June of 2024, the program will honour some 250 students in Orillia's schools.

KIWANIS BACK-TO-SCHOOL BACKPACK PROGRAM

Over the past several years, the Kiwanis Club's "Back-to-school Backpack Program" has made several hundred students feel better about going off to school each September.

The program started in 2011 with an idea from Francois Tisi. He had been in touch with the Staples store manager, Lisa Croft. Francois knew that a Kiwanis Club in another jurisdiction was running a program that provided backpacks and school supplies to students, so he asked for details and then discussed with President Tim Timpano the possibility of starting it in Orillia.

Past President Timpano picks up the story.

"Francois and I discussed the possibility of accepting monetary donations and getting corporate sponsors or creating a specific fundraiser to fund the purchase of supplies at heavily discounted prices from Staples. Staples also created a donations jar and had it at their checkout for July-August. The idea was to gather all of the supplies and backpacks, and make it a Kiwanis event by having members gather together to stuff the backpacks. Francois was able to get a "shopping list" from a local elementary school to give us an idea of what kind of supplies were required at each grade level. We presented the idea to the Board, and they supported it unanimously. The Board also supported it financially and added it as an annual budget item.

"In the first year of the revival, I filled my van at the Staples loading dock and a number of Kiwanians and their children gathered at Francois' house to stuff the backpacks. In the years that followed we used space at BBBS and they helped stuff the backpacks. We had a lot of fun doing it, and it was a nice learning experience for the next-generation of Kiwanians (and a great way to get them involved and introduce them to the type of work that Kiwanis does for our community).

"We approached BBBS to be the "trustee" for the backpacks, and they made sure the supplies found their way into the hands of those in need within their organization.

I recall that we also distributed supplies to the Orillia Youth Centre, and backpacks to the Ontario Ministry of Child & Youth Services.

"The program had some hurdles to overcome to be a continuing success, and I think it lost some of its steam when Francois passed away in early 2015."



Pictured above: Francois Tisi with his youngest grandson, Jasper.

Stephanie Pegelo took over the chairing of the program after Tisi's passing in 2015. The program has continued ever since. BBBS chairs Miranda and Lauren find out from the kids what they would like (including favourite colours, for example, or superhero). They then provide Kiwanis with a list of items and Steph goes shopping at Staples for the goods.

Steph adds, "This past year Staples had an additional top-up. For a specific dollar amount spent by Kiwanis, they added \$25! As we were shopping they were still asking customers if they would like to donate to next year's program."

Through the pandemic Steph did the shopping and packing on her own, and a few times had her stepdaughters help with delivering the backpacks to the agency office. In 2023, with husband Dan Pegelo's deteriorating health and eventual passing, she took a step back, and that's when Heather Breckles, Miranda Chaffey, Amanda Tevelde and Stephanie Hunter stepped in to do the shopping. The packing was done by club members at the August 28th lunch meeting. Steph notes that the program now costs the club a minimal amount of money each year, due to the generosity of Staples' customers making contributions at the checkouts. Each year, typically, we are able to serve approximately 60 children in need.

NOTE 1: Throughout the eleven years of the program, around 60 children received assistance each year, resulting in a total of over 600 children in Orillia starting their first day of school feeling confident and prepared to learn—with their backpacks fully packed and ready to go!

NOTE 2: Tim Timpano highlights an interesting point that subsequent to Kiwanis's revival in 2012, other organizations initiated similar programs. This suggests that the initiative's impact on our local community has been significant, a testament to the efforts of Francois.



Pictured above: a happy backpack recipient and his 'Big Brother'.

KIWANIS HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

Each spring the Kiwanis Club of Orillia delivers a cheque for \$1,500 to each of the three Orillia high schools—Orillia Secondary School, Patrick Fogarty Catholic High School, and Twin Lakes Secondary School. Each of the schools has a committee that determines the recipients of those awards.

Kiwanians join our club to help and support local children and youth. The scholarship awards each year are presented by Kiwanis Club members during Commencement Exercises in late June as a way to say to graduating students, "Best wishes to you as you finish your education here in our community. We wish you well as you begin the next stage of your life."

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I was attracted by the youthful spirit of the members when I thought service clubs were for the older generation. I enjoy that there is no pressure to attend or champion any committee, but volunteering to benefit the youth of the community is rewarding.

-- Rob Town

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I wanted to join a group of like-minded individuals who want to have a positive impact on the children living in our community — the Kiwanis Club.

-- Danielle Tisi

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“

The fellowship is my favourite aspect of club membership.

-- Bob Brown

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KIWANIS FIRE SAFETY HOUSE

The idea for the original Orillia Kiwanis Club fire trailer came from Austintown, Ohio. Orillia members who had travelled to visit the Ohio club were exposed there to a new “Fire Safety House” and came back with the idea that their community needed one.

When they returned home they called on the local fire departments to see if they were interested in having a trailer in Orillia. Their enthusiasm and support was instant, so the Club set about looking for ways to raise funds for the \$60,000 purchase.

Two years of fundraising by the Orillia Kiwanis Club ensued. The Club organized a “tennis ball tumble” (3,000 numbered tennis balls loaded in the front end loader of one of Jack Keyzer’s excavators). “We sold tickets for the numbered balls and set up a ‘course’ on the Main Street.” The balls were dumped at the corner of Mississauga and Peter Streets. First one to reach the course end at the bottom of the hill won the prize. The 1996 and 1997 events raised around \$30,000. The original Orillia Kiwanis Fire Safety House was purchased for \$65,000 in 1998.

For almost twenty years, fire departments in and around Orillia used the Orillia Kiwanis Club’s Fire Safety House to teach both children and adults about fire safety.



Pictured above: Kiwanis Fire Safety House, circa 2010

From the outside, except for the banners and printing, the 28-foot trailer looks ordinary. Stepping into it, one sees a kitchen counter which includes a stove with burners and an oven. Much of the rest of the space, except for another

door, is open, providing standing room for those inside to witness the trailer’s lessons.

The trailer is towed to elementary schools in our area where students are brought in to the trailer.



Pictured above: Kiwanis Fire Safety House dramatization, circa 2010.

There, they are treated to a simulated oven fire, then a fire in a pot on the top of the stove. Then smoke (also simulated) begins to billow into the trailer, and students learn quickly that getting down on the floor allows them to breathe easier and find a way out. All demonstrations have the goal of teaching young people how to react if, and when, they discover a fire at home.

By 2015—after almost 20 years of use—the original trailer was in bad shape. Jerry Wink, a long-time Kiwanis member, brought the poor condition of the Fire Safety trailer to the attention of the Orillia club members. Wink told the club, “It’s decision time. We scrap it, we buy a new one, or we fix it.” The problem? It was determined that a new Fire Safety House would cost \$100,000!

Meetings with the local Fire Prevention Officers, the people really responsible for the success of the program, indicated the need for this type of safety training was still very real. Over the 18 years’ life of the original trailer, an estimated 50,000 children and hundreds of adults had learned how to respond to fire threats; there was no telling how many lives might have been saved by the Safety House lessons.



Pictured above: Jerry Wink and Peter Head working on the Kiwanis Fire Safety House, circa 2016.

So Wink went to work. First up? A place was needed where the trailer could be kept to work on. R & F Construction offered their warehouse. For six months their staff worked around the trailer while it was being refurbished.

The local Home Depot contributed building material. Headstart Construction, owned by Kiwanian Peter Head, provided staff to install doors, siding, cabinets, and do some welding. Orillia Glass provided new windows for the trailer as well as help with the installation. Paul Sheridan of Sheridan Seating and Gymnasium Equipment, donated the seating for inside which his staff also installed. Gord Yates, a volunteer firefighter in Severn Township, just outside of Orillia, provided and installed new commercial flooring. A dozen Club members gave of their time to

help, first with taking the trailer apart, and then putting it back together again.

And so it went. A new electric fire place and new lights for the trailer were donated. John Morton, a business owner and Kiwanian for almost 40 years, donated the graphics for the outside and his staff did the wrapping.

Altogether, Wink estimates the value of the donations of material and time at \$20,000. New, state-of-the art-equipment, upgrades for existing equipment, and parts of the new exterior amounted to \$30,000. Firefighter Associations in nearby townships (who also use the trailer) donated \$5,000. Additional cash donations from a variety of donors amounted to another \$5,000—and the Orillia Kiwanis Club came forward with a cash payment of \$20,000.

The total cost in cash, labour, and donated materials to refurbish the Fire Safety House? Over \$50,000.

At a September, 2016 special lunch meeting, Jerry Wink took to the podium to thank the guests whose generosity had made the project possible, the Fire Associations and professionals who gave of their time and expertise to ensure the new project met today's needs, and the many members of the Orillia Kiwanis Club who volunteered their time to help with the work.

October 3 – 10, 2016 was Fire Safety Week in Orillia. On display and ready to kick off the week was the completely refurbished Kiwanis Fire Safety House, manned by local Fire Prevention Officers. The next 20 years of teaching fire safety had begun!

Pictured to the right: the refurbished Fire Safety House, circa 2016. Thanks to Jerry Wink and all of the members of the Orillia community that helped make the Fire Safety House new again!



KIWANIS CHILDREN'S SAFETY VILLAGE (KCSV)

The Kiwanis Children's Safety Village (KCSV) is a mobile teaching unit. The village itself is a miniature version of buildings and roads that children would see in the community. It is the only Safety Village in Canada that travels from school to school.

The KCSV is housed in a 25-foot enclosed trailer and is comprised of pop-up tents, battery operated cars, pretend roads and information banners to assist our partners and to give children the experience of the idea that "It takes a village to raise a child". The message is simple: teaching our children how to think and act safely protects them for life.

Sandy Cobbe and Gerry Dwyer, a member of the Ontario Provincial Police, came up with the idea of the Children's Safety Village in 2008; it took a number of community volunteers and another year before it became a reality. The Kiwanis Club became involved early on to help fund the teaching tools and resources needed to make the Kiwanis Children Safety Village the success it quickly became.



Pictured above: guests in attendance at the launch of the Kiwanis Children's Safety Village, circa 2009.

The original launch was held at Regent Park Public School the week of April 20-24, 2009. Over the next two years, the program grew to involve fifteen elementary schools in the Orillia area.

In a typical school year, the KCSV was in eight schools between Thanksgiving and Christmas and seven schools from the New Year to March break.

As mentioned, all of the equipment for the Safety village was stored in a specially-constructed trailer. On the Monday of a scheduled week, 3-4 Kiwanians would volunteer their time to meet at the host school to unload the trailer and set up the village in the gymnasium for the week.

Each day of the week, classes were scheduled with a different teaching partner from the groups involved—the OPP, Simcoe County Paramedics, Ontario Hydro and the Children and Youth Advocacy Centre. Resources were ordered online to use with each grade level. The lessons included school bus safety, train safety, drug awareness, internet safety (cyberbullying and sexting), and sadly, the recently added identifying human traffickers.

The younger kids would be rewarded for listening and participation with a turn to drive the battery-operated cars around the village on the little roadway that was set up. The pop-up buildings were images of buildings found in any town or city, including a school, a police station, a hospital, and a factory. At the end of the week, 3-4 Kiwanians would come and pack up the village for the weekend, until it would be unloaded and assembled the following week at a different school!

Each year over two thousand children have hands-on learning about a variety of safety topics—taught at an age-appropriate level. Due to privacy legislation, it has been difficult to track how many children have been saved from physical danger, household hazards, substance addiction, and human trafficking simply by attending an afternoon at the Kiwanis Children's Safety Village.

“

Witnessing the impact the club had on our community was incredibly appealing. Contributing to the community and aiding in the development of youth for success resonated deeply with me.

-- Amanda Tevelde

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In spite of this, the KCSV committee believes in the power of knowledge provided by the Kiwanis Children's Safety Village to our community.

Early in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic shut everything down. Because restrictions on visitors to school have been slow to be relaxed, the KCSV has been unable to be back in the schools. However, with the help of our OPP partners and Kiwanis committee members, we anticipate the Safety Village will be back in the schools in 2024.

An amazing group of volunteers has created the success of the Safety Village. An executive member group, chaired by a Kiwanis member, met once a month to discuss plans and changes for the Safety Village to ensure the messages were always fresh and relevant. The Kiwanis connection was meant to ensure fundraising and budget needs were met. Previous Chairs include members Carol Ivey, Korine Keyzer and, most recently, Stephanie Hunter.

In 2019, in Korine Keyzer's time as chairperson, the Village was revamped with new, modern pop-up tents for buildings, updated learning modules, and a brand new trailer to house the village to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Safety Village.

“

I joined Kiwanis because I wanted to become involved in our community. The people in the club welcomed me with open arms and I now consider club members like family.

-- Stephanie Hunter

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2,000 kids each year = 200,000 kids reached over the KCSV decade! Well done, everyone!

Aside from the Kiwanis Club, the organizations involved with the Safety Village include the Country of Simcoe Paramedics, the OPP, the Orillia and Severn Township Fire Departments, Rama First Nation Police and Fire, Orillia Power and Hydro One, the two local school boards, and the Children and Youth Advocacy Centre.

The Safety Village receives sponsorship from Lafarge, Orillia Power and Hydro One, Sharp Bus Lines, Telus, Walmart, Holdaway Truck Centre and East Side Mario's.

The Kiwanis Children's Safety Village now occupies a special place in the community. May it continue to do so for years to come.



Pictured above: Gerry Dwyer at the 10-year celebration circa 2019.



KIWANIS AND THE EASTER SEALS SOCIETY

-- memories of Jerry Wink

"In 1947 the Orillia Kiwanis Club began work with the Ontario Crippled Children organization, which later became The Easter Seal Society of Ontario. From the very beginning our Children's Committee was responsible for fundraising, reviewing requests for assistance, connecting with Easter Seals and the organization of special events involving children with disabilities.

Over the years, the committees were fairly small and members often remained on the committee for many years. When I was invited to a club meeting in November of 1973, the committee had just completed its first Telethon run by local radio personality, Rusty Draper. Rusty broadcast continuously for 70 hours raising over \$20,000. Our "Timmy" in 1974 was Kevin Collins, shown below with Rusty.



Our 1974 "Timmy" with his friend, Rusty Draper.

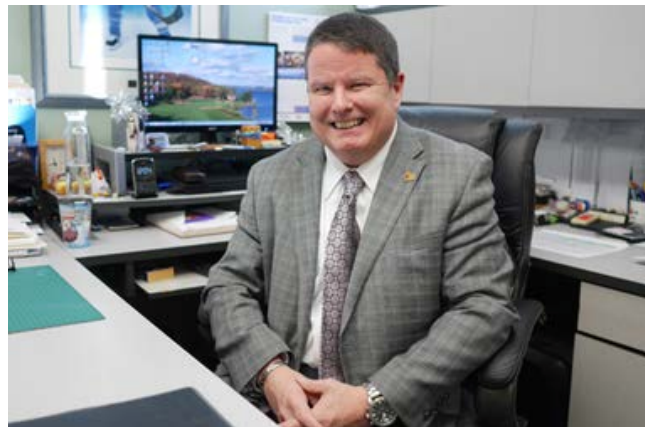
Kevin went on to become the "Ontario Timmy" and later an executive with the Easter Seal Society. Kevin is now President and CEO of the Easter Seals Ontario (see picture on right).

I joined the Children's Committee in 1980. Skid Watson had been the chair for many years. In 1985, following in his footsteps, I became the committee chair.

From 1985 until 2001, 118 children benefited from our program. Assistance ranged from orthotic needs, wheelchairs, ramps, hospital beds, bed and bath lifts, transportation and parent accommodation costs while children were at Sick Kids, summer camp, car seats, stimulators, trips to Walt Disney World, Annual Fishing Derbies for the kids sponsored by the Orillia Fish and Game Club, as well as 6 voice-activated computers—a total of 662 things Kiwanis paid for.

It was not unusual for Kiwanis Members to drive children and families to camp, to Toronto, and to appointments. Every Christmas, club members delivered fruit baskets to families on our case load. For many years we had special Christmas parties for the kids and their families. In addition to the children on Easter Seal's list, it was very common to approve requests from other children in the community who were in need. In all the years I was involved, we turned down only one request for assistance.

As a result of "Privacy Laws," our club in 2001 was no longer able to continue our association with Easter Seals. Needless to say, my emotions still run high when I reflect on those years. Memories, pictures and thank-you notes are something to be treasured."



Pictured above: Kevin Collins, from Orillia, who was Easter Seals "Timmy" in 1974, is now the President and CEO of Easter Seals Ontario.

KIWANIS AND ORILLIA SOLDIER'S MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

"The Kiwanis Club has donated a total of \$536,400 to Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital (OSMH) Foundation. Thank you" said the recent note from the Hospital Foundation. What a milestone for this Club!

Soldiers' Memorial Hospital (OSMH) has been the recipient of the greatest support from the Kiwanis Club of Orillia over the years. The Club has stepped forward several times to support hospital facilities for the treating of children. The hospital recorded \$90,000 in donations directly to the hospital before the Hospital Foundation was established in 1998.

In 2001 a \$109,000 gift was given to the Building Fund, followed a month later by a \$5,000 gift toward Paediatric Diabetes treatment. In June of 2003, a \$75,000 gift went to Paediatrics, followed in October, 2011, by a \$100,000 gift to the Paediatrics/Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Renovation Project.



Pictured above, left - right: Tim Timpano, Dr. Sarah Barker, CEO Elizabeth Riley, Carol Ivey (Kiwanis President), Dr. Gary Smith, Nicole McCahon, and Francois Tisi, circa 2011

In a January 2015 document, Clinical Services Plan for Orillia Soldier's Memorial Hospital, the hospital outlined three areas of focus for treatment, one of which was "outstanding care and service for women and children in a regional model of excellence in Obstetrics, Gynecology and Paediatrics." This re-focusing of health services in the Simcoe-Muskoka area led to major changes in our hospital's facilities for infant and child care. The Orillia Club once again responded with support.

The Club provided a \$75,000 gift in 2019 to help fund a central patient monitoring system for the Paediatric department as well as renovations to make the paediatrics unit more welcoming to children. 2020 President Korine Keyzer notes: "With our support, they were able to create an area that had family friendly 'zones' represented by different animals in the zoo with wonderful graphics in the corridors and rooms. What they were able to achieve with the funds we provided was truly transformational."

In May, 2021, President Mark Burns presented a further \$40,000 gift to the Foundation to help fund a Panda Warmer / Resuscitation Unit for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICO). His comment at the time captures the connection between Kiwanis and the hospital's paediatrics and neonatal services: "The focus of the Kiwanis Club is to improve the lives of children and I can't think of a better way to do this than giving them the absolute best chance for quality of life right from the start . . . I know first-hand the value of investing in life-saving equipment for newborns as my daughter spent some time in Soldiers' NICU. I can appreciate how this new Panda Warmer will be valuable to staff and Soldiers' youngest patients and their families."

Not surprisingly, given the close connection between the hospital and the Kiwanis Club, past Foundation staff members, Nicole McCahon and Mark Riczu, were members of the local Club.

And, if this wasn't enough of a good-news story already, in February, 2024, Heather Breckles, long-time Kiwanis member, was the winner of the hospital's 50-50 draw. Congratulations, Heather!

"I have been rewarded with the opportunity to be of service to children and families in need and to make a difference. I have also forged lifelong friendships with fellow Kiwanians that I cherish deeply.

-- Steve Van Kessel

KIWANIS AND BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF ORILLIA

Over the years, Kiwanis members have been involved in Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) fundraising initiatives such as Bowl for Kids' Sake, Curl for Kids' Sake, Golf for Kids' Sake, and the Old Timers' Hockey Tournament. These are long-standing events, some having taken place in our community for over twenty-five years.

Many Kiwanians have also been involved with the organization. Marilyn Watson, Executive Director of BBBS and also a Kiwanis club member, first initiated the club's involvement in BBBS. It was James Maxwell, her successor as Executive Director and Kiwanis President in 2013, who brought the Kiwanis membership on board to support the organization more directly.

Doug Downey was a long time BBBS board member and served as Chair. Heather Breckles (also a past board chair), Don Haskins and Stephanie Pegelo have all sat on the BBBS Board of Directors. Member Mike Whitwell was also involved in BBBS. John Mayo, a Big Brother for years, still keeps in touch with his little brothers!

In 2016 BBBS celebrated its 50th anniversary in Orillia. To commemorate, BBBS set out to create an endowment fund held by the Community Foundation (CFOA). Their initial goal was to raise \$50,000, but various community fundraising events to promote the fund resulted in a \$100,000 start to the fund. Kiwanis member Doug Downey was instrumental in helping set up the fund for BBBS. The Orillia Kiwanis Club assisted with an initial contribution of \$10,000, which Doug Downey matched.

Since Miranda Chaffey's involvement back in 2015, the initiatives have continued to grow. Kiwanis and BBBS began holding a kids' Christmas Party, first at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in 2015 and then at St. Paul's Church. Recently the party event was moved to the Masonic Lodge. This event has grown from initially serving dinner to about forty people to hosting a dinner for over one hundred people in December of 2023.

Kiwanis sure knows how to give a kid a Christmas! In addition to dinner, the sponsorship for gifts for the kids is unreal!



Pictured above: Elf Stephanie Pegelo (seated) and the Kiwanis crew—Heather Breckles, Cathy and Ben Cole, Lawrence LaFrance, Don Haskins, Peter and Kim Head, circa 2018.

Each kid leaves with 2-3 amazing gifts, hand-picked for them and wrapped by Kiwanians! Rock 95 is a gift sponsor.

Even during the pandemic in 2020, when the families and Kiwanis members weren't able to gather in person, Kiwanians and BBBS staff distributed take-out containers containing a Christmas meal for BBBS families. We never missed a year.

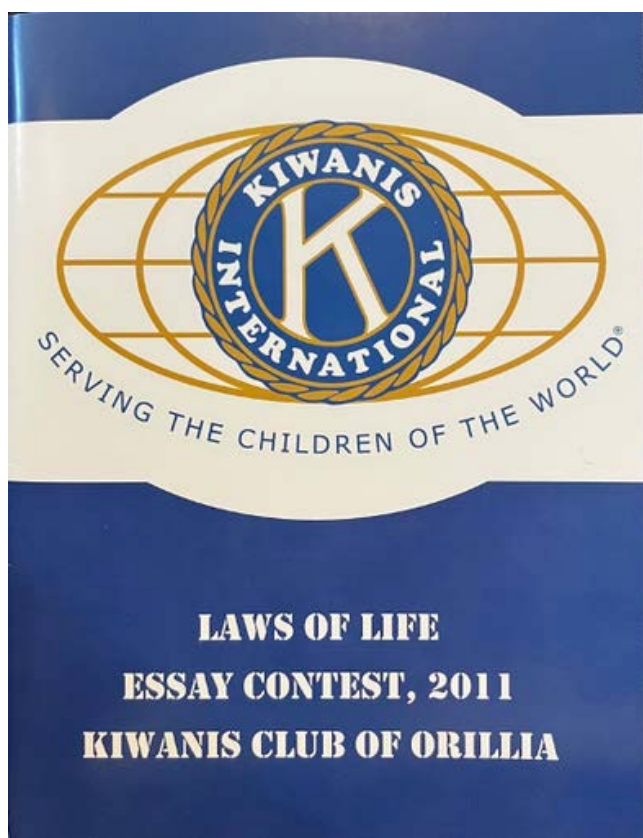
The Back to School initiative (see article on page 31) is also something that has grown over the years. With the help of Kiwanians and the folks at Staples, we are able to outfit over 60 children per year, with backpacks and school supplies to return to school with everything they need.

Miranda joined Kiwanis back in 2022. She had always admired the work Kiwanis did, not just for BBBS, but for so many other child-serving organizations in our community—and it felt right to become part of the Club.

LAWS OF LIFE ESSAY CONTEST

The Laws of Life Essay Contest was brought to Orillia in 1997 through the efforts of then President-Elect Carol Ivey. The contest invited high school age students to express, in writing, their personal ideals and the “laws of life” they value the most—the rules, ideals, and moral principles by which we humans live.

In the first year of the contest, 145 essays were submitted, with as many as 215 received in one subsequent year. Essays were judged on three criteria: Was a law of life identified? How well was the law defined and developed? What was the overall impact of the essay?



Each participating student received a certificate of recognition and the English department of each participating school received a \$100 donation. There were two

“
I joined the Orillia Kiwanis Club to help provide a better future for the children in our community.
— Robert Marck

divisions: Junior (grades 9 and 10) and Senior (grades 11 and 12). First, second and third place winners in each division received cash prizes (in 2011, \$300, \$200, and \$100 with runners-up receiving \$25).

Following an awards ceremony, a limited number of booklets containing the winning essays were printed (see photo at left).



Pictured above: Joanne Watson and Twin Lakes Secondary School teacher Sheri Nicholls, circa 2013.

The contest ran for a few years after its introduction and then disappeared for a few years before being revived under the leadership of member Francois Tisi and President Susan Thomas in 2010 and 2011. While the quality of essays remained high, the number of entries never did equal the earlier success of the contest, so the contest was discontinued around 2014.

https://www.simcoe.com/news/laws-of-life-essay-contest-underway/article_25837dd0-be47-5ee2-a212-ec222603f4f6.html



THE MILLENNIUM / LIGHTFOOT TRAIL

Visualize a four-metre wide ribbon of pavement stretching from one end of the city to the other. Imagine the enjoyment of being able to in-line skate, bicycle or walk from Wilson's Point to the Narrows. Picture the pleasure of a wheelchair user being able to travel independently from Couchiching Beach Park to J.B Tudhope Memorial Park to watch a baseball game.

The above description of the current 9.5 kilometre-long Millennium Trail portion of the Trans-Canada trail that winds its way through Orillia is found in the Simcoe County Map Guide.

According to Jerry Wink, the Orillia Kiwanis Club was the first organization to participate in the City of Orillia's plan to create what is now "the Millennium Trail." The Club signed on in 1999 to create the first stage of the trail, from the entrance to Tudhope Park to Forest Avenue.

Bob Brown recalls Jack Keyzer unloading a bulldozer after trying to get the city to agree to the trail. "They didn't say yes, but they didn't say no, either," says Keyzer. Using the bulldozer he created a meandering trail from Forest Avenue to Tudhope Park. Prior to that, club members had cleaned up alongside Atherley Road. It was Jack that spearheaded the project and did much of the work with his company's (Aknor) equipment.

Keyzer picks up the story. "It didn't cost the Kiwanis anything. I approached local companies—Beamish Construction and Nelson Aggregate on Burnside Line—for their support. They really stepped up. Beamish provided the asphalt—at a very reduced rate—and Harold Serra from Hot Knots Racing paid that bill. Nelson provided all of the aggregate, including the large stone that has our plaque on it. Aknor, my company, worked very closely with all of these companies, and Aknor did the work.

Jack found a couple of very large rocks at Nelson Aggregate—one to put on the path and one for the skateboard park—and had a "Kiwanis Club of Orillia" plaque put on the rocks.



Pictured above: the stone and plaque near Leacock Retirement Lodge.

Prior to this project, there had been no pathway for children to get to Tudhope Park. The Kiwanis path created that safe way for children to travel to the park.

Bob Brown remembers that Bob Wink, Jerry Wink's son, did the landscaping and planted the trees. The Club paid for the trees. "We planted trees for each president on the trail."

Keyzer says, "The only thing that we didn't have permission for was the "memorial rock" with the Kiwanis name on it. It wasn't received well by some city staff members, but rather than dealing with negative publicity if they had it removed, they chose to accept our efforts. I did the work for the people of Orillia and for Kiwanis."



I am passionate on making a difference in our community, so it is important to me that I can provide support to those that need it. I enjoy meeting new people and creating long-lasting relationships.

-- Chris Marinakos



THE KIWANIS SKATE PARK

In 1998 the Kiwanis Club, known for its work with youth, recognized a lack of activities in Orillia for teenage kids. A group of members pitched the idea of an indoor, highly competitive skateboard park. The Club's Board referred the matter to its Youth Committee to investigate. The Committee subsequently recommended to the Board that we take the lead in building a less competitive, more inclusive outdoor skateboard park for beginner to intermediate-level skaters.

The Club presented the idea to the City Council which eventually set aside a site at 154 Elgin Street, part of the City of Orillia's Lake Couchiching Park system positioned along the Lightfoot Trail in the downtown area. Kiwanis took the lead in generating community business connections, volunteer labour, and the financing to complete the project. Under the supervision of Kiwanian Jim Storey, the project was designed and built.



Pictured above: skateboard demonstration.

Kiwanians, kids of all ages, and municipal politicians attended the Grand Opening, where local kids skated to the tunes of a punk rock band. The lyrics to some of their songs resulted in the plug being pulled on the audio. Notwithstanding, the event was a great success, and validated the efforts and the funds expended by the Club.



Pictured above: a skateboarder having fun at the Kiwanis Skatepark

Some of the features of the park include a fun box, bank, rails, stairs with rails, and a snake run—and the park has since provided recreation for many kids from sunrise to sunset. It received high marks for its design and has lasted with minimal upkeep for twenty-five years.

The skate park is still in constant use. The Orillia Kiwanis Club is currently working with the Youth Group and City Council to provide a large sunscreen canopy for shade in the summer months. This should extend the use of the park for many years while a new facility is being considered as part of the second phase for outdoor activities at the new Orillia Recreation Centre at Foundry Park on West Street South.



Pictured above: the Kiwanis Skatepark with the plaque-bearing rock in the foreground.

ORILLIA KIWANIS CLUB “ROUND TABLE” GATHERINGS

If one visits the Brewery Bay Food Co. bar and restaurant in downtown Orillia, one will find a small plaque on the wall at the back of the bar side that reads “Kiwanis Korner.” The following notice went out to members from President Ben Cole on February 11, 2016—an example of the fun that Kiwanis members enjoy.

Good Afternoon Fellow Members:

There will be No Meeting At Theo’s this Monday because Monday is Family Day. Theo’s will be closed, and most of you will be spending the day with your family, as the Government of Ontario intended.

But, as is our tradition here in the Kiwanis Club of Orillia, we will be having a meeting of sorts, commonly referred to as a “Round Table at Brewery Bay.”

BACKGROUND: It occurs to me that some of our newer members may be puzzled at the meaning and purpose of a “Round Table at Brewery Bay” on holiday Mondays.

Our club historians have informed me that these gatherings have been happening for a very long time. Prior to Brewery Bay opening in 1993, they were held at Carter’s Restaurant, then at the Sundial, both iconic Orillia Establishments. When these locations closed, the meetings were shifted to Brewery Bay – around 1993.

Brewery Bay has hosted many auction meetings since 1993, prompting Steve Clarke (owner of Brewery Bay and our current mayor) to mount a plaque on the wall beside our meeting tables. The plaque says simply “Kiwanis Korner.”

It is not known exactly how the tradition started. It could have been an over-zealous club president who wanted to maximize the number of meetings hosted; or a lonely club president with no plans for a holiday Monday. For whatever reason, the tradition has stuck. In the ensuing decades, the Kiwanis Club of Orillia has cancelled the Monday lunch meeting on statutory holidays, only to replace it with a meeting—a “round table” gathering.

There are, of course, no guest speakers at these events, nor do we sing O Canada or toast the queen. They are informal affairs, held “round the table.” It has become customary for the club president—or designate—to host these gatherings, and the club picks up the cost.

Thus, if you’re so inclined, please join me this Monday at noon for a “Round Table at Brewery Bay.”

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Show up at Noon at Brewery Bay.
2. Find the “Kiwanis Korner” Plaque (see picture attached).
3. Sit down at the rectangular table below the plaque, so that the round table meeting to replace our cancelled meeting can begin.
4. Enjoy the Fun. For illustrative purposes, I have attached a photograph from our last round table meeting, which was held on Thanksgiving last October.

Have a great weekend everyone.

Ben



Pictured above: Ben Cole and Stephanie Pegelo “having fun” at a Round Table.



Kiwanis Club OF Orillia 100th Anniversary Gala

Saturday, June 1st, 2024
Casino Rama

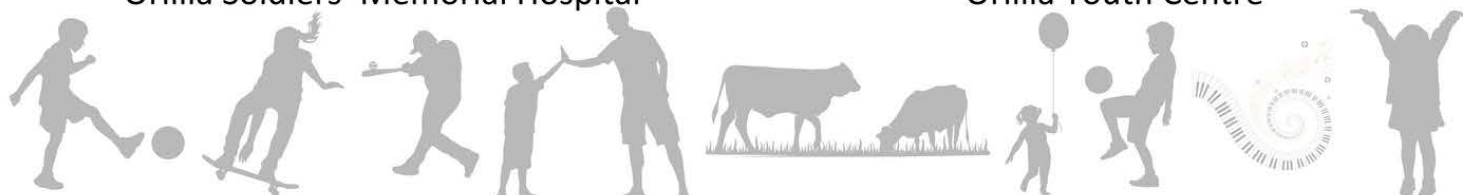
Cocktails | Dance | Formal Attire
Four Course Prime Rib Dinner

Programme

Call to Order MC Bruce Waite
Land Acknowledgement MC Stephanie Pegelo
O Canada
Grace Dave North
Welcoming Remarks
Honorary Recognition Awards
Dinner
Introduction of Special Guests
Kiwanis Greetings John Chave, Governor, ECC District
Introduction of Past Presidents President Paul Ross
Presentation from Chartering Club (Kiwanis Club of Barrie)
Introduction of Keynote Speaker Jerry Wink
Kevin Collins, CEO, Easter Seals Ontario
Appreciation Stephanie Pegelo
Dance

Honorary Award Recipients

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orillia & District	Child & Youth Advocacy Centre Simcoe Muskoka
Easter Seals	Hospice Orillia
Mariposa House Hospice	Orillia 4H Calf Club
Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital	Orillia Youth Centre





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Arts
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Big Brothers Big Sisters of
Orillia and District



Hospice
Orillia



Stephanie Hunter -
The Mortgage Hunter





The logo features a large, stylized '100' in a gold, metallic font. Overlaid on the '100' is the text 'Kiwani's Club' in a white, cursive script with a blue outline, followed by 'OF Drillia' in a similar script. To the right of the text is the official Kiwanis International logo, which is a circular emblem with a blue border containing the words 'KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL' and a large white 'K' in the center.

Celebrating 100 years of serving the Youth of Orillia

