January 2015

Centennial kickoff
It’s time to celebrate! Kiwanis International launched the 2015 Centennial Celebrations with a birthday cake float in the 126th annual Rose Parade in Pasadena, CA. (Check out www.kiwanis.org/rosefloat for photos and video.) To get additional value from this promotional investment, the Kiwanis PR team created and sent news briefs about the float riders to their hometown media and offered stories about the thousands of Kiwanis members who volunteer to decorate floats – not just the Kiwanis float but other floats, too.

Several media outlets picked up our stories. Here is just a sample of the coverage:

- A story about an Aktion Club member who rode on the float
- A story about volunteers working down to the wire
- Online coverage included an interview with Steve Hadt, a member of the Kiwanis International communications team
- A San Diego TV station carried a blog post that mentioned the Kiwanis float
- The Los Angeles Times mentioned Kiwanis in a story about the diversity of the parade and the attendees
- And the Pasadena Star-News ran a story about decoration day and the huge volunteer effort

We also held a birthday party outside the Rosemont Pavilion, brought cupcakes for anyone who attended and invited the media. However, timing was not on our side. Our story that day was overshadowed by a reunion of the cast of The Love Boat, which would be riding a different float. Sometimes, despite the best efforts, the media chooses a different story. Nonetheless, we were thrilled when HGTV gave us several minutes of screen time, showing our float as we rolled down Colorado Street. Happy Birthday, Kiwanis!

Local celebrations
How is your club celebrating Kiwanis’ 100th Anniversary? Clubs that requested a party kit received them last fall. Some clubs are hosting events, others are sharing their party kit for larger district events and some might be unsure of what to do.

One way to garner media attention for your club is to tell your favorite news reporter about an interesting club member. A club in Tallahassee (FL) featured a long-time member and landed a
story in the local paper. A club in Decatur (IL) used a historical approach and listed service projects to get coverage. Focus on your club’s strengths when making a pitch to your local news outlet.

If you want to submit a news release to your local paper or seek a proclamation from your local or state governments, go to Kiwanis' centennial resources page. We have sample news releases and proclamations that you can customize for your community.

**Kiwanis One Day**
This year, Kiwanis One Day will be Saturday, April 11. This is a great opportunity to show your community what the club does, but don’t forget about your friends on social media! When you’re volunteering, record a quick video of your service project. Post it on Facebook and send via Twitter. Share it with other club members who can then share it with their friends. Soon, everybody will be talking about Kiwanis.

Don’t forget to share it with us—it might be shown on the big screen during the Kiwanis International convention this June in Indianapolis. We’ve developed a short video that gives tips on how to shoot a video of your project. Our video on how to make a video, and other details, will be released soon.

**Photo op**
Some news organizations just don’t have the resources to cover every newsworthy story. So be a reporter or photographer for them. Take a photo at your event and send it to your local paper. If they can’t use it in the print edition, the editor might decide to post it on the paper’s website. That’s how the Key Club at Nipomo High School and members of the Nipomo Kiwanis Club (Santa Maria, CA) got their photo in the paper when they presented snack kits to a local homeless coalition. Assign a club member to take some photos, or work with the group you are helping to arrange photography and submit it to your local media. But don’t wait too long, it’s only news if it’s new.

Radio stations are another opportunity for sharing the good deeds your club does. Some stations will use your news release and conduct an interview; others may run your release and include a photo, just like KFIZ in Fond Du Lac, WI.

**News release tips**
Still unsure of what information should be in a news release? Read this tip from Ragan Communications on what to include – and what to leave out. It’s also a great example of an infographic, a different way of communicating key messages.