September 2015

**It's all about the opportunities**

The first of October is a news opportunity for Kiwanis.

On Oct. 1, Susan A. “Sue” Petrisin officially takes office as president of Kiwanis International. That’s newsworthy because Sue is the first woman president of Kiwanis, an organization that didn’t even admit women as members until 1987. She’s also the first female to serve as global president for any of the major service organizations.

If your club is in one of the 15 districts that also has a woman leader, Kiwanis has drafted a news release that you can share with local media. If your club has a woman president, or other woman leaders, you can customize a release to add those names, and share with local media. Kiwanis will send a news release to the United States media before Oct. 1, announcing Sue’s presidency. Even if your club does not have a female leader, you can send a release to the media noting Sue’s presidency, and include information about your club and your service projects.

This is a great opportunity to tie your club to Kiwanis International. If you’re hosting a club meeting or service project, make sure you mention it. If your club is hosting an event for your club’s new president, note Sue’s presidency. It’s all part of our effort to focus on our next 100 years of serving the children of the world while capitalizing on having the first woman president of an international service club. If you participate in social media, push out Sue’s news and link back to the Kiwanis International news release and any releases your club issues. Use the hashtag #kiwanis1st.

Kiwanis International worked with Cherice Gilliam, the first African-American woman to serve as governor in the California-Hawaii-Nevada District, and wrote a news release about her election to district leader. Cherice’s local paper carried the release and added a few interviews to provide more local flair. This is an example of what your club or district can do to capitalize on Sue’s presidency and the women who are incoming governors or leaders.
District conventions

Some Kiwanis districts holding conventions during the past few months have garnered media coverage by showcasing their projects and featuring their leaders.

In the Kentucky-Tennessee District, the district placed a preview of its upcoming convention in the Owensboro newspaper, the site of the convention. Pennsylvania also was successful in pitching its local media. A paper near Detroit carried coverage of the Michigan District convention, noting the Kiwanis Centennial. Another Michigan newspaper carried a story linking its hometown club to events at the Detroit convention, focusing on a fundraiser set for the same time and allowing the local club to tell its story and the story of how Kiwanis began.

The Kiwanis Club of Erie, which will turn 100 next year, pitched this story to the local NBC affiliate, WICU. The 2014-15 Kiwanis International president, John Button, attended and was interviewed, along with Kevin Thomas, the district executive director.

Once conventions ended and elected officers were announced, several districts placed stories in the hometown media of the new office holders. Examples:

- Stephen Sirgiovanni, New York District governor-elect (also in Times News Weekly)
- John Oliver, Kentucky-Tennessee Division 15 lieutenant governor
- Gordon Meth, New Jersey District governor
- John Kyle, West Virginia District governor
- Bob Carson, Southwest District governor
- Erby Eikner, Texas-Oklahoma District governor

And don’t forget your district or local websites. The New York District had election results and photos posted by the time the district convention ended.

Centennial celebrations continue

The Centennial Tour has ended but four months remain in our Centennial year, so if your club has yet to host a celebration, there’s still time to have a party, invite the media and gain coverage and recognition for your club.

The CBS affiliate, WHBV in Davenport, Iowa, covered a centennial celebration focusing on projects the local club supports as part of the Illinois-Eastern Iowa District.

In Jonesboro, Arkansas, the club celebrated its 80th birthday along with Kiwanis International’s centennial. Tying those celebrations together got coverage on the local
ABC affiliate and gave the club an opportunity to showcase its projects and talk about its long-term involvement in the community.

A club in Hibbing, Minnesota, celebrated its 95th anniversary by focusing on The Eliminate Project, seeking community partnership in its fundraising goals. In St. Peter, Minnesota, the club leveraged Kiwanis International’s 100th and its own 36th anniversary to invite new members to join the club. The story noted some community projects and also mentioned Key Club and CKI.

In Denville, N.J., the Kiwanis club attended the town council meeting for a proclamation noting the 100th anniversary. The local club was recognized for its community projects and the installation of 28-year-member Lance Incitti to the Kiwanis International Board of Trustees. The Montana District placed a story about its district convention, taking the opportunity to talk about the Centennial and the work done by the local club.

In Austin, Texas, the Early Risers club celebrated its 40th anniversary by reviewing projects and listing club members.

In Billings, Montana, the Kiwanis club celebrated 95 years of local service and 100 years of Kiwanis with a playground build. The club received coverage and Kiwanis partner KaBoom also was mentioned in a news report.

**The Eliminate Project**

A newspaper in Dyersburg, Tennessee, carried the story of how the Kiwanis club is raising money for The Eliminate Project and plans to be a model club, raising US$58,500 by October 2019.

And in Utah, the Sun Advocate, carried the story of a Kiwanis club member who walked across the country to raise money for The Eliminate Project.

How is your club raising money for The Eliminate Project? Try a story pitch to your local media for an event to raise funds to eliminate MNT.

**Thanks to the volunteers!**

Kids at the Boys & Girls Club of San Luis Obispo County in California thanked the Atascadero Kiwanis Club for raising US$34,000 with a video that speaks from their hearts. While they can’t always pronounce Kiwanis, they were very thankful for the help the Boys & Girls Club received.
The Kiwanis Club of Tweed was honored at an event for volunteers in the community. The Ontario, Canada, club was one of several mentioned in the story that focused on the need for volunteers. Remember to let the media know when your club is receiving credit from another organization. They might just cover that story!

**How and when to use a quote in your media release**

Public relations chairs are often the club members who write the media releases and develop a quote for the club president, event chair or other subject of the story. After the lead is written, how and when do you drop in a quote?

**PR Newswire has some suggestions.** If you’re a regular reader of newspapers and magazines, this will be familiar to you. If not, read these tips and try this the next time you write a release. It’s also useful for releases you post to your club’s website or social media pages.

**New Kiwanis video for club use**

Have you seen our new "Stuffed Love" video? It’s guaranteed to make you smile. Post it on your club’s Facebook page, push out via social media or show it at a club meeting. It’s why we do what we do.

**It’s a banner day!**

Let everyone know you are a proud member of a Kiwanis club. Display your banner or fly your Kiwanis flag with pride. Get signage that lets your whole town know the great work your club is doing. Check out the Kiwanis Store’s banners.