

# WORKING TOWARDS A BETTER COMMUNITY



*Kiwanis Club in the Airpark*

*by Sarah Laidlaw*

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The international service organization of Kiwanis was started in 1915, when the first Kiwanis club was organized and chartered in Detroit, Mich. One year later, the organization went international with a club forming in Hamilton, Canada, and, in 1962, clubs outside of the U.S. and Canada were included. Today, there are 8,445 Kiwanis clubs in 91 countries with 288,702 active members.

The Airpark has its own Kiwanis club, started October 2002. Kiwanis clubs focus on the mission suggested in their name. "Kiwanis" is derived from the Detroit-area American Indian phrase "Nunc Kee-wanis," which means "we trade" or "we share our talents." Kiwanis clubs work to share their diverse talents with the world's children and families in order to improve their quality of life.

The clubs work to assess local community needs, create service projects to provide for those needs, and raise the funds and provide the volunteer service necessary for those goals. Tammy Flosi, owner of Sonoran National Insurance Group and the Airpark Kiwanis Club's president says, "Some people are interested in fundraising and others just want to go out and get their hands dirty and help. So, we try to accomplish both by focusing on organizations that need fundraising and money and on those that need hands-on volunteer work."

The Airpark Kiwanis Club chooses two organizations to support each year, and



***Kiwanis fundraising became a family affair when Ruby Cordova (far left) and Tony Cordova (far right), owners of Kwik Copy Printing on Greenway-Hayden, brought their daughter and her friend to serve hamburgers and hotdogs to holiday shoppers at the Briar Patch Marketplace. Joining the Cordova family were members Peter Carpenter and Loren Molever, and Keri Carpenter. Proceeds from this event were used to take 30 foster children Christmas shopping.***

produces fundraisers and donates time and money to them. This year, they have chosen to support the National Conference for Community and Justice (NJCC), which operates an annual summer camp for teens to increase awareness of cultural diversity, and Interfaith Christian Ministries, which operates a large food pantry for low-income people in need. Loren Molever, senior attorney at Hymson and Goldstein and charter member of the Airpark Kiwanis Club, says, "Right now we have decided to partner with a couple organizations each year, so we can focus our fundraising. Instead of giving out a very small amount to a lot of different organizations, we can, hopefully, have a greater impact on fewer organizations and change the future."

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Kiwanis clubs are nonprofit corporations made up of active and retired business professionals. The clubs tend to encompass dynamic groups of people. Tony Cordova, owner of Kwik Copy Printing and a charter member of the Airpark Kiwanis Club, explains, "Within the group, there are people from all different walks of life, but we come together at one time for one common reason. ... When we're sitting in that room, we're there together, brainstorming, trying to figure out how to help."

The Airpark Kiwanis Club membership is slightly different from other Kiwanis clubs in that its members are active businesspeople. The members commit as much or as little to the club as their schedules allow. Flosi explains, "A lot of Kiwanis groups are people who are older and retired, but our group is a younger group, not everyone is young, but everyone is working. So, it's more what I was looking for because people understand if you miss a meeting since we all have jobs and families." The strong business make-up of the group also spawns professional contacts between club members for their individual businesses.

The Airpark Kiwanis Club meets Thursdays, 7:30-8:30 a.m., at The Blue Fig, located inside the Scottsdale Airport terminal. Every meeting features a different speaker, which is custom for all Kiwanis groups. Speakers at the Airpark Kiwanis Club have talked on subjects ranging from the Scottsdale Airport, to DC Ranch and new area developments, to community charity organizations needing help from Kiwanis. Molever says, "It makes a nice tie into my work community with the speakers at the meetings."

In its three-year history, Airpark Kiwanis Club members have actively raised over \$11,000 for various charity groups, along with volunteering thousands of hours of their own time and physical labor for social causes. Molever says, "It's an obligation I think we all have. Some people refer to it as giving back. I don't know that I'm particularly fond of that phrase. I just look at it as being active in the place I live, and not passively letting life happen around me." In one year, Kiwanis clubs worldwide sponsor over 147,000 service projects, raise over \$100 million and contribute over 6.2 million volunteer hours. Cordova explains Kiwanis success, saying, "We

are trying to make a frontline impact and make things better for people ... I think the key for me is you aren't just sending your check somewhere and wondering if your money ever got there."

The Airpark Kiwanis Club is constantly seeking new members with a goal to double its size, currently at 22 members, within the next year. If you would like more information on the group, contact Denise Kennedy at home at [denisemk@hotmail.com](mailto:denisemk@hotmail.com) or at work at (480) 301-4689.®



**Scottsdale Airpark Kiwanis Club President Tammy Flosi (left) presents a check to Denisa Casement, Outreach Coordinator for Ronald McDonald House Charities. The Club's donation was made in memory of Jack Nagle, a life-long Kiwanis member who spent numerous volunteer hours cooking meals for families staying at the Phoenix Ronald McDonald House near 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Thomas Road.**