

East Aurora Aktion Club Serves Community

Service Program Helps Disabled Adults to Help Others

by Libby Maeder

As reprinted from the East Aurora Adviser

Every Kiwanis president adopts a community service project that is near and dear to their heart. When service station owner Don Bach was President of the Kiwanis Club of East Aurora, the project nearest and dearest to his heart was the Aktion Club.

"I had a special interest in helping people with developmental disabilities," he said. Through family members and friends who worked with the developmentally disabled population, he had a familiarity with the issues. But something really clicked when he toured area group homes for adults with developmental disabilities.

Barb Wheeler of East Aurora was with Bach and other Kiwanis Club members on a tour of the Willow Street group home about six years ago, one of several such Kiwanis tours arranged by former East Aurora Mayor John Pagliaccio.



Aktion Club members enjoy some karaoke at a Valentine's dance last week at the Aurora Senior Center. Aktion Club is a Kiwanis-sponsored service organization for adults with disabilities. Photo by Marty Wangelin.

"A spark flew for Don," recalled Wheeler, who works at HSBC. "After that, he found out about Aktion Club, and away we went

Bach did some digging, and discovered Kiwanis International and individual Kiwanis organizations sponsored Aktion Clubs, locally based service organizations to help adults who live with disabilities. The first Aktion Club was formed in Florida in 1987, and by 2000, Aktion Club had become an officially sponsored program of Kiwanis International.

Aktion Club's premise is a simple one. "No matter whether we have developmental disabilities or not," said Bach, "we all have a responsibility to make our community a better place to live.

The local Aktion Club has about 70 members, including e with developmental disabilities, family members, friends and Kiwanis volunteers. Developmentally disabled members give back to their community through charitable donations and service projects, and volunteers help them.

Aktion Club service projects are many and varied. Member sing at me Erie County Home and Infirmary, plant flowers at cemeteries, volunteer at FISH, a-and clean trails at Knox Farm State Park.

Through car washes and other fundraisers, members have raised funds to aid rebuilding efforts in New Orleans and support the troops in Iraq. They also raised \$300

Continued on Page 10

Division 6 Key Clubs Take Aktion

Officers and members of the Division Avenue HS, East Meadow HS, Elmont Memorial HS, G C Tech, Hempstead HS, Island Trees HS, MacArthur HS, Uniondale HS, West Hempstead HS and W T Clarke HS Key Clubs welcomed Former First Lady and NYD Aktion Club Administrator Debra Fuchs to their Thanksgiving divisional meeting. The meeting was hosted by the Uniondale Key Club who served their guests a delicious Thanksgiving meal during the break.

Following the break, Former First Lady Debra explained the origin of her passion for Aktion Club and asked the Key Clubbers for their help in forming and supporting Aktion Clubs. The Key clubbers pledged their support of the Aktion Club being formed at the ACLD home in West Hempstead. Former First Lady Debra also explained the Aktion Club's SCAW (Sleeping Children Around the World) service initiative.

LTG Rickie Santer who also serves as NYD Key Club K-Family Relations Chair had already described the SCAW program. Each Key Club had raised at least one SCAW donation which was matched by their sponsoring Kiwanis Club. Every \$28 donation purchases a bed kit for a needy child in a developing country. These kits include a sleep mat, pillow, a sheet, a mosquito net, night clothes and, school supplies.

Following IPFL Debra's presentation, representatives from each Key Club, as well as the Woodland Middle School Builders Club, presented their donation along with the matching donation from their sponsoring Kiwanis Club. In total, the Key Clubs of Division 6 and the Woodland Builders Club presented over \$750 in donations which will be used to purchase bed kits for 26 needy children.

LTG Rickie applauded the Key Clubbers, Builders Clubbers and their sponsoring Kiwanians on this example of the best in K-Family relations saying, "This project involved three branches of the K-Family all working together to support a fourth K-Family branch. I am proud of how the Key Clubs of Division 6 work with and are supported by their sponsoring Kiwanis Clubs. I am also glad to see the Builders Clubbers join us in this project and at our Divisional."

The Key Clubbers also asked ESK to thank their sponsoring Kiwanis Clubs of the Long Island South Central Division: East

Seyfried

Continued from Page 4

Contact Name (Reporter/Producer; may be more than one appropriate per outlet), Contact Phone, Contact Fax and Contact E-mail.

We would recommend putting the information you gather into a spreadsheet or table for convenience when you begin to call your media contacts and tell them your story. For more information on "pitching" your story to the media, please refer to your PR & Marketing Handbook, which can be downloaded from Kiwanis International: <<http://www.kiwanis.org/lit/download.asp?id=148>>.

Best of luck with building your media lists and thank you for continuing to promote the good work that Kiwanis does in communities across the country!

If you have questions, please contact me (KiwanisPR@aol.com) or Karen Yackovac, Marketing Director, Kiwanis International, (kyakovec@kiwanis.org). We look forward to your sharing your communications with us and hope to be able to present this year's award to many more clubs as in the past year.

Meadow, Elmont, Hempstead, Levittown, Uniondale and West Hempstead.

Any K-Family club wishing to support Aktion Club's SCAW Service Initiative should send a check in a multiple of \$28 dollars to Kiwanis International. Be sure to include

your club contact information and write SCAW on the memo line. For additional information: sponsored youth can email to: LTG Rickie via email at <RES3KINGOFSI-AM@aol.com> Kiwanis Clubs may wish to contact District Chair Debra Fuchs directly.



Uniondale Key club officers and Faculty Advisor Andrea Battle-Brown present five SCAW Bed Kit donations to Aktion Club District Chair Debra Fuchs.



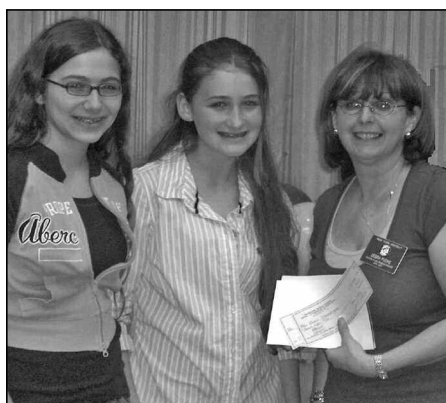
Uniondale HS Key Club serves Thanksgiving Dinner at divisional meeting.



East Hempstead Kiwanis Advisor Diann and Key Clubber Kat present their SCAW and Kiwanis matching donation.



Levittown Kiwanis Secretary Lisa Santer, GC Tech Kiwanis Advisor David Cummo, Division Ave. Key Club President Andrew Paulsen, Levittown Kiwanis Treasurer Gail Cummo, Island Trees Key club President Lauren Wielgus. MacArthur Key Club President Kristin Leverone, LG Rickie Santer and, NYD Aktion club Administrator Debra Fuchs.



Woodland builders Club President Diana Barsky and 7th grade Director Rachel Udkow Present a SCAW Donation to District Chair Debra Fuchs.

Key Leader

Continued from Page 10

The Key Leader Committee here in New York is willing to come and speak to your clubs and/or divisions, where possible to speak about the wonderful program and show a DVD. Please contact me at kscharoff@yahoo.com or 516-432-0850 if you are interested in having a speaker. We are also looking at expanding our committee here in New York. If you are interested in getting involved with the program, please contact me, especially if you are in the Syracuse, Albany, Binghamton, New York City or Suffolk County areas.