



First Lady

Debra Fuchs

Back in April, while Governor David and I were visiting the Southwestern Division under the leadership of LG Wendy Wilcox, I had the pleasure of meeting the secretary of the Kiwanis Club of Northern Chautauqua, Denise Dejaiffe. While Denise and I were chatting that evening, I happened to mention that my daughter Gabrielle had just gone with her Key club to a local AHRC to do an art project with the children who attended that program. Denise and I agreed that we both had an issue with the use of the “R” word. And so, Denise agreed to help me with this issue by writing the article one the right. I hope you enjoy Denise’s article and please open your hearts to those less fortunate. I thank the many of you that have participated in this years Partner’s Project and I am looking forward to receiving more completed projects during the rest of my term.

Delegates Endorse

Continued from Page 3

• A proposal to provide that the House of Delegates address any change in charter fees, new-member induction/processing fees, or any other financial encumbrance for any member club or active, privileged, or senior member.

Failed for lack of a motion:

• A proposal to require clubs to pay a US\$30 new-member fee to Kiwanis International.

Referred back to the International Board for further consideration:

• A proposal to allow Kiwanis International to pursue new membership initiatives, such as affiliate groups, to best ensure robust growth worldwide in support of the one-million-members goal.

Withdrawn:

• A proposal to limit the eligibility of former members of Kiwanis International sponsored programs for the waiver of dues payments to Kiwanis International for the first two years of membership.

• A proposal to allow clubs to pay dues on behalf of "family units" rather than on behalf of individual members.

• A proposal to change the eligibility of Kiwanis International officers for reimbursement for travel and accommodation expenses for the annually conducted International Council and Convention.

Rothman

Continued from Page 3

ago, after heavy rains and massive flooding the lower southern tier including but not limited to Susquehanna Division sustained heavy damages. The Binghamton Regency where we have held conventions, took in three feet of water in its lower level. I am asking you to look at the many needs listed on the District website (www.Kiwanis-NY.org) to see if you can fill any of the many needs. We wish those effected well and will help in anyway we can.

How Do We Make The Kiwanis Structure More Member-Focused?

Recently a special committee comprised of Kiwanis members and leaders from around the world, issued a report to the Kiwanis International Board containing 12 recommendations for changes to our organizational structure.

The International Board has not offered a position on any of these recommendations.

These recommendations were submitted by the special committee to offer solutions on how Kiwanis could be a more efficient, member-focused organization.

In order to properly evaluate the committee’s recommendations, the Board has established four task forces on Global Structure, District Structure, Election of International Leadership and Conventions and Council with

the important task to gather as much feedback from the members as possible.

For this reason, you, the member, are an important part of the process.

By far, the single most important thing that the International Board can do for you is to listen. Listen to your ideas, your concerns and your questions. If it’s important to you, it’s important to us because you are the future of Kiwanis and the one who will help it grow.

The International Board would like to know what you think about the proposed recommendations. You may find, that after reading the special committee’s recommendations, you have more questions than answers. We’d like to hear about those too. We are asking for

your comments; if you agree tell us why. If you disagree, offer a solution. Help us to understand your rationale.

As you know, we have an aggressive goal as an organization and that is to grow Kiwanis to one million members by 2015. The only way we are going to do that is by making our organization more member-focused.

Help us do that by sharing your suggestions and thoughts.

Check out the New York District Website at www.kiwanis-ny.org

The “R” Word – Derogatory Slang

Written by: Denise M. Dejaiffe, Secretary of the Kiwanis Club of Northern Chautauqua/Southwestern Division and her daughter, Katherine “Katie” Wilkes, New York District Key Club Past Lt. Governor, Southwestern Division

“re-tard” (r_· tãrd’) – to make slow or slower; to delay or impede the progress, course or event of.” (Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary, ©1961 G. & C. Merriam Co.) Our nation’s special education law, the IDEA, defines mental retardation as . . . “significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.” [34 Code of Federal Regulations §300.7(c)(6)]

That out of the way, this article is not about the actual definition or origin of the word retard, or the term mental retardation. Rather it is about the derogatory way retard, (hereon referred to as the “R” word) is used as a slang word in everyday language to many people.

My son David was born on November 28, 1984. He suffered a lack of oxygen at the time of his birth, resulting in a chronic seizure disorder and mental retardation. At the age of five he was diagnosed as having profound

mental retardation. It was a heartbreaking diagnosis, more so even than the seizures he suffered from almost daily. One of the first things that came to my mind was that he would be called “R” the rest of his life. I was determined from that moment on to help change the minds of people about using the “R” word. David was a child with mental retardation, not a “R”. It was a diagnosis of his intellectual and adaptive functions, not who he was. He was still a beautiful boy with brown curly hair, blue eyes and a sweet, crooked smile that would make anyone smile back at him.

It is disturbing enough that over the years the “R” word has been used to make fun of someone whose intelligence is less than what is considered normal, whether they have mental retardation or another learning disability. More so lately it is used as everyday slang by many people towards just about anyone. They use the “R” word without even thinking about it. I hear young children, teenagers, college students, adults, professionals, teachers and even my own family use the word every day. Comedians, actors and radio hosts use the “R” word to supposedly be funny. I’m not laughing!

My daughter, Katie, age 19, and I almost always bring it to the attention of the person using the “R” word that it is both hurtful and

offensive to us. We tell them briefly about David and ask them if they have ever known someone who has mental retardation, to personalize it for them. We then ask them to think twice about using it again. We do this not just for David, but for his friends, classmates and all persons who have mental retardation.

Our beloved David passed away on August 18, 1996 from a sudden illness. His courage, faith and unconditional love are daily reminders to us to live each day to the fullest and to show respect and compassion to those less fortunate.

“Great strides are continually being made to include children and adults with special needs in our schools and community. Let us welcome them with open minds and open hearts.”- from David’s eulogy, written by Mom.

I had the honor of meeting New York District First Lady Debra Fuchs at the Southwestern Division Governor’s Visit. We talked about Debra’s Partner’s Project and shared our experiences about Debra’s brother, Richard and my son, David.

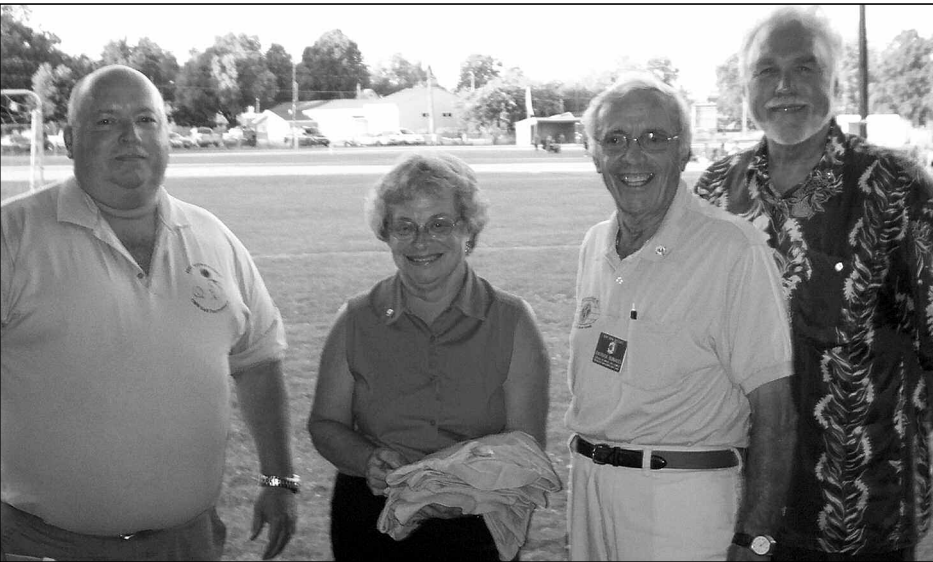
We found out that we both hated when people use the word retard, we termed it the “R” word, and decided to write this article together.

• • •

Richard A. Terry Memorial CMN Golf Tournament Raises Over \$3,800

The **GENESEE DIVISION** raised over \$3,800 for the Golisano’s Children’s Center at Strong Memorial Hospital. On Friday, July 7, 2006, over 45 golfers (mostly Western New York

Kiwanians) participated in a scramble event that saw two winners: Nunda Kiwanis and Henrietta Kiwanis Team 1, who shared the honors.



Since the early eighties the Genesee Division has hosted this event in conjunction with the Children’s Miracle Network Telethon. Distinguished Past Lt. Governor Dick Terry began this tournament and promoted it throughout Western New York.

The Genesee Division has raised over \$250,000 since the early 80’s and currently shares the naming rights with sister Division, Finger Lakes, for a patient room in the state-of-the-art PICU unit at the recently expanded Golisano Children’s Center’s Pediatric Trauma Unit.

Photo left, Greece club Secretary Vivien accepts shirts with Dick Terry’s likeness on front on behalf of her family. This is a token of appreciation to honor Dick Terry’s persistence in making sure that the Genesee Division continues to support CMN and Kiwanis International (a National Corporate Sponsor of CMN).