

90 Years of Service!



Kiwanis
CLUB OF PIQUA

Chartered on 1/22/1936

THE PIQUANIAN

April 2026

6

Mark Wion (President), Mikaili Hall (V.P.), Gretchen Roeth (Secretary), Mark Wion (Treasurer)
Kelly Meckstroth (Immediate Past President), Ralph Tracy (President Elect)
Board Members: Mark Greenwood, Brent McKinney, Warren Parker, Marijo Poling, Shane Schneider

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President's Message

Greetings all.

Just when we think Spring is here, Mother Nature fools us.

Some of our Pancake Day results are in. We served 376 meals, which is down about 50 from last year. We are still waiting on bills and finishing collecting ticket money in order to get the final totals. Thank you to those who sold tickets and helped that day. Check out "It Takes a Village to Flip a Cake!" on page 5 for more on this year's Pancake Day, including pictures of the event.

Please note: we **WILL** be having a meeting on the second Wednesday of April, the 8th, which is usually our Wednesday off. However, we will be having a joint meeting with Key Club at the PHS Student Union. We will be inducting their new officers, and they will be presenting their year in review. Please plan to attend to help support our Key Club. If you would like a meal please contact Kelly Meckstroth to order your lunch. You do not have to order a lunch to attend, but please let us know if you are coming so we will have the space.

Don't forget our 90th anniversary dinner, scheduled for Saturday, May 2. Dinner starts at 6:00 PM. Invitations are in the mail.

We have two more months to read at the Head Start. Both are on the third Tuesday of April and May at 9:45am. It only takes about 15 minutes. "Story Time", on page 7, goes into more detail about the Head Start reading program. See me for more details or to volunteer.

Our longtime member Billy Parke is in Piqua Manor for rehab, then he will be going to live at Storybrook, in Troy.

In His Name

Mark Wion



House Cleaning

Birthdays

Brian Sowers (4/7), Warren Parker (4/8), Mark Reedy (4/8), Joe Shaffer (4/21)

Anniversaries

Bill McNeil (4/2), Brent McKinney (4/7), Marijo Poling (4/17), Mark Greenwood (4/29)

Wednesday Programs

- Apr 1 Self-Publishing
Marla Fair is a historical interpreter at Johnston Farm and an author.
She will talk about a new book she is writing and will self-publish.
- Apr 8 Key Club Joint Meeting and Officer Induction
We will meet at the PHS Student Union at noon.
Note: this is an off-site meeting on the 2nd Wednesday, normally a non-meeting day.
- Apr 15 Financial Scams
LaTrisha Reed from Edward Jones will talk about current scams in the industry.
Board Meeting follows.
- Apr 22 Free Haircuts and Bookbags at PHS
Shelly Mitchell, Piqua High School, will present on this new program for PHS students
- Apr 29 Pageantry and Aesthetics
Former Key Club member, Megan Booher, will talk about MB Aesthetics, her Piqua based
business, as well as her experience in beauty pageants.

Wednesday meetings are held from noon to 1pm at the Piqua YWCA, 418 N. Wayne St., unless stated otherwise.

Currently, we do not meet on the second Wednesday of the month.

In the event of a program change, emails will be sent out with updated information.

For a lunch reservation notify Kelly Meckstroth by Monday.

Text (preferred) 419-348-4329 or email KMeckstroth@trio-healthcare.com.

*DID YOU KNOW...*current and back issues of the newsletter and up-to-the-minute meeting info can be found on our website at www.piquakiwanis.org.

Newsletters are published at the first of the month. Please email news items to mark1greenwood@gmail.com.

Items must be received at least one week prior to the end of the month.

The Back Burner



Just a few things on the back burner that are worth noting:

Head Start Reading - Third Tuesday of each month during the school year at 9:45 am

If you would like to volunteer or get more information about the program, contact Mark Wion.

Piqua Kiwanis 90th Anniversary - Saturday, May 2nd, time TBD

Our Club will be celebrating its 90th anniversary on May 2, 2026. The location will be the Covington Eagles at 715 East Broadway, Covington. More info to follow.

Scholarships

Each year we award scholarships to PHS seniors. Applications will be "scored" to determine this year's winners. This year Kris Stewart, daughter of long-time Piqua Kiwanian Don Smith, established a \$1500 memorial scholarship in her dad's name. We budgeted for two \$1500 scholarships this year, but thanks to Kris's generosity, we will be awarding three \$1500 scholarships during PHS Awards Night on May 20. It all sounds straight forward, but there's more to it than you think.

First, what type of scholarships do we want to offer? The most common types are merit-based (achievement and academics), need-based (low income only), underrepresented (ex. Native Americans), international (foreign students only), and location-specific (limited to a specific geographical area).

We offer merit-based scholarships that reward academics and achievement, but we are also sensitive to need. If two candidates are equal, except for need, the one with fewer financial resources will score higher. Being limited to PHS seniors also makes our scholarships very location specific.

Next, what kind of information do we use? Applicants are asked if they were Key Club members, and if so, were they an officer. We want to reward our SLP students, so Key Clubbers get a leg up when things are otherwise equal. Being an officer goes directly to hard work and achievement and will add to the applicant's score.

Applicants must provide "family income" and any "scholarship dollars awarded". That way we can consider need when two applicants are very close in other areas.

GPA and ACT scores are provided by PHS counselors. These are strong indicators of hard work and achievement and carry the most weight when scoring applicants.

Applicants also list any activities, including leadership roles, that they have been involved in. We look for commitment in substantial activities, with leadership being a plus.

Finally, an essay is required. This year's essay topic is "What are your academic/career goals". Believe it or not, "non essay" scholarships exist because more students are claiming to be too busy, too tired, poor writers... Since we want hard working, high achievers, we're sticking with the essay for now. However, with AI capable of writing student essays, who knows what the future holds!

At the start I mentioned that applications are in and ready to be "scored". So, what does that look like? To remove as much human error and bias as possible, we use an Excel spreadsheet to "score" applicants. Info that is not subject to interpretation, e.g. family income, GPA, ACT scores, is entered as reported. Activities and essays are subject to interpretation/personal perspective and thus cannot be entered as is. That's where the Scholarship Committee comes in. Committee members individually score applicant activities and essays. Their scores are averaged together to create a single activity and essay score for each applicant. These are entered into the Excel spreadsheet and an overall score is calculated for each applicant. Highest scores are the winners and that's it. WELL NOT QUITE.

Winners names are sent to the club Secretary, Gretchen, who prepares Scholarship Certificates. The certificates are packaged with a letter of congratulations and instructions on how to receive the \$1500. Finally, an invitation is included asking winners, and their parents, to join us and enjoy complimentary lunches. This year our winners will join us at our May 27th meeting.

FYI: In the June 2024 newsletter I mentioned that I had received a \$250 Kiwanis scholarship in 1971. That scholarship paid for most of my first two years at a Community College, which led to a B.S degree from Cal Poly University, and finally an M.S. degree from The Claremont Graduate School. Would I have gone to college without the Kiwanis scholarship? Probably. Did that Kiwanis scholarship make a difference? ABSOLUTELY!

Mark Greenwood

Meet the Scholarship Committee:

Mikaila Hall, Joe Gebhart, Kathy Graeser, Jeni Greenwood, Kathy Vogler, and Mark Wion,
and Mark Greenwood (Chair)

In addition to scoring activities and essays, the committee determines the number and dollar amount of scholarships awarded.

It takes a Village to Flip a Cake!

Last month, March 14th to be exact, was our 72nd annual Pancake Day event and it took 32 folks to pull it off. There were 19 Kiwanians, 5 family members, 5 Key Clubbers, 2 from Builders Club and 1 Builders Club Advisor. That's a small village! The entire "village" deserves a round of thanks for all their dedication and hard work.

Friday was setup. 10 of our 32 volunteers showed up to assemble grills, prepare sausages and applesauce, and setup tables, coffee stations, and a "to go" area. They set the stage for a successful event.

30 of our volunteers were on-hand during the event itself to greet guests, take tickets, mix batter, handle food, serve guests, clean tables, and man-the-grills. It was a busy day. Our volunteers served 376 breakfasts!

Last but not least, 7 of our 32 volunteers stuck around to clean up. We are fortunate to have such a facility at our disposal, but we are also responsible for leaving the place as it was when we arrived. Thanks to our clean up crew, we met our requirement.

At the end of the day, it all comes down to ticket sales. Tickets are sold at the door, but pre-ticket sales make the difference. This year \$1335 worth of tickets were sold at the door versus \$2920 pre-sale. Of the \$2920 pre-sale tickets sold, Steve Wells was our top salesman with over \$1200 in sales!



Members Ralph and Char Tracy working a grill. And before you ask if we were serving silver dollar pancakes, the answer is NO!

Ralph was merely photographed in the middle of dispensing batter for a full-sized cake!



Josh Meckstroth, Kelly's husband, having too much fun flipping cakes.

FYI: Josh also helped set up the grills on Friday afternoon which distinguished him as the only cook of the day to set up his own grill!



Kiwanian Brent McKinney enjoying breakfast with the family after finishing his morning shift on grill #1. Clockwise from Brent, son, daughter and granddaughter, daughter and son-in-law, and Brent's wife Tracy who help with tickets.



Past Lt. Governor, John Coffield, sporting a blue Kiwanis sweatshirt, dropped in with his brother for a pancake breakfast.

These guys are really enjoying their pancakes! I wonder if they went back for seconds?

Aaaarrrrr!

Once again, the Dayton Performing Arts Alliance (DPAA) Children's Traveling Opera came to Piqua Central Intermediate and performed two performances of the Pirates of Penzance. Fourth graders were invited to each performance. A handful of students were randomly selected to be a part of the opera while the remaining students did their part as an audience by yelling "Bravo" among other things.

The Pirates came ashore on March 17th and were accompanied by four DPAA Artists in Residence who directed the students, sang, and played music.



Pirates of Penzance in mid performance

STORY TIME

Every third Tuesday during the school year you can find one of our members reading a children's book to a group of preschoolers at the CORS Head Start Reading Program. Not only do we read a book to the children, but our club buys hardcover copies of the book to add to each pre-school classroom's library.

In December we switch to a paperback book and purchase enough copies so that every child receives a book of their own to take home.

This year's readers include Bill McNeil, Kathy Vogler, Mark Wion and Kathy Graeser (pictured below). Bill has been with the program for some time and rumor has it that he is a favorite among the preschoolers.

Readers are always welcome. If you would like to volunteer or get more info please see "Head Start Reading" on page 3 of this newsletter.



Kathy Graeser delves into the "Leaf Thief" while preschoolers eagerly listen

Hydro...What?

Hydroponics! It is a method of growing plants in nutrient rich water without soil. Sounds intriguing, so I thought I'd find out a little more about this new-fangled approach to growing plants.

The first thing I discovered was that the idea of hydroponic is not new at all. In 1699 John Woodward, an Englishman, published the results of his “water culture” experiments where he used spearmint grown in differing sources of water. And there were others much earlier than Woodward that reasoned that plants only needed water to grow, but they never actually used hydroponics.

Then along came Johann August Ludwig Wilhelm Knop, a German. In 1860 Knop successfully grew plants without soil, thus laying the foundation for modern day hydroponics.

Things got quiet for a few decades until William F. Gericke, an American, started growing food plants in nutrient rich water. In 1940 he wrote *The Complete Guide to Soilless Gardening* and coined the term “hydroponics”.

Fast forward to 2026 and you will find a modern hydroponics unit (pictured right) at Piqua Central Intermediate School. Our club purchased the unit and the kids have already harvested (and tasted) different types of lettuce. They are currently growing tomatoes, lettuce, and zucchini, and are looking forward to sampling their bounty!





Exercise Those "Gears" Between Your Ears

(see bottom of page for answers)

1. What thrives when you feed it, but dies when you water it?
2. What has a head and a foot and four legs?
3. What five-letter word actually becomes shorter when you add two letters?
4. How far into the woods can you walk?
5. BAD wolf

----- answers -----

1) a fire 2) a bed 3) short, it becomes shorter when er is added
4) halfway, then you start walking out the other side 5) big bad wolf