

Kiwanis®

CLUB OF COLDWATER

90 
anniversary

April 5, 2025

Insight Coldwater Community Care and Conference Center

370 E. Chicago Street • Coldwater, MI 49036

Our club members are passionate about making our community and the world a better place for children so they can thrive. We are devoted to serving the children in our local community and also children all across the country and worldwide through unique and innovative service projects and fundraising.

2025 OFFICERS

President – John Towers

President Elect – Shelley Hawver

Second Vice President – Sheila Winfrey

Immediate Past President – Shana Grife

Secretary – Janet Ott

Treasurer – Kent Neitzert

BOARD MEMBERS

Paul Alger

Kimberly Feltner

Maggie Flick

Ray Sebastian

Stan Tipton

Bill Trebilcock

Val White

90TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Mark Ott

Stan Tipton

Bill Trebilcock

Sheila Winfrey



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Welcome to the 90th Anniversary Celebration Kiwanis Club of Coldwater

Dear Friends, Fellow Kiwanians, and Honored Guests

It is with great pride and heartfelt gratitude that we
welcome you to this special occasion—
the 90th Anniversary Celebration of the
Kiwanis Club of Coldwater!

For nearly a century, our club has been dedicated to
serving the children, families, and community of Coldwater,
living out the Kiwanis mission of making a difference through
service and leadership. From supporting local schools
and youth programs to organizing community events and
charitable initiatives, our journey has been one of
commitment, compassion, and camaraderie.

Tonight, we come together to honor the legacy of those who
paved the way before us, celebrate the impact of our efforts,
and look forward to a future filled with continued service and
fellowship. Whether you are a longtime member, a valued
community partner, or a friend joining us for the first time,
your presence makes this milestone all the more meaningful.

Thank you for being part of this memorable evening. May we
reflect on the past with gratitude, celebrate the present with
joy, and embrace the future with purpose.

*With appreciation,
The Kiwanis Club of Coldwater*



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Program for the 90th Anniversary

Saturday, April 5, 2025

Insight Coldwater Community Care and Conference Center
370 E. Chicago Street • Coldwater, MI 49036

Reception.....Music by Randall Hazelbaker, Saxophone
.....Music by Russell Gates, Keyboard

Greeting.....John Towers

Presentation of Colors - Boy Scout Troop 433

"America The Beautiful"

Pledge to the Flag

Invocation.....Paul Alger

Dinner

Introduction of Guests

Opening Ceremony.....John Towers

Club History.....Stan Tipton

Signature Projects/Service.....Ray Sebastian

Coldwater Kiwanis 2025 & Beyond.....John Towers

Michigan District Governor.....Stan Nelson

Kiwanis Club of Alpena

Past International Trustee.....Linda Lawther

Kiwanis Club of Ypsilanti

Closing.....John Towers

Benediction.....Salwa Alsuraimi



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HISTORY OF THE COLDWATER KIWANIS CLUB 2025

On March 26, 1935, several noteworthy events appeared in the Branch County News, later known as the Daily Reporter. Sir John Simon and Lord Anthony Eden of England had just returned from a meeting with Adolf Hitler over Germany's right to rearm. Meanwhile, a local farmer, Jay Crow, was acquitted by a jury for stealing three heifers after a seven-day trial. And, most importantly for us, the Coldwater Kiwanis Club was founded.

With guidance from Kiwanis International and sponsorship from the Hillsdale Kiwanis Club, the Coldwater Kiwanis Club adopted bylaws and elected Dr. Lemuel I. Gist as its first president. On May 8, 1935, the club received its official Kiwanis Charter, and celebrated with a dinner dance. The club started with 28 charter members and initially held weekly Wednesday evening meetings, a tradition that continued until 1980, when meetings shifted to noon.

The Early Years: 1935 - 1945

Kiwanis International was founded in Detroit, Michigan, in 1915 as a businessman's club but soon expanded into philanthropic efforts. The motto "We Build" was adopted in 1920, and the Coldwater Kiwanis Club immediately began working to improve the community.

One of the club's first projects was purchasing eyeglasses for a high school student who planned to drop out due to vision problems. After receiving his glasses, he was persuaded to return to school. In 1936, the club introduced Christmas parties for local children, a tradition that lasted for years, with as many as 185 attendees at some events.



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Other pre-World War II projects included:

- Constructing and maintaining a City Tourist Camp
- Sponsoring the Coldwater Senior Class annual outing
- Sponsoring the President's Ball
- Supporting amateur radio
- Providing milk for needy children in Coldwater's First and Third Wards
- Donating crutches to children and adults in need

On January 12, 1940, the club sponsored a new Kiwanis Club in Sturgis, further expanding its reach.

World War II: 1941 - 1945

During the war years, Kiwanis clubs across the U.S. paused their regular projects to focus on fundraising and supporting the war effort. The Coldwater club contributed through:

- Rummage sales
- Scrap metal drives
- War Bond sales
- Red Cross and USO fundraising drives
- The club also continued its commitment to youth, briefly operating a Youth Center on West Chicago Street.

Post-War Growth: 1945 - 1965

By 1959, club membership had grown to 56 regular members and six privileged members. Several fundraising initiatives began during this period:

- Peanut Sales (1949 - 2019)
- Travelogue Series at Tibbits Opera House (1957 - 2002)
- Annual Pancake Day at the Masonic Temple (1954 - 1960's)

The club also launched its involvement in the Youth for Understanding exchange program, offering scholarships for students to travel abroad. Additionally, members helped build and furnish chapels at Maple Lawn Medical Care Facility and the Community Health Center of Branch County.



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Community Service and Expansion: 1965 - 1985

In 1974, the club repaired and painted the home of an elderly, visually impaired widow. Between 1978 and 1979, Kiwanis members helped restore the Music Room of the historic Wing House.

During the late 1970's, Coldwater's Kiwanis Hill sledding area was relocated from Behnke Road to Heritage Park for improved safety. The club helped build fencing for the new site.

In June 1985, the club became the sponsor of Boy Scout Troop 433, a relationship that continues to this day.

Welcoming Women into Kiwanis: 1987

At the 1987 Kiwanis International Convention in Washington, D.C., delegates voted to admit women into Kiwanis membership. Soon after, the Coldwater club welcomed its first female members, ending its 52-year history as a men's club.

"Young Children: Priority One" & Global Impact: 1991 - 2005

In 1991, Kiwanis International launched "Young Children: Priority One", focusing on early childhood development. The Coldwater club supported this initiative through numerous local projects benefiting children under age five.

Starting in the mid-1990s, Kiwanis partnered with UNICEF to eliminate Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD), the leading cause of preventable mental impairment worldwide. The Coldwater club and its members donated over \$35,000 to this cause.

To support these efforts, the club introduced reflective house number signs, many of which can still be seen throughout Branch County. Funds were raised through this initiative and other events.

At the 2005 International Convention in Honolulu, Kiwanis updated its motto from "We Build" to "Serving the Children of the World", reflecting its primary mission.



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New Projects and Expanding Service: 2006 - Present

- 2006: Launched Flags Across Coldwater, setting out 700+ American flags on five patriotic holidays each year.
- 2008: Received an annual endowment from longtime members Gerald and Gladys Hensley, enabling new service projects.
- 2010: Supported Kiwanis & UNICEF's initiative to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus, raising \$30,000.
- 2015: Made childhood literacy the club's Signature Project, supporting the following programs:
 - Terrific Kids and Readers are Leaders book distributions
 - Dolly Parton Imagination Library
 - Schools of Hope tutoring program, helping 40-50 second graders each year.

In 2020, the club donated funds for the City of Coldwater's snow-making machine, ensuring Kiwanis Hill remained a prime sledding spot. In 2022, it introduced the Cardboard Sled Race, a free event held during Winterfest.

By 2023, the club chartered a new Cub Scout Pack and established a Key Club at Pansophia Academy with over 30 members.

At the end of 2024, the club started K-Kids Club at Lakeland Elementary.

Looking Ahead

As the Coldwater Kiwanis Club celebrates 90 years, we remain dedicated to improving the world—one child and one community at a time. We are deeply grateful to our community partners, volunteers, and members, who's dedication allows us to continue making a lasting impact into the future.

#Kids Need Kiwanis!



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CURRENT SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Literacy Projects

Applefest Book Giveaway

Bubbles & Books - Laundromat Libraries

Dolly Parton Imagination Library in Branch County

Free Little Libraries Placed in Neighborhoods

Kiwanis Terrific Kids Book Distribution Program

Lakeland Elementary School Library Upgrade

Real Men Read

Readers are Leaders

Schools of Hope Reading Buddies Program

Strawberryfest Book Giveaway

Story Walk at Heritage Park

United We Read

Youth Projects and Support

Boy Scout Troop 433 (Sponsor)

Cardboard Sled Races at Kiwanis Hill
(Snow Cannon Sponsor)

Children's Museum of Branch County
(Children's Ball Sponsor)
(Volunteers)

Cub Scout Pack 433 (Sponsor)



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Beginnings Care for Life
(Infant Car Seats and Pack N' Plays)
Great Start Collaborative (Baby Shower)
Kimball Camp A.E.D. (Device)
Kiwanis of Michigan Foundation (Hospitalized Children)
Lakeland Elementary (K-Kids Club)
Pansophia Academy (Key Club) (Youth Leadership) Tibbits
Young Audience Program (Sponsor)
Tibbits Popcorn Theater (Volunteers)

Community Service

Branch County Literacy Council
Coach Eby Home Store (Volunteers)
Flags Across Coldwater
Good Better Best Shop (Volunteers)
Jacobs Well
Kids Coalition Against Hunger (Food packaging)
Kiwanis Children's Fund
(Elimination of Iodine Deficiency Disorder)
(Near Elimination of Maternal & Neonatal Tetanus)
Tibbits Opera House Foundation Membership (70 Years)



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PAST CLUB PRESIDENTS

1935 Dr. Lem Gist	1964 Glyn Dee Havens	1993 - 1994 James Gordon
1936 Carl McConnel	1965 Howard Thompson	1994 - 1995 Steve Goddard
1937 Virgil Hungerford	1966 Cornelius Medendorp	1995 - 1996 C.J. Medendorp
1938 Alfred J. Smead	1967 Ray Benson	1996 - 1997 William J. Voss
1939 George Kelsey	1968 Dr. Robert Krutsch	1997 - 1998 Mary Guthrie
1940 Lloyd Luce	1969 Charles Gruner	1998 - 1999 Daniel Kaepf
1941 William Oesehgar	1970 Richard Hammond	1999 - 2000 Jack Lintner
1942 Dr. Max McConnell	1971 Eugene Wallace	2000 - 2001 Robert Foote
1943 Dean Steffy	1972 Donald Jones	2001 - 2002 H. Michael Axford
1944 Gerald Hensley	1973 Joseph Otis	2002 - 2003 Brad Wallace
1945 Oscar Renshaw	1974 Richie Barnes	2003 - 2004 Kay Kaepf
1946 Robert Anderson	1974 - 1975 George Henderson	2004 - 2005 Ray Sebastian
1947 Harold Faulkner	1975 - 1976 John T. Parlette	2005 - 2006 Dylan Foster
1948 Hal Smith	1976 - 1977 Richard Zeluff	2006 - 2007 Marcy Holland
1948 Nelson Ilford	1977 - 1978 Roger C. Meadows	2007 - 2008 Robert Foote
1949 Howard Minier	1978 - 1979 James Mollenkopf	2008 - 2009 William J. Voss
1950 Owen Decker	1979 - 1980 Jack Lintner	2009 - 2010 Letha VanBlarcom
1951 Clarence Lee	1980 - 1981 Lyman Little	2010 - 2011 Sharon Coolbaugh
1952 Rodney Albright	1981 - 1982 Manly Magsig	2011 - 2012 Terry Tomlinson
1953 Dr. A.J. Long	1982 - 1983 Kenneth Loose	2012 - 2013 Denny Brieske
1954 Kermit Dennis	1983 - 1984 Fred Pierson	2013 - 2014 Deborah Tomlinson
1955 Keith Davis	1984 - 1985 Greg Ledyard	2015 - 2016 Cheri Anderson
1956 Forrest Gallop	1985 - 1986 Stanley Tipton	2016 - 2017 Bob Tharp / Mark Ott
1957 William Winemiller	1986 - 1987 Henry Hess	2017 - 2018 Mark Ott
1958 Rolph Carlisle	1987 - 1988 John Pollack	2018 - 2019 William J. Voss
1959 Robert McDonald	1988 - 1989 Warren Widner	2019 - 2020 Ray Sebastian
1960 Charles Berry	1989 - 1990 Detlef Olsen	2020 - 2021 Cayden Sparks
1961 Leland Vance	1990 - 1991 Manly Magsig	2021 - 2022 Janet Ott
1962 Sherwood Craig	1991 - 1992 Daryl Abrey	2022 - 2023 Val White
1963 Harry Hockstad	1992 - 1993 Ray Sebastian	2023 - 2024 Shana Grife



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Paul
Alger



Keith
Baker



Lori
Bobilya



Denny
Brieske



Paula
Brieske



Stephanie
Burdick



Heather
Condon



Kimberly
Feltner



Tiffany
Edwards



Rachel
Everett



Maggie
Flick



Laura
Flores



Chloe
Garr



Gail
Green



Shana
Grife



Cathy
Gordon



Shelley
Hawver



Kim
Hemker



Jennifer
Henry



Cammie
Hostetter



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Kris
Jenkins



Vlad
Jeudy



Lori
LaBundy



Yolanda
Lozano



Kent
Neitzert



Kristen
Niedzwiecki



Janet
Ott



Mark
Ott



Benjamin
Shaw



Ray
Sebastian



Shirley
Tipton



Stan
Tipton



John
Towers



Bill
Trebilcock



Valerie
White



Sheila
Winfrey

Not Pictured:

Terry Andress

Bill Kurtz

Cynthia Gardner

David Sutherland

Sam Greenburg

Ryan Tomlinson

Kayla Gray



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PAST LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS

1938 Dr. Lem Gist

1956 Gerald Hensley

1960 Robert McDonald

1968 Dr. Robert Krutsch

1974 - 1975 W. H. Lucas

1979 - 1980 Cornelius Medendorp

1988 - 1989 Manly Magsig

1992 - 1993 Stanley Tipton

2015 - 2017 Terry Tomlinson

2017 - 2019 Phil Krauss

2022 - 2024 Mark Ott

CHARTER MEMBERS

H. O. Baum

Carl Bonfiglio

Sidney Burr

Ed Butters

Rolph J. Carlisle

Harry S. Claar

Dr. L. I. Gist

F. N. Grover

Dr. G. S. Hadley

Earl T. Huckle

Virgil Hungerford

George Kelsey

Frederic A. Kibbe

Lloyd H. Latchaw

C. R. McConnell

Ralph Miller

Dr. C. H. Reincke

Oscar F. Renshaw

H. B. Scott

J. B. Seiler

E. Bailey Stoddard

H. F. Stukey

John Veonstra

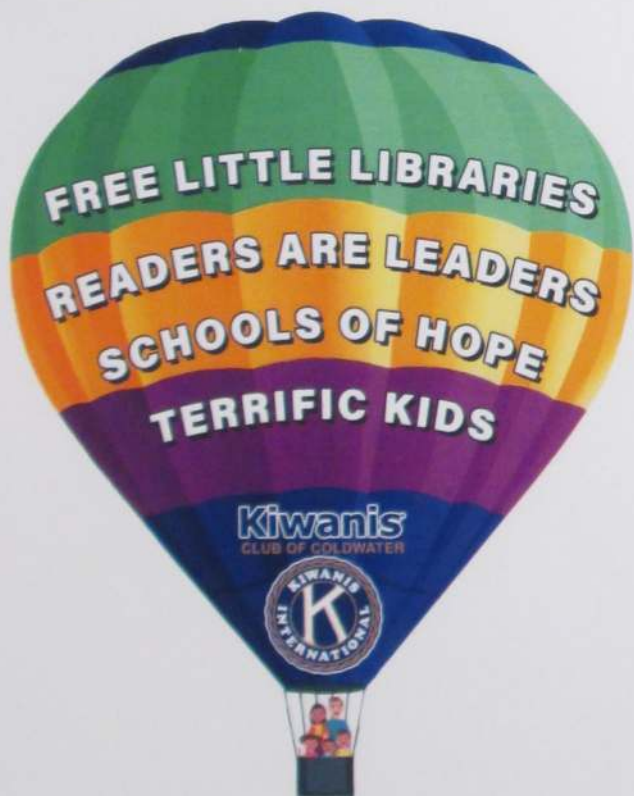
Douglas Watson

Joseph R. Watson

Don White



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If you know someone who is passionate about making a difference and being part of a giving community, feel free to share our message and invite them to join the Kiwanis Club of Coldwater anytime!



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THE OBJECTIVES OF KIWANIS

- 1) To give primacy to the human and spiritual rather than to material values in life.
- 2) To encourage the daily living of the Golden Rule in all human relationships.
- 3) To promote the adoption and application of higher social, business, and professional standards.
- 4) To develop, by precept and example, a more intelligent, aggressive, and serviceable citizenship.
- 5) To provide, through Kiwanis Clubs, a practical means to form enduring friendships, render altruistic service and build better communities.
- 6) To cooperate in creating and maintaining sound public opinion and high idealism, which make possible the increase of righteousness, justice, patriotism, and goodwill.



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