



January 2015

House Talk

The official newsletter of the Kiwanis Family House

Vol. 15, Issue 7

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An Early Christmas Present | Ron Beams

In my journey serving as chaplain at the Kiwanis Family House, I never know what unique moment may occur in my family visits and conversations. Sometimes there are circumstances that bring families together in amazing ways. In one recent case, two Hispanic families shared their respective circumstances together in a way that had a personal effect on me.

On Tuesday morning, December 16th, while visiting families in the large kitchen, I met 15-year-old Ivan. He told me that his 17-year-old brother, Israel, had experienced a sudden brain-related event that left him in a very serious condition. He suggested I speak with his father, Alex. I sat down with Dad to hear the story of what occurred two weeks prior in this life-changing incident.

As Alex opened his heart, it was apparent that this tragedy has shaken the entire family. It is too early to know how Israel's recovery will play out. Alex told me that his faith is strong and he is not questioning God as to why this happened but rather wondering where all this is headed. It indeed is a critical moment in this family's life.

In my time with Alex, I was able to share with him my own life-changing moment when my now 44-year-old son, Matthew, experienced a massive brain hemorrhage at the age of seven. Since that time, Matthew has been disabled and has care-givers every day. I was able to relate with Alex and encourage him with support as the crisis unfolds. It was a very tender and emotional moment with two dads sharing their respective journeys.

A few feet away were members of the Cocio-Panchano family - father Damien, Mother Violeta, son Hector, and daughter Gloria. This family experienced a horrific accident in their home town in Baja, Ca. three years ago. Although Mom and Dad escaped with minor injuries, five-year-old Gloria was thrust through the windshield of the car and thrown over 30 feet. Somehow she miraculously survived. Thirteen-year-old Hector took the brunt of the accident. Spinal-related injuries and complications with his kidneys bring the family to Shriner's Hospital two to three times each year for Hector's treatments and therapy.

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Executive Director's Column | Dan Germain

To my friends, family, fellow K-Family members, the staff here at the Kiwanis Family House, my key contacts at our partner hospitals, my peers in the regional nonprofit community, guests and former guests who continue to support us, and the KFH Board of Directors.....Happy 2015!

As we launch into a new calendar year, I remind myself that I serve all of you as I fulfill the duties of Executive Director. I am accountable to you. Please do me a favor. File this column away. Retrieve it next January and use it as a 2015 report card. Hold me accountable for meeting expectations – mine and yours.

I am confident that our record of accomplishment in 2015 will match, even surpass, our record in 2014. So here is a list of important actions and accomplishments I envision for our team over the next 12 months, largely through the hard work of our active committees.

- Officially unveil our new Legacy Giving Program and recruit “founding” members of our Legacy Society. We must start building an endowment that will ensure a solid future for the Kiwanis Family House.
- Complement recent major improvements by installing new flooring throughout the facility and completing construction of our new staff laundry room.
- Provide reliable information technology support for our computer network and associated resources.
- Complete and publish a Risk Management Plan that identifies risks and creates practical strategies in such areas as governance, board operations, insurance, human resources, financial management, technology and information management, and public relations.
- Complete and publish a Fund Development Plan that maps a strategy for identifying and securing resources needed to advance the mission and strategic goals of the organization. The plan’s long-term objectives will address:
 - Gradually reducing reliance on house rent as a source of operating income so that we are able to offer our services to guest families at no cost.
 - Increasing our donor base to include corporate partners, additional sponsoring individuals (inside and outside of Kiwanis), additional sponsoring clubs, additional Service Leadership Program members, and other community service organizations.
 - Achieve six months of operating reserve.
- On May 5, 2015, surpass the amount raised during the 24-hour Big Day of Giving in 2014.

Comments? Questions?

*Email the editor at
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*Executive Director
Dan Germain*

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Executive Director's Column *(continued from page 2)*

- By June 30, 2015, meet the current-year budget target for grant funding.
- Complete and publish a Marketing Plan that will present strategies for encouraging community involvement and ongoing investment, both financial and in terms of volunteer support, in KFH's mission.
- Sign up our 100th sponsoring club during the year in which Kiwanis International celebrates its 100th anniversary (we are currently at 96!).
- Develop and publish Board policies that cover evaluation of the board and the chairperson, election and reelection of board members, Board orientation and education, and succession planning for the Board chair and other Board leaders.
- Review and revise the bylaws of the Kiwanis Family House.
- Review and revise the KFH Employee Handbook.
- Adopt and publish a new Strategic Plan that will guide our leadership over the next three years.



Clearly, this is a compilation of outputs, not necessarily outcomes. But I am good with that. It is, by definition, what a to-do list entails. However, I am supremely confident that the outputs referenced above will directly translate into desirable outcomes that affect the quality of our services.

I will make this easy for all of you and trot this list out again next January. That way, we can fill out my report card together.

100 in 100!

Kiwanis Family House needs four more clubs to reach 100 sponsors! Only four! Can your club help us reach that target during the 100th anniversary of Kiwanis International?

With the half a dozen new sponsors we have recently added, 96 clubs in California and Nevada are now official sponsors of the Kiwanis Family House. We are flying on a wave of confidence that we will reach at least 100 Sponsor Clubs during Kiwanis' centennial birthday. If your home club is not already a sponsor, please champion our cause with your board of directors. The commitment is as follows:

- A one-time sponsorship fee of \$500
- Annually, thereafter:
 - Dues of \$100 each October
 - At least one additional donation or fundraiser on our behalf

If you are a 2014/15 Lieutenant Governor, can you help us locate one club in your Division which is not already a KFH sponsor? Let us know!



*Kiwanis Family House
Board President
George MacMurphey*



Each year for the past 15 years, Mauda Butte has prepared Thanksgiving dinner for guests of our House

President's Message | George MacMurphey

The old year ends and we look forward to a fresh new year ahead. Even though the Family House's fiscal year runs from mid-year to mid-year, my tendency is to reflect on events of this past calendar year. The sum of all the parts seems very positive as I look back.

We had new board members replace some retirees, and Bill Hooper was granted a respite from his many exceptionally productive years as board member and board president. Our board continues to be strong and dedicated, with every member fully involved and willing to take on necessary duties and tackle challenges as they present themselves. Our management team, Executive Director Dan Germain and Operations Manager Charlie Bussey, continue to tirelessly perform yeoman's duties and diligently work with a superb staff to operate a superior home away from home for our hundreds of guests. It all comes down to this one basic invaluable function--providing a comfortable place for family members to stay and be minutes away from their seriously ill loved ones.

I could fill pages enumerating the year's successes, but I will highlight just one. After months of discussion, planning, designing, and fundraising, everything finally came together and made it possible to begin construction of our new staff laundry room. (Just barely within the confines of 2014).

Such an installation may seem rather mundane and basic, but it will provide so many benefits. It will free up the existing equipment for use by our guests at all times--no more sharing and juggling schedules by our staff and guests. The industrial grade equipment will be available 24 hours a day to our personnel and will be faster, more efficient, and will enable staff to make better use of their time (not to mention freeing Charlie from counting hundreds, maybe thousands, of quarters day after day)!

Milestone years seem to cause us to reflect back perhaps more so than we do year by year. Decades, silver or golden anniversaries, and significant periods of time measured in various ways produce a desire to sum up and remember.

So, as I look back on this past year, I am reminded that it has been 10 years since I came to really appreciate the value of the Kiwanis Family House. Ten years ago just at this time of the year, our son, John, was at the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center Rehabilitation Center in San Jose. He suffered a series of strokes in October and went through three brain surgeries at the very young age of 37. Even though he had been transferred to rehab, he was essentially still in ICU at Santa Clara. His prognosis was not well-defined and the therapists found he was not able to participate in any productive rehab activities.

Naturally we felt the need to be there. The hospital was on a busy street and the nearest motels were some miles away on a busy expressway. Sound familiar? How many times have we heard that

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President's Message *(continued from page 4)*

comment from our guests at Kiwanis Family House? Then, after a few days, we heard about Santa Clara's version of the Family House. The accommodations were completely different. They were in the form of a series of duplexes, complete "homes" with full kitchens, washer & dryer, beds for 4, all just a 5 minute walk across the parking lot from the hospital. There was no friendly staff in sight. The lodgings were administered by social workers from an office buried in the main hospital building. Their function was to evaluate need, schedule reservations and hand out the keys. However, the end result was the same as the Family House -- a comfortable place to stay and be minutes away from a family member's hospital room.

Days went by with little change in John's condition. Then just at Christmas time a diminutive neurosurgeon from Stanford appeared. He evaluated John and proposed another procedure, another brain surgery as we perceived it. Of course we felt an even more compelling need to be right there as this surgery loomed ahead. We were so blessed to have a duplex available.

The short version of the outcome: surgery was successful and John was able to begin serious rehabilitation. He was finally released and went home to San Luis Obispo by the end of February. His life is good now.

I said earlier that this experience really brought home to me the value of the Family House. As we used Santa Clara's facilities, I constantly thought of what the Kiwanis Family House does in an even better way.

I have been involved with the Kiwanis Family House in small ways since its inception over 30 years ago. In theory the concept of the Kiwanis Family House seemed very worthwhile. In practice my limited experiences with guests proved the value of our facility. The new House was even better and there was no question that we were providing a service so valuable and so greatly appreciated by our guests.

However, my firsthand experience with my son made it all so very real. The feeling of a need to stay close to a desperately ill loved one is indescribable. The ability to be a short walk away, to have a place to rest, sleep, prepare food, do laundry, come and go as you please and to be together with other family members, not to mention the ease of parking at the front door of the lodging, are so important and appreciated beyond words.

I have heard all of the above expressed in many and varied ways by our guests over the years. Our personal experience truly gives it real meaning. I send a sincere thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you, our devoted supporters, do for the Kiwanis Family House.



Spotlight on Service | Charlie Bussey



KFH Employee Sarah Cundiff

Sarah Cundiff is our newest employee and came to us on the recommendation of her aunt, Carol Frost, a member of the East Sacramento Kiwanis Club and also one of our awesome volunteer gardening staff. Sarah has been a pleasant addition to our staff and currently works as the "On Call" staff member who can work any position on short notice. I have called her at various times of the day or night and she has always responded quickly and so far she has been able to fill in for others on short notice. She lives just a few blocks away from Kiwanis Family House and this proximity to work makes it easier for her to be on call.

Sarah is a person of many interests. She loves music and crafts. She knits, sews and does many other "crafty" things. She is currently on a sabbatical from her education and instead is working a couple of different part time jobs while she contemplates where she wants to take herself in life. Sarah is competent in all phases of work at Kiwanis Family House and has proven that she is a fast learner and a good listener.

When asked why she likes working here, she said "Kiwanis Family House helps people and I like that ."

When asked her least favorite thing about Kiwanis Family House she said, "The time when a kid threw up in the laundry room and I had to clean it up."

A few things you don't know about Sarah are:

- Her favorite color is yellow.
- Her favorite musician/singer is George Watsky (hip hop)
- If she could be a tree, she would be a Christmas tree.
- Her hero is Malala Yousafi, the young Afghani girl who was shot by the Taliban for going to school.
- If she could have a super power, it would be super speed so that she could get things done faster and that would let her get more done each day.

KFH Staff celebrated the Holiday season at their annual dinner



How YOU Can Make A Difference | Rita Germain

Donors and volunteers make all the difference in our ability to care for our guest families during times of medical crisis. Without these two key groups, our Kiwanis Family House could not continue to fulfill its mission of providing temporary housing and support to ill and injured patients being treated at UC Davis Medical Center and Shriners Hospitals of Northern California. So, beginning this month, we will use this column to remind you of ways YOU can make a difference by helping the families who stay in our Kiwanis Family House.

Do you shop at Amazon.com? If so, an easy way to give back to the Kiwanis Family House is through the AmazonSmile program. You can shop at AmazonSmile for the same items you purchase on Amazon.com every day. When you do, .5% of the purchase price of all items you buy will be donated to the Kiwanis Family House.

Just go to www.smile.amazon.com and designate Kiwanis Family House as your charity, and start shopping today—it's that easy!

Volunteer opportunities are always available, and Operations Manager Charlie Bussey coordinates these efforts for individuals, clubs, and outside groups. To learn more, or to schedule a time to volunteer, contact Charlie at (916) 736-0116 or cbussey@kiwanisfamilyhouse.org.

In addition, large K-Family workdays are scheduled at least two times a year, typically in April during Kiwanis One Day, and in early September. These are great opportunities for clubs to work side-by-side with their sponsored youth, friends, family members, and membership prospects. Our next Kiwanis One Day K-Family Workday is scheduled for **Saturday, April 11, 2015**. Look for more information soon on our website!



Making a Difference At Left:

Members of Greater Sacramento Kiwanis regularly sort and organize clothing in the KFH Clothes Closet.

Christmas Present *(continued from page 1)*



*KFH Chaplain Ron
Beams of the
Greater
Sacramento
Kiwanis Club*

Because the Cocio-Panchano family speaks minimal English, I asked Alex to interpret for me as we all sat together, got better acquainted, and further each other's stories. What I didn't know was how the conversation would affect me personally. The Cocio-Panchano family opened their hearts and shared how it takes three days from Baja to get to the Kiwanis Family House and treatment for Hector at Shriner's. They can't say enough for the housing and hospitality of the KFH staff as it is "a gift from God." This family's faith in God, just as with Alex's family, is very strong. They thanked me for my spirit and concern.

We joined hands in prayer and shared many hugs. I walked away knowing that this family meeting was no accident. It was meant to be on this day, at this time, in God's time.

In life, we eventually discover that Christmas is more than presents and end-of-the-year celebrations. It's about giving and receiving. Sometimes, being on the receiving end comes in presents wrapped in the lives of individuals that touch our lives in pain and change. May God help us to recognize these gifts when they come, and surely they will come. This moment on December 16th was an early Christmas present and I will always cherish it.

Mattress Replacement in Progress, New Bed Linens Needed

As part of our current campaign to address compelling facility needs at the Kiwanis Family House, we are replacing 80 percent of all of the mattresses in our guest rooms in January. Funding to accomplish this has come from generous people with the Sacramento Bee Book of Dreams and from the Thomas Winn Foundation. We are also grateful to Nick Kirk, a member of the Kiwanis Club of Rocklin and owner of Mattresses by Appointment, for his assistance with the procurement. Once we receive supplemental donations, we will be able to complete the change-out in all rooms.

In conjunction with these replacements, we are soliciting donations of new linens to outfit the new beds. We seek complete sets of white bed sheets, twin-size only. Fitted sheets must accommodate our new mattresses, which measure 12 inches in height. If you or your club would like to help us meet this need, please contact Charles Bussey, KFH Operations Manager, at (916) 736-0116 or cbussey@kiwanisfamilyhouse.org.



Upcoming Events

Join us for the following upcoming events:

- January KFH Board Meeting** January 8
- February KFH Board Meeting** February 12
- Cal-Nev-Ha Mid-Year North** February 28
- March In March** March 21
- Kiwanis One Day K-Family Workday** April 11

January Wish List

The Operations Manager always has a ready Wish List of items that are needed by Kiwanis Family House. These items are usually available at a convenience store or perhaps you might have them in your home. If you feel you can help out with an item, either bring it to Kiwanis Family House or give the Family House a call at 916-736-0116 to arrange a pick-up of the item(s).

JANUARY PRIORITIES

Paper towels, unscented facial tissues, toilet paper, hotel size toiletries (shampoo and soap in particular), Clorox or comparable disinfectant wipes, non-latex disposable gloves (all sizes), bottled water

GUEST NEEDS

- Fitted bed sheets. TWIN Size only. White only. Must fit 12'' deep mattress (We have 51 beds in the House)
- Wash cloths (white only)
- Liquid hand soap

OTHER NEEDS

- Individually wrapped candies for our front desk candy basket

JANUARY 2015						
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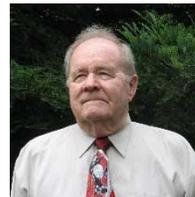
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Our Mission

Our mission is to provide temporary housing and support to families of seriously ill or injured children and adults being treated at UC Davis Medical Center and Shriners Hospitals of Northern California.

Our Vision

Our Vision is to continually provide convenient, restful, secure, and low cost accommodations for the families of patients being treated at the UCD Medical Center or at Shriners Hospital.

Our Values

Our Values are guided by the KIWANIS Service Motto: "Serving the Children of the World".

The KIWANIS FAMILY HOUSE encourages the following core values:

- o A sense of community
- o Dedication to service
- o Respect for families
- o Augmentation of services provided by other organizations

Collaboration with community partners

- o Foster awareness for those in need
- o Generosity

Ways to Help

You can help the Kiwanis Family House by donating or participating in the following programs:

- o Sponsor A Family
- o Become a Friend of the Kiwanis Family House
- o Buy a Brick
- o Purchase a Bright Award
- o Donate a Vehicle
- o Participate in the SaveMart S.H.A.R.E.S. Card Program
- o Donate Wish List Items
- o Become a Sponsor Club
- o Sponsor a Room
- o Volunteer at the Kiwanis Family House
- o And much more!

For information on these opportunities, go to www.kiwanisfamilyhouse.org/how-you-can-help

Kiwanis Family House is a 501(c)3 charitable corporation.



Visit www.kiwanisfamilyhouse.org