



**Kiwaniis**<sup>®</sup>  
CAREFREE

**CLUB CONNECTION**



**KIWANIS CLUB OF CAREFREE NEWSLETTER**

**KIWANISCAREFREE.ORG**

**APRIL 2026**

## A Message from the Communications Committee

Well, we have a lot to be proud of as Kiwanians. Our Marketplace is firing on all cylinders, producing some of the best earnings in our history. Thank you, Alex. And this gives us the opportunity to support our community in unprecedented ways.

John Skarda has put together a program to support foster children who are ageing out of foster care at age 18, and has partnered with Grand Canyon University to enable foster students to attend college with 365 days of room and board, providing a new home (not just for the semester), including a personal life advisor. Kiwanis has funded the first student in this program, and a gracious Kiwanis member has provided matching funds to support a second student in the program. NICE WORK, JOHN.

Biff Miller is coordinating a project with the school district to address the serious MENTAL HEALTH damage being done by social media to our students. Dr. Lisa Strohman's Digital Citizen Academy has developed a protocol to address this issue, and Kiwanis of Carefree is in the process of supporting this effort for every student in the school district. WOW.

And let's not forget the two big winners of the month, Barb Pearse, who won the Southwest District Kachina Award, and Bob Moore, who won the Kiwanis International Geoge F. Hixon Award. CONGRATS. And thank you Mike Poppenwimer for putting together the recent charter day and Celebration of Service luncheon with our past presidents. WELL DONE.

We are also a SOCIAL CLUB, so invite your friends and neighbors to the PANCAKE BREAKFAST so we can expand our membership and our influence in the community.

### April MEETINGS

**Be There!**

**Apr 1** - Leigh Zydonik, Foothills Food Bank

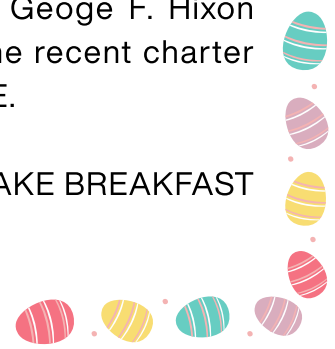
**Apr 8** - No Meeting

**Apr 11** - Pancake Breakfast

**Apr 15** - Harry Minniear, Our Gang

**Apr 22** - Janet Busbee, Scholarship Chairperson

**Apr 29** - Club Business



# Mutton Bustin'

"Mutton Bustin'" is one of the most popular events at the Cave Creek Rodeo, and this year was no exception. Kids aged 4 to 7 and weighing up to 60 pounds can ride the "Woolly Bully" inside the rodeo arena. These helmeted cowpokes are placed atop a sheep in the chute and released into the arena to ride for as long as they can hold on. This event is sponsored by Kiwanis of Carefree, where the kids get a chance for real excitement, get introduced into the rodeo family and gain tremendous self confidence no matter how successful the ride. Participation trophies for everyone.



# Club Social Mixer

Great conversations, plenty of laughter, and the joy of spending time with people who care deeply about our community remind us that Kiwanis is not just a service club, it's a social club too. Next time, invite your friends and come enjoy the fun with us!



# Charter Day & Celebration of Service Luncheon

We were honored to have several of our past presidents in attendance, each sharing meaningful memories and stories that highlighted the heart and history of our club.

Past Presidents in attendance: Bill Mulliniks, Kathy Haugner, Brian Kunkel, David Bell, Bob Swan, Wes Hunsaker, Geno Orrico, Cannon Steven Dart, Mike Poppenwimer, Joyce Jordan, Linda Wright and Cam Kuniej.



# Congratulations!

## AND OUR AWARD WINNERS ARE...

### **BARB PEARSE**

**Southwest District  
Kachina Award**

A SW District honor presented to a Kiwanian who exemplifies outstanding service, meaningful contributions to the community and unwavering dedication to Kiwanis and its mission. The Kachina doll, originating from the Hopi Tribe, has long been used as a teaching tool, helping children understand cultural values, traditions, each spirit, and the importance of community. This symbolism reflects what Kiwanis stands for: guidance, service, respect and a deep commitment to giving back.



### **ROBERT MOORE**

**Kiwanis International  
George F. Hixon Award**

George F. Hixon Fellowship is one of the most prestigious honors a Kiwanian can receive. It is not simply a "thank you" for a single project, but it recognizes a deep and ongoing commitment to the global mission of Kiwanis. Named for Kiwanis International's first president, it honors those who generously contribute their time, talent, and financial support to the Kiwanis Children's Fund, making a lasting impact on children around the world.



# In Case you Missed



**March 4**  
**DR LISA STROHMAN**  
**Digital Citizen Academy**

**50/50**  
**WINNERS**

**NO WINNERS FOR MARCH**

**We draw a winner each week but you must be present to win!!**

**March 11**  
**GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY**

Our friends at Grand Canyon University for sharing the incredible scholarship opportunities they provide for foster youth. We're also grateful to club member John S. for helping lead the way in connecting our club with this meaningful initiative.



## **CAVE CREEK RODEO DAYS PRINCESSES AT THE MARKETPLACE**

It was Community Days at the Marketplace, and we had the pleasure of the Cave Creek Rodeo Days Princess greeting guests and handing out posters.

# In Case you Missed

## SONORAN ARTS LEAGUE VETERANS ART CLASSES

Kiwanis member Jacqui B presents a check to Board Member Nick Mancusi and Studio Coordinator Jules Gallatig of the Sonoran Arts League. The funds are to be used for art supplies and lessons for Veterans and First Responders.



## Big News!

**KIWANIS MARKETPLACE WAS FEATURED ON ABC 15 UPLIFTING ARIZONA**



[CLICK TO WATCH](#)

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# KIWANIS PANCAKE BREAKFAST



*All you  
can eat!*

**SATURDAY  
APRIL 11  
7 am - 12 pm**

Sanderson Lincoln Pavilion  
on Easy Street in Carefree



For the kids

**SCAN FOR TICKETS OR  
PURCHASE AT THE GATE**

**\$10 ADULT  
\$5 CHILDREN**

**KiwanisCarefree.org**



# YOU ARE INVITED

The Kiwanis Club of Carefree  
invites you to attend our:

## ANNUAL NIGHT OF EXCELLENCE

Featuring our  
2026 Scholarship Awards Ceremony

This free event celebrates our 40th anniversary of providing local students with funding to pursue their education, now expanded to include both college and vocational training, an essential part of Arizona's growing economy.

Last year, we funded over \$500,000 in scholarships, and this year we plan on doing the same or more.

Please, put this event on your calendar and help us celebrate these student awardees' accomplishments. You are welcome to bring a guest. Light refreshments will be served.

**MONDAY, MAY 4<sup>TH</sup> AT 6 PM**  
**CACTUS SHADOWS FINE ARTS CENTER**  
34250 N. 60<sup>th</sup> Street | Scottsdale

*Brian Kuntzel*  
President



**Kiwanis**  
CAREFREE

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Darlene Carter  
Brent Downs  
Sherie Eschels  
Brian Kunkel  
Barb Pearse

John Skarda  
Frank Tyrol  
Renaë Watkins  
Kevin Wilson

# Happy Easter



**SEND YOUR PICTURES TO  
COMMUNICATIONS@KIWANISCAREFREE.ORG  
WE WOULD LOVE TO SHARE THEM!**

**GUEST SPEAKERS**

**★ WANTED ★**

**If you know of someone who would  
be a great speaker at a luncheon  
email Darlene Carter!**

**ADMINISTRATION@KIWANISCAREFREE.ORG**



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