



Kiwaniis
CAREFREE

CLUB CONNECTION



KIWANIS CLUB OF CAREFREE NEWSLETTER

KIWANISCAREFREE.ORG

AUGUST 2026

A Message from the President Brian Kunkel

As many of our members return from their summer travels, we're looking forward to another busy and productive season at the Kiwanis Club of Carefree. Our strength has always been the willingness of our members to step up and serve, and I'm pleased to announce that the Board has approved three new committee chair appointments.

Please join me in congratulating:

- Mark Weidhaas as our new Membership Chairman
- Steve Jouflas as our new Set-Up Committee Chairman
- Patty Cashin as our new Loss Prevention Chair

Each of these committees plays an important role in the success of our Club, and all are looking for members who would like to get involved. If you're interested in helping, please reach out to one of our new chairs. Thank you to Mark, Steve, and Patty for taking on these leadership roles, and thank you to all of our members who continue to make a difference through their service.

August MEETINGS

Be There!

August 5 - NO MEETING

**August 12 - Peter Gentala,
Center for AZ Policy**

**August 19 - Colleen Adams,
Desert Storm Robotics**

**August 26 - Chuck Lee,
SkyRanch Airport Manager**



KIWANIS MARKETPLACE COMMITTEE MEMBER OPENING

One of our current members is terming out which will create an available position effective October 1st. We are looking for new talent and fresh ideas to compliment our outstanding team. If you would like to apply, please submit your indication of interest, a brief summary of your professional background, and your Kiwanis volunteering experience to:



**MARKETPLACE
THRIFT STORE**

Administration@kiwaniscarefree.org

Attn: Larry Key, Marketplace Committee Chair



A Celebration!

KIWANIS MARKETPLACE



Twelve years ago, the Kiwanis Marketplace opened its doors with a simple mission: to transform donated treasures into opportunities that improve the lives of children and families in our community. Thanks to the dedication of our volunteers, generous donors, loyal shoppers, and every Kiwanis member who has supported this mission, the Marketplace has grown into one of Arizona's premier nonprofit resale stores and an incredible source of funding for the causes we care about.

To celebrate this milestone, we'll be hosting a week-long anniversary celebration August 18–23, featuring daily sales and special bargains throughout the store. We're also excited to announce that beginning August 2, the Marketplace will be open every Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., giving our community even more opportunities to shop, donate, and support our mission.



As Kiwanians, you know every donation, purchase, and volunteer hour makes a difference. The Marketplace isn't just a thrift store; it's one of the most powerful ways our club serves the Desert Foothills. Thank you for helping build something truly special over the past 12 years. Here's to the next chapter of giving back together!

Thank you!



KIWANIS MARKETPLACE UPDATES

A big thank you to Alex for updating the Kiwanis Marketplace Community Giving Wall to reflect an exciting new milestone: \$12,508,668 returned to our community!

This incredible achievement is a testament to the generosity of everyone who shops, donates, and volunteers at the Marketplace. Together, we've helped fund scholarships, supported local nonprofits, invested in youth, and strengthened the community.

In Case You Missed



SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL HAPPY VALLEY OF THE SUN



Kiwanis Club of Carefree is proud to sponsor Dream It, Be It 5-day summer program in partnership with CCUSD Education and Community Services Department. DIBI empowers young women with the confidence, tools, and mentorship to set goals, overcome obstacles, and build a brighter future.

CONGRATS!!

Anjali, a Kiwanis member and Director of Development at Desert Foothills Library, was the lucky winner of the latest edition of *Veterans Heritage Project: Since You Ask – Veterans Share Their Memories*. The book was presented by Sheryl Bell, a longtime club member, Marketplace volunteer, and a dedicated Chapter 2 Bookstore volunteer for more than 13 years.



DESERT FOOTHILLS LAND TRUST

Kiwanis Club of Carefree is proud to support the next generation of explorers as member Jacqui presents a check to Raena Kamakahi, President and CEO of Desert Foothills Land Trust. This funding will help make Desert Discovery Day possible, where an expected 400 to 500 children will have the opportunity to reconnect with nature, discover the wonders of the Sonoran Desert, and create memories that could inspire a lifelong love of the outdoors.

50/50
WINNER

**NO WINNERS
IN JULY**

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

Southwest District Convention

ALBUQUERQUE - AUGUST 7 • 8 • 9

When Kiwanis SWD Governor Erica Stephens was at our luncheon on June 17th, she was on a marketing roll, telling us all about some changes in the upcoming SWD Convention in Albuquerque, NM, beginning on August 7th.

She shared with us a more casual event, but with more recognition opportunities for SWD chapters to “show off projects” and receive recognition for them. The Communications Committee jumped at the chance and began rounding up such special event projects, beginning with a recognition program of outstanding members who had passed and had served the District as well as our Chapter.

The name of Pete Carpenter immediately came to mind, and a number of photos and an in-depth story on him (in his own handwriting) were submitted. Our chapter had donated some of Pete’s SWD pins to Governor Stephens when she was here.

Other projects submitted are:

1. The Scholarship Awards program, including some of the statistics slides presented by Steve Woods at a recent meeting and photos and a recap from the Scholarship event.
2. A short, but very moving film from Geno on his life before Kiwanis and now and some of the contributions he has made at the Marketplace and other Kiwanis events.
3. The new recruitment piece with the updated contributions by category and showing the \$12,000,000 provided to the local community in the last 8 years.
4. The new program pioneered by John Skada for Foster Kids at GCU.

And a statement from SWD Governor, Erica Stephens, advising our president, Brian Kunkel, that: “I wanted to let you know that your very own member, Dr. Lisa Strohman, will be speaking during one of our sessions at the upcoming Southwest District Convention in Albuquerque, NM. She will be presenting on cyber crimes against families. Her session is titled, “Click with Caution: Building a Future Where Seniors, Parents, and Children are Protected from Harm.”

It is going to be a fantastic and timely lesson for all of us!

Brent Bowles and Bob Moore will be attending the SWD convention and bringing back a lot of photos and hopefully some award recognition of some of our projects.



In Case You Missed

EVERY TEACHER, EVERY STUDENT COMMITTEE

Through our Every Teacher, Every Student Committee, chaired by Darrell Doepke, we presented every teacher with a \$200 Walmart gift card to help offset the out-of-pocket classroom expenses so many educators generously cover each year.





CAREFREE KIWANIS FCAP

Student Success Stories

A newsletter highlighting the achievements of foster youth at Grand Canyon University.



VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 1 • AUGUST 2026



“ I want to be a teacher who makes history come alive and helps students see that they have the power to shape their own future. ”

– ISAAC

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

ISAAC

A Future History Teacher Making a Difference

- ★ First-generation college student at Grand Canyon University pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in History for Secondary Education.
- ★ Works as a substitute teacher in the Phoenix Union High School District, where he creates welcoming, engaging classrooms for students from all backgrounds.
- ★ Serves as an Orientation Leader and mentor in GCU's Fostering Futures program and is Vice President of the Creative Herd student organization.
- ★ Inspired by the power of education, Isaac wants to become a high school history teacher who helps students believe in themselves and reach their full potential.

The Carefree Kiwanis Foster Children Assistance Program is proud to support students like Isaac as they pursue higher education and prepare to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

Congratulations, Isaac! We wish you continued success on your journey.



ABOUT FCAP

The Carefree Kiwanis Foster Children Assistance Program (FCAP) supports students in Grand Canyon University's Fostering Futures program.

- Across Arizona, qualified students who have experienced foster care are eligible to receive state-funded tuition at Arizona's public universities.
- Grand Canyon University's Fostering Futures program is unique. GCU provides room and board 365 days a year, keeping residence halls and dining facilities open during weekends, holidays, and school breaks so students always have a safe place to live and eat.
- The annual cost of room and board at GCU is approximately \$12,825 per student per year.
- Because FCAP has limited funds, FCAP comes alongside GCU to provide room and board to as many students as we have funds to support. GCU then provides room and board to as many additional students as GCU funds will allow.

Together, GCU and Carefree Kiwanis FCAP are helping foster youth earn a college degree and build successful, independent lives.



**A COLLEGE EDUCATION
CAN CHANGE A LIFE.
A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE
MAKES THAT EDUCATION
POSSIBLE.**

Your gift to the Carefree Kiwanis Foster Children Assistance Program (FCAP) helps provide room and board scholarships for foster students attending Grand Canyon University.

**FOR INFORMATION ABOUT FCAP
OR TO MAKE A DONATION:**



John Skarda
FCAP Chair



azjohn1934@gmail.com

**ROOM & BOARD
AT GCU:
\$12,825
PER STUDENT
PER YEAR**



TOGETHER, WE EMPOWER FOSTER YOUTH TO BUILD BRIGHTER FUTURES.

Kiwanis

Kiwanis Marketplace Volunteer

WESTERN HOEDOWN

& Celebration

12
ANNIVERSARY

Monday, August 24



4 pm - 7 pm



at the Marketplace

Dust off 'yer boots and get ready for a hootenanny of a great time we are turning 12! Enjoy entertainment, BBQ, giveaways and whole lot more!

FOOD ★ DRINKS ★ FUN

RSVP By
Aug 14

★★
50% OFF
SHOPPING!
★★

[CLICK TO RSVP](#)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

2nd - Julie Sallee

5th - Glenn Fahringer

7th - Holly Gulley McCrea

15th - Ralph Spurgin

16th - Charles Maranto

22nd - Bob Hesselgesser

23rd - Greg Gardner

25th - Penny Nicholas

25th - Blue Street

27th - John Dionne

27th - Lara Lewis

28th - Biff Miller

31st - Karen Mackiewicz

THE DUSTY Diamond G A L A

Save the Date

OCTOBER 24

5 PM - 8 PM

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



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK
TO SEE MORE!

[@KIWANISCAREFREE](https://www.facebook.com/KIWANISCAREFREE)

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR
EVERYTHING KIWANIS!

KIWANISCAREFREE.ORG