

February 23, 2016  
CHAIR: Bruce Rayce

[www.kiwassee.org](http://www.kiwassee.org)  
INVOCATION: Roger Briggs  
MAILER: Roger Briggs

VOLUME XXXXVIII NO 20  
EDITOR: Martha Briggs  
GREETER: Al Klashak

### CALENDAR

**February 23 (today!):** Items for Whispering Pines due (Susan Love)  
**March 3:** The Rock's spring fundraiser (Doug Snoddy)  
**March 5:** Walk for Warmth, Midland Center for the Arts (Millard Kent or Diane Stevens)  
**March 9:** AKtion Club meeting, 5:30, Midland Public Schools Administration Center  
**April 5:** Big Project proposals due to BOD from Committees  
**April 21:** Top 2 Big Project proposals chosen by BOD.  
**April 26:** Top 2 presented to General Membership, who then vote by ballot  
**May 3:** Winning Big Project announced to General Membership

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Roger Briggs:** The Kiwassee Foundation Board will meet in two weeks (March 8) to consider two funding requests.  
**Dick Jellum:** Community Service meets after today's regular meeting. Sign up to volunteer and/or donate to the Walk for Warmth, March 5, at the Center for the Arts.  
**Susan Love:** Junior Youth meets next week (March 1) at 11:15 (BEFORE the regular meeting).  
**Bill Marklewitz:** Gene Woodward is not feeling well enough to attend meetings and would love to have visitors; he's at Candlestone on Waldo Road. Let's step up our efforts to keep Gene in the Kiwassee loop.  
**Bruce Rayce:** Senior Youth and Junior Youth committees will meet next week (March 1) to hear two project proposals from Renee Castellon, long-time Kiwassee member.  
March 8 is Children's Miracle Network's "International Pancake Day." See Bruce if you're interested in serving pancakes at the IHOP in either Saginaw or Mount Pleasant—it'll be late afternoon or early evening.  
The Nominating Committee is working on a slate for next year's club officers, to be announced April 9.  
Last week's Board of Directors meeting was unusual in that the Board had no funding requests to consider, probably because the committees are hard at work considering possible "Big" and "Little" projects. The Eliminate Project has raised \$107 million to date toward its \$110 million goal; the International Foundation will likely make up the difference. The Board voted to support "Gary's Bridge" at the West Midland Family Center, via Foundation and/or Project Fund monies. The bridge will honor long-time member Gary Kerestes, who passed away in January. He was extensively involved in the design and discussion of the bridge, which will be built this spring. Doug Snoddy provided an update on The Rock's plans to expand its programs to adjacent counties. Mike Cronenberger discussed a "webinar" that focuses on reaching and retaining new members; he explained that the Membership Committee continues to review our club's meal plans to be sure they provide the flexibility members need to remain active in the club.  
The Board approved Bruce's request to establish a "FUN Committee" that will come up with ways to increase the "fun factor" in living up to Kiwanis' motto to "change the world, one child and one community at a time."  
Bruce asked committee chairs to give him the names of committee members willing to take over Roger Briggs' role as the Flag Project team and route coordinator.  
The Board accepted with reluctance Joe Blewitt's resignation and approved the membership application of Alison Maloney.  
The next Board of Directors meeting is at noon, March 17, at Memorial Presbyterian Church.  
Bob Hansen's funeral is tomorrow (Wednesday) at St. John's Lutheran Church. Meet in the lobby at 10:15 to walk in as a group to honor Bob's long-time membership of our club.

**GUESTS:** Mike Cronenberger introduced Patrick McElgunn from the Small Business Development Center and Caleb Guthrie from United Way Agency.

**NEW MEMBER INDUCTION:** Dave Bender inducted new members Carol Anne Guillemette, sponsored by Duane Brooks; and Alison Maloney, sponsored by Bruce Rayce. Carol Anne is a trust officer at Chemical Bank and Alison recently relocated to Midland from Iron Mountain, where she was in the queue for club president!

## **PROGRAM: Midland County Early Childhood Education Center**

Young Children Priority One committee chair Karen Adams introduced Michelle Bahr, Director of Special Education for the Midland County Educational Services Agency (MCESA). Michelle thanked Kiwassee for our continued support and mentioned that her daughters Kirsten and Shannon were active in Key Club at Dow High, and that Kirsten is active in AKtion Club; Kiwassee sponsors both of these service leadership clubs.

Michelle explained that Michigan's services for children and students with special needs are both free and exceptional, prompting families to relocate to the state. Her presentation highlighted several of these services.

The MCESA is one of fifty-six such agencies around the state; it has twenty-six classrooms in seventeen locations throughout Midland County, including the four public school districts, Windover High School, and the Midland Academy. MCESA provides special education services for students in schools that can't serve them, typically because the population of special needs students in those schools is too small. The early-secondary and post-secondary programs address transition needs for secondary students and operate at Sugnet School, and other services imbedded in individual schools facilitate integration of those students with their peers.

MCESA's special education services for pre-school children include early intervention, classroom programs, parent education, and resources for hearing impaired, visually impaired, and autistic students. In addition, the Longview Early Childhood Center brings together under one roof many services and agencies for families with pre-school children, such as the Midland County Great Start Collaborative, the Longview Central Resource Center, WIC, Mid-Michigan Community Action Agency, Head-Start and Early Head Start, and MCESA Early Childhood special education classrooms.

Two collaborations show particular promise: Project Search is a partnership with the Dow Chemical Company. This nationally-recognized initiative prepares students with special needs for employment. The one-year school-to-work program takes place entirely at the workplace, providing total immersion that combines classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training via worksite rotations. The partnership is looking to expand opportunities beyond MidMichigan Health to include other locations.

The Pediatric Center is a partnership between MCESA and Community Mental Health, MidMichigan Health/ University of Michigan, and Central Michigan University. Currently located at Longview, the Pediatric Center offers a range of medical, psychological, and educational services in one location for children with autism and other neurodevelopmental disabilities. A comprehensive treatment plan includes research-based interventions for these children. Ultimately, Michelle would like to add a Pediatric Autism Center to the Longview location.

Michelle closed her presentation with a personal connection: her daughter Kirsten has Turner's Syndrome and first received services at the ESA when she was three years old. Kirsten attended Midland Public Schools, graduating from Dow High School, after which she earned a Bachelor's Degree from Saginaw Valley State University. She interned at Chemical Bank and is currently employed at Stuart Wilson CPA. Michelle showed photos of Kirsten from infancy to adulthood, including one of her in a cap and gown, proudly holding her SVSU diploma.

Michelle explained that Kirsten is the answer to "What's Your Why?" She is the reason Michelle shifted her interest from elementary education to special education eighteen years ago: she is the source of Michelle's empathy for children with special needs and their families, and she fuels Michelle's drive to help them.

**NEXT WEEK:**

**Greeter:** Ron Graunke

**Invocation:** Dick Schochdapole

**Program:** Junior Youth

**Reminder:** Bob Hansen's funeral – St. John's Lutheran Church, 10:30 meet in the lobby at 10:15 to walk together into the service