

## CALENDAR

**Thursday, May 24:** setting up tubes for public installation of flags (Jim Young)

**Friday, May 25:** **LAST DAY TO TURN IN ORDERS AND MONEY FOR KIWANIS ROSES!** Home delivery is Thursday am/pm and Friday am, June 7 & 8. Or you may pick up your roses at the Farmer's Market or 809 Honeysuckle Circle (Kevin Shaunessy's) Thursday am/pm, and at Kevin's Friday am only. Questions? Contact Roger Briggs of the Evening Club at 989-835-8508 (H), 989-859-0825 (C), or [briggs409@aol.com](mailto:briggs409@aol.com).

**Monday, May 28:** Memorial Day Parade. Meet at Larkin/St. Nicholas Sts. at 9:45. (Martha Briggs)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Jim Young:** Help set up the tubes for the public installation of flags this Thursday—see Jim.

**Nancy Stark:** Nancy gave a moving tribute to Jack, thanking members for their support during Jack's illness and in the aftermath of his passing and emphasizing the important role Kiwassee played his life. More than \$1000 has been donated in his name, and Nancy presented cash and checks to President Roger for future recognition and remembrance of Jack.

**Roger Moll:** Saturday's Midland Blooms planting was a soggy success, with eleven Kiwanians, two children, and three grandchildren in attendance...truly a family affair! Remember the Memorial Day Parade Monday, May 28. Meet at 9:30 at the corner of St. Nicholas and Larkin Streets.

### PROGRAM: A Listening Session with Community Leaders—Kiwasssee Kiwanis Club

President Roger Moll introduced Kiwassee member and Division 19 Lieutenant Governor Bruce Rayce, who explained the purpose of today's panel presentation/discussion. While Kiwanis International's commitment to children and youth make it abundantly clear that "we do good things," we want to know: What are the most critical problems currently facing Midland County's youth? How can Kiwanis prevent, reduce, and resolve these problems? To provide insight into these questions, Bruce gathered four local experts on youth: Midland County Sheriff Scott Stephenson, Probate Judge Doreen Allen, Midland Public Schools Superintendent Michael Sharrow, and The ROCK Director Beverlee Wenzel. After each spoke in turn, all responded to questions from the audience which, in addition to Kiwassee members, included several invited guests as well as members of the Midland Kiwanis Club.

All four panel members shared good news: Sheriff Stephenson complimented local service organizations like Kiwassee that do so much for youth, and emphasized the positive effects of the School Resource Officers in each of the Midland high schools, explaining that his department hopes to place such officers in the other three county high schools. Judge Allen noted the 82% decrease in juvenile delinquency in Midland County over the past twenty years, and cited the Legacy Center's data based on 1000+ teens' self-reporting of substance use: in the past ten years, smoking is down from 13% to 6%, use of alcohol down from 26% to 16%, and use of marijuana and opiates down from 8% to 2%. Superintendent Sharrow said students are experiencing the highest quality of education ever as they prepare for success in a fast-paced and competitive world. Executive Director Wenzel praised the "amazing kids" that benefit from The ROCK's programs that help them develop emotionally and physically and acquire the skills and attitudes they need to succeed in an ever-changing world.

That said, several troubling issues emerged from the speakers' remarks.

- difficulties in the home: drug abuse, domestic violence, sexual abuse, inadequate living conditions (heat, water, cleanliness)
- school safety
- mental health issues in both parents and youth
- lack of early intervention and prevention assistance
- lack of parenting skills (nutrition, health, discipline)
- insufficient number of health professionals in schools (1 counselor/700 students, 1 social worker/1000 students, 1/4000 school psychologist)
- lack of resiliency, hope, curiosity, self-confidence in youth (how to learn, set goals, solve problems, self-advocate)

When asked what Kiwanis and Kiwanians can do to address these challenges, all four panel members had lots of ideas:

- support existing social programs and mental health assistance
- advocate for partnerships and collaborative projects between organizations, agencies, communities, counties
- learn more about existing initiatives like "Hope, not Handcuffs," "Handle with Care," "Blueprint for Safety," "Dump Your Drugs," etc.
- CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS AND COMMISSIONERS ABOUT YOUTH-RELATED LEGISLATION! Google "Michigan Legislative Tracker" for useful websites, e.g. [www.legislature.mi.gov/mileg.aspx?page=CategorySearch](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/mileg.aspx?page=CategorySearch).