



Jan Burch, Editor | Article submissions always welcome. | May, 2024



Opening Day

The start of our 2024 SPRING SEASON is right around the corner! That's right—May 11th is opening day. Ceremonies to officially kick off the season will begin at 8:30 AM featuring the ZaGaZig Shrine clowns playing an “exhibition game” with the SE Polk Girls Softball team. Cubby Bear will be making an appearance, too. Come on down for the festivities, then visit the Downtown Farmers Market for some spring veggies and flowers. And come back if your game is scheduled for later in the day.



Buddies Needed

Have a friend or neighbor who might want to be a buddy for our special kids? Be sure and let them know about this unique opportunity. Our goal is to supply a buddy for every player in every game every Saturday. That means we need at least 1,116 buddies! Right now, we have 600 of the 1116 spots filled, or 53%. Plenty of room for more volunteers! For those in high school, this is an opportune way to get Silver Cord hours! Sign up is easy—just go to our KML web site: <https://kiwanismiracleleague.org> and click on VOLUNTEER!



Al Knudsen Memorial Golf Tournament

Plans are well underway for the third annual Al Knudsen Memorial Golf Tournament to be held Friday, June 21, at the Briar Creek Golf Club, in Grimes. Are you a golfer? Please sign up! Not a golfer? Sponsor a hole. Contribute an item to the silent/online auction. Make a donation. This is a MAJOR fundraiser for the Kiwanis Miracle League this year.

Much more information is available on our web site at <https://kiwanismiracleleague.org> or click on the button below for further details including how to register or contribute.

Golf Tournament



KML Sends two families and a board member to 2023 ML ALL STAR WEEKEND

The Miracle League Association's annual ALL STAR WEEKEND was a huge success for players and families from around the country. Held in Palm Beach, FL, this year, our KML sent two player families and a board member. Bob Syroyka and Shawn Corkrean, Marlins coaches, nominated the three Evans players from the Marlins and Will Sales, coach of the Brewers, nominated Corbin Habberger from the Brewers.

Corbin's mom, Bridget, explained the experience:

The 2023 Miracle League All Star Weekend in West Palm Beach, Florida was an absolutely incredible experience for my son, Corbin Habeger and myself. We began our trip early Friday morning, November 3rd, flying out of Des Moines and into West Palm Beach in the late afternoon. We flew back to Des Moines late Monday night, November 6th.

Corbin lived his best baseball life all weekend beginning with getting checked in at the All-Star Celebration at Roger Dean Chevrolet Stadium Friday night. Corbin loved every minute of being at the stadium from using a brand new 2024 Rawlings bat in their batting cage set up by Rawlings, swinging in the lawn swings, checking out the Cardinals spring training dugout, to endless running and taking a break to relax on the field while a live band played in the atrium off left field. Saturday at the All-Star games Corbin loved seeing the therapy ponies and playing ball, especially with his favorite song "Big, Big Plans" playing as he came up to bat and round the bases! Corbin loved all the horse statues and watching the horses at Saturday evening's gala at Wellington Equestrian Center and dancing after dinner. We ended our trip spending time with family and taking a trip to the beach!

We are beyond thankful to Kiwanis Miracle League and his Brewer's coach, Will Sales, for choosing him to partake in the most incredible All-Star Miracle League Baseball weekend that was so memorable and carefully planned for the best experience for all athletes and their families.

The Evans family expressed very similar experiences. For them, as well, it was a 'once-in-a-lifetime' experience.

Rachel McCann, KML board member, represented the Kiwanis Miracle League board of directors and reported back on her experiences, as well as gaining new insights as to how other leagues operate around the country.

The pictures pretty much say it all!



Our Marlins players got to meet Johnny Bench (catcher), Cincinnati Reds All Star and Hall of Famer!



Local All Star Corbin at the Miracle League Associations's annual ALL STAR WEEKEND.



Max, Meilin, and Mia get last minute instructions from their coach at the ALL STAR weekend.

KML Outreach

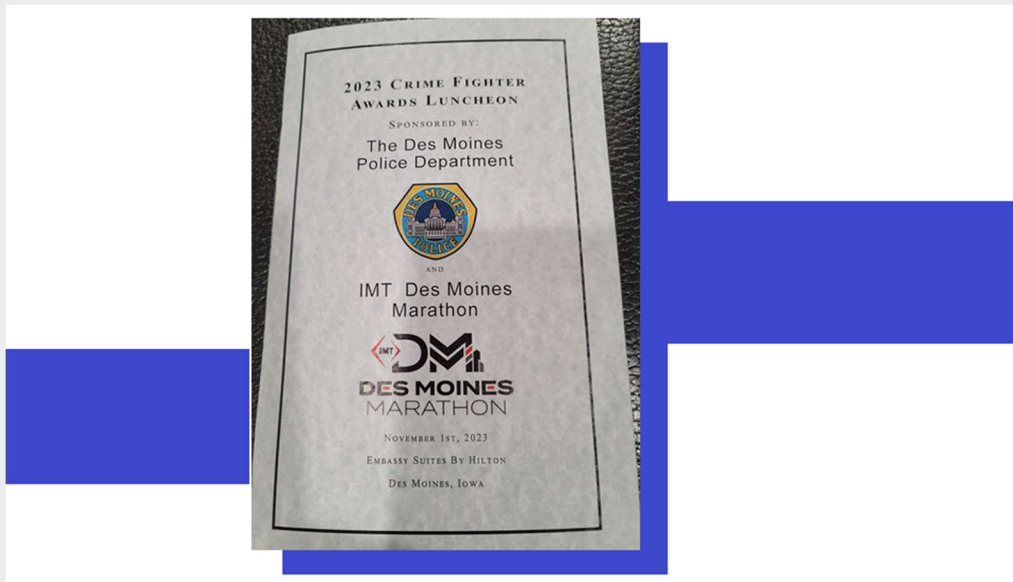
We're always happy to tell the KML story to potential players, donors, volunteers, and really anyone who will listen! We have a great story...and 17 years of fun experiences.

On April 15, we attended the Annual Region 2 Transition Fair at Waukee High School. This gave us an opportunity to "meet and greet" many parents and potential players, many of whom had not heard of our Kiwanis Miracle League! Thanks to Christy Nelson and Carol Towner for helping to spread the good word!

If your school or other organization has similar outreach programs, please let us know!

The KML ballpark is "unwinterized" and ready for play!

Thanks to 19 volunteers, the entire "to do" list was completed the morning of April 27. Banners are hung. Exterior landscaping has been mulched. Interior landscaping, especially weeding, is a work in progress! Restrooms and concessions building are cleaned and ready. THANKS AGAIN TO ALL!



Bob & Jan Award from DMPD

The Des Moines Police Department and IMT Des Moines Marathon annually recognize individuals in the community at their Crime Fighters Award luncheon. It was held this year in early November at the Embassy Suites in downtown Des Moines. Awards were presented in three categories:

1. **CRIME FIGHTER**—for citizens who have assisted police in capturing criminals by either physically stopping the suspect or by giving information leading to an arrest.
2. **HUMANITARIAN**—For citizens who have aided an injured victim or saved or attempted to save a life.
3. **COMMUNITY SERVICE**—For citizens who have been a positive difference in the community.

Jan Burch and Bob Mitchell were recognized in the Community Service category for their volunteer work with the Kiwanis Miracle League, Kiwanis International including local and district endeavors, and literacy improvement in the Des Moines Public Schools.

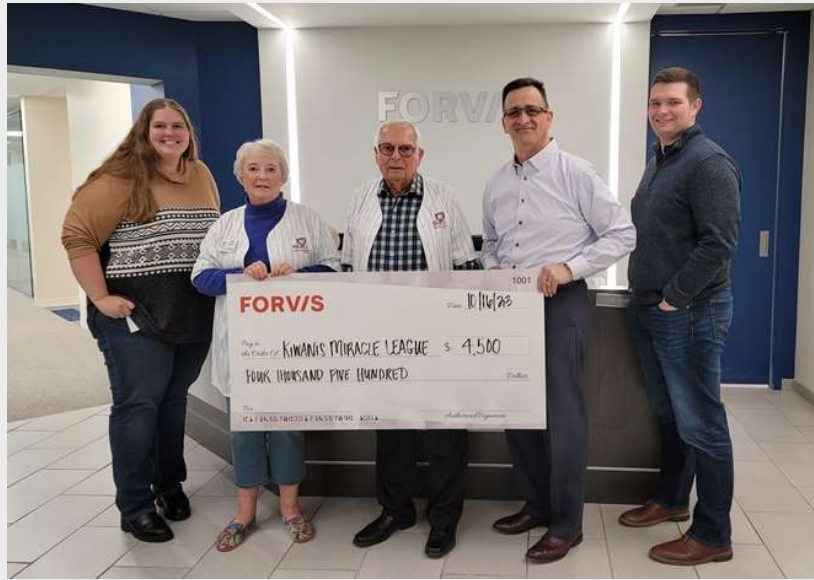
Congratulations to Bob and Jan for this most prestigious recognition!



KML 2024 Special Events

Mark your calendars for our 2024 Spring special events (youth only).

Des Moines Police & Fire Departments will join us for an ALL STAR night on Monday, June 10. The Iowa Barnstormers are looking forward to special times on Tuesday, June 18. Watch for signups and more information.



Our new friends from FORVIS, LLP, surprised us with a very generous and unexpected check in October. FORVIS provides tax, audit, and consulting services to clients across multiple venues.

We Love our KML Donors!

We couldn't do the things that we do, offer games, uniforms, even pizza, without the help of our many donors! Donors might include team sponsorships, "in memory of" contributions, engraved pavers, church groups, grants from various entities around the city, corporations large and small, etc.



The Christ the King Knights of Columbus, long-time Kiwanis Miracle League supporters, presented the organization with another generous check.

Calendar of Events

April 27	Ballpark Clean up, 8:30 – 11:30 AM
May 4	Rain date for ballpark cleanup
May 11	Opening Day of 2024 Spring Season
May 16	KML Board of Directors Meeting
May 18	KML Games (afternoon)
May 25	KML Games All Day
June 1	KML Games All Day
June 8	KML Games All Day
June 10	DMPD/DMFD ALL STAR Night
June 15	KML Games All Day
June 18	The Iowa Barnstormers Night at the ballpark
June 20	KML Board of Directors Meeting
June 22	KML Games All Day
June 29	Last Saturday of Spring Season



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