

RIPON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
2024-2025 Friends of Public Schools Award
Ripon Noon Kiwanis and Early Bird Kiwanis Clubs

The Ripon Noon Kiwanis and the Early Bird Kiwanis Clubs are true Friends of Education. The Ripon Kiwanis Club was first founded in 1924 and grew so large it split in the 1970's into the two clubs today. Local Kiwanis Clubs are part of a larger international organization that takes on large-scale challenges such as fighting disease and poverty. Local clubs such as those in Ripon, live out the club motto "Serving the Children of the World." by focusing on local needs and issues. For more than a century, Kiwanis has created opportunities for children in Ripon to be curious, safe and healthy regardless of the community in which they live believing when you give a child the chance to learn, experience, dream, grow, succeed and thrive, great things can happen.

While both the Ripon Noon Kiwanis Club and Early Bird Kiwanis Club live out the motto of serving the children of the world, each club sponsors different events throughout the year. Ripon Noon Kiwanis is known for supporting the Riggs County Park Splash Pad; scholarships to local high school students; the Kiwanis Park and Northernwestern Trail; the Toy Lending Library at the public library; and the Childrens' Fair and Clothing Swap. Fundraisers include an annual pancake breakfast during Septemberfest.

Members of the Ripon Early Bird Kiwanis Club volunteer for many activities impacting children in our area by providing the annual Easter Bunny Hop with goodie bags and books and scholarships to local high school students, as well as sponsoring events such as the Cast It Forward Fishing Tournament. The Ripon Early Bird Kiwanis brought together nearly 30 community sponsors to support their 31st-annual golf outing at the Golf Courses of Lawsonia. The four-person scramble featured hole prizes followed by a dinner with raffle prizes and a silent auction.

Recently Ripon Kiwanis Clubs partnered to raise funds to build an ADA-compliant all-inclusive playground with 43 features for children ages 5 to 12 years old. A joint service project of the Ripon Early Bird and Ripon Noon Kiwanis Clubs, in collaboration with Fond du Lac County, the playground was built at Riggs Park, adjacent to the Kiwanis Splash Pad. The playground which opened in July 2024, provides a safe place for children to play from sunrise to sunset.

Ripon is very fortunate to have the support of Ripon Noon Kiwanis and Ripon Early Bird Kiwanis. These two service clubs found a way to use their sense of community to care for children. Many thanks.