



KIWANEWS

WISCONSIN-UPPER MICHIGAN KIWANIS DISTRICT

DECEMBER 2025/JANUARY 2026

REMEMBERING WI-UM GOVERNOR & KI PRESIDENT CASE VAN KLEEF

Submitted by 2020-2021 WI-UM Kiwanis District Governor Jean Long Manteufel

Past Kiwanis International President Case Van Kleef, a beloved leader from our district, passed away on November 30th, 2025. Highlights of his obituary and tributes from three Kiwanians who hold him dearly in their hearts follow:

Born in 1933, in Poeldijk, the Netherlands, Case grew up in a family of eight during World War II. The hardships of his youth inspired his lifelong commitment to helping others. He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Susan; two daughters, and four grandchildren.

While in college, he worked at Kasteel in Wassenaar where he served presidents and kings. After two years as a medic in the Dutch Army, he joined Holland America cruise line, which brought him to New York. Captivated by America, he immigrated in 1956 and worked as a director of food and beverage at Cobo Hall Convention Center in Detroit.

On January 24th, 1965, Case catered dinner for Kiwanis International's 50th Anniversary. Inspired by the event, he joined Kiwanis the next day, a decision that would change his life.

His career then took him to Chicago, where he met Susan, his future wife.

In 1983, Sentry Insurance World Headquarters recruited Case to create a five-star dining experience in Stevens Point. He and Susan later opened The Cottage in Plover. He also started the Plover Kiwanis Club. His leadership continued as the 1995-1996 WI-UM District Governor and the 2004-2005 Kiwanis International President.



Susan and Case Van Kleef

Case was a two-term president of the WI-UM Kiwanis District Foundation, which later created the Case Van Kleef Fellowship in his honor. A Van Kleef Fellowship permanently honors an individual who has dedicated outstanding time or service to Kiwanis.

Retiring to Bonita Springs, Florida, he joined Northside Naples Kiwanis. Case was always the first to sign up for a volunteer opportunity, even the week before he passed.

Case always saw the good in everyone, leaving a legacy of service and friendship wherever he went.

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CONSIDER THE KIWANIS EXPERIENCE FROM A BROADER PERSPECTIVE

Submitted by 2025-2026 WI-UM Kiwanis District Governor Paul Shrode



Paul Shrode

Let's face it. Our clubs have found meaningful and significant ways to meet a variety of needs in each of the communities we serve. **Our members have taken our mission to heart and most certainly represent Kiwanis in the cities and towns where we exist.** We enjoy the fellowship of

the members of our club, use programs at our meetings to become better informed about the work being done where we live and the needs and concerns of our neighbors.

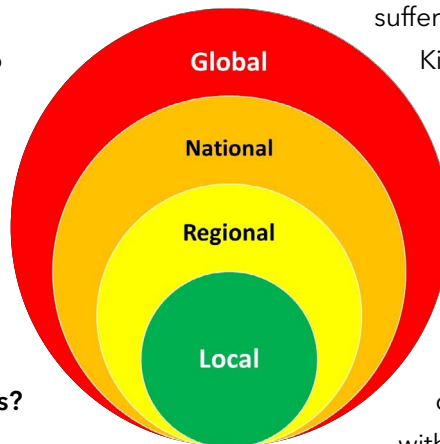
Our Kiwanis experience centers around service projects, fundraisers, social activities, club and committee meetings. For the vast majority of members, Kiwanis is synonymous with our club. It is too easy to forget – or at least put out of our minds – the reality that there are many Kiwanis clubs, some nearby and others around our district. Indeed, our name, Kiwanis International, reflects a much broader outreach and perspective. **Yet how often do we consider that broader perspective in our daily service as Kiwanians?**

Last year, just six of our clubs in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan earned the Round Robin award for having a few members visit other clubs at least ten times during the year. Interclub activity was once a fun way to make new friends, gather ideas from other clubs that could be replicated or turned into great projects locally, and better understand the needs and concerns of the broader area. Often, these visits turned into collaborative projects to address some of those needs on a broader level. **When was the last time your club undertook an interclub and attended a meeting, pitched in on a service project, or helped with a fundraiser?**

Each year, our divisions hold caucuses, division council meetings, social gatherings and other activities for the

clubs within the division. Our district holds midyear conferences and an annual convention. All of these gatherings provide an opportunity for members to understand Kiwanis beyond the bounds of our club and community, to meet others dedicated to service through Kiwanis, to gain some enthusiasm for what we do and bring back new ideas.

Along the way, we may also gain a better appreciation for what Kiwanis can mean regionally and globally. We bring in resource people from International to make presentations and offer leadership training so each club (and ideally each individual member) can get the most out of Kiwanis and all of its programs and resources.



Our Sponsored Leadership Program (SLP) groups suffer from too little interaction with our Kiwanis clubs, so much so that in many Key Clubs, their members don't really know that they are affiliated with Kiwanis and don't fully understand what we do in our service organization beyond the school setting. They hold meetings, service projects, fundraisers, district conventions and social activities both within their areas and on a district level.

I can tell you from first-hand experience, the opportunity to work with these young people is both enriching and highly rewarding. **If they are to be our future, they need to understand and appreciate who we are, what we do, and perhaps most importantly why we undertake our mission of service.**

For many of you reading this it may seem like I'm stating the obvious, but for all too many Kiwanis members, those with whom we sit meeting after meeting, often in the same seats, considering the Kiwanis experience on a broader level just doesn't enter the conversation. **I challenge you and your club to take a risk and visit the clubs in your area. Send representatives to division**

...Continued on page three



WANTED: STRONG, DEDICATED AND CARING LEADERS TO HELP US GROW

*Submitted by 2025-2026 WI-UM
Kiwanis District Governor Paul Shrode*

Ever wonder how a new club forms and gets off the ground? Believe it or not, there is as much science to the process as there is art and just plain luck!

✓ We are actively looking to support our existing clubs, all too many of which have diminished in size through the years for a variety of reasons, some of which are finding it difficult to recruit and retain members.

✓ We are also looking to add some new clubs to our family in order to serve under-served areas of our district. That's why we need you!

✓ We are looking for energetic and willing Kiwanians throughout our district to assist our existing clubs through some coaching and mentoring, or to help in the process of building new clubs.

✓ We are looking for club strengthening coaches, club building coaches, and new club building helpers. While experience in Kiwanis is helpful, training is available to bring any willing person up to speed.

There are many tools in our resource kit and lots of support and help from both district and international leadership to make this a great experience for the volunteer and those being helped. If you are interested in helping, or know of a fellow Kiwanian whom you would like to nominate, please contact Joanne Horner, Membership and Engagement chair at teamhorner@mindspring.com or Paul Shrode, Governor, at psshrode@aol.com or 920-809-2872.

Consider the Kiwanis Experience from a Broader Perspective...continued from page two

and district meetings, conferences and conventions.

Consider sending delegates to the International convention where you can only come away with a new appreciation for the rich diversity of our organization. Invite your SLP groups to join you in your work, help them with their work, partner with another Kiwanis club on a project. See if you can gain at least one new and exciting idea to implement in your club.

This is the Year of the Family in Wisconsin-Upper Michigan and like any extended family, we reflect a broad range of talents, ideas, opinions, and ways of serving. **I hope that for you and your club, it may be time to "get out of the house and go visiting the relatives."** Like any such visit, you are likely to come away proud of the good work you do and enriched by the opportunity to find common ground with new friends.

Remembering WI-UM Governor & KI President Case Van Kleef...continued from page one



Case and Susan were always willing to put on a silly costume if it furthered the Kiwanis mission!



Susan and Case cooked for many Kiwanis fundraisers through the years.

Case and I began our district journey together, often sharing a hotel room for board meetings. We had many late-night conversations – and built a lasting friendship. When Case ran for International Vice-president, we had a cardboard case we gave away that said, “A Strong Case for Case.” Case was a long shot to win coming from such a small district. After the first vote, it was narrowed down to two candidates and they both got a chance to speak again. When it was Case’s turn to speak, he tried to tell a joke about how life is like a roll of toilet paper. But he got it wrong and everyone laughed, and Case laughed at himself. That is what got him the votes needed to win. Case leaves a legacy of friendship, inspiration, and service in our District. – Mark Finger, WI-UM Kiwanis District Executive Director (1994-2020)

Case was a steadfast supporter of WIUM District, attending our events whenever possible. Every time he spoke, it felt like a warm blanket enveloping the room. As my mentor since my Circle K year as governor, he



Case’s enthusiasm for the Kiwanis mission and vision was inspirational.

encouraged me and celebrated my achievements. One memory I will hold dear forever is when he presented me with a Van Kleef Fellow. – Justin Hahn, WI-UM Kiwanis District Executive Director

Knowing Case was an honor. He was one of the most dedicated Kiwanis members, instantly befriending everyone he met. Kiwanis, as a global organization, has lost an icon and friend to all. – Tom Rigden, Appleton-Fox Cities Kiwanis and Northside Naples Kiwanis

Heaven has welcomed Case. Right now, he is likely founding the first Kiwanis Club of Heaven.

GOVERNOR-ELECT CHALLENGES US TO BUILD, NURTURE AND RETAIN

Submitted by Rebecca Mattson, 2025-2026 WI-UM Kiwanis District Governor-elect



Becky Mattson

Kiwanis International has a core strategy for membership growth. It focuses on **building** new clubs and members, **nurturing** existing ones, and **retaining** members. It is designed as an ongoing initiative to make membership growth and club opening an integral part of Kiwanis culture – by combining

ongoing recruitment efforts with realistic goals. This year's district goal is to open three new clubs. Next year's goal is set at five new clubs.

How does the district leadership play a part in growing our membership through opening new clubs? What responsibilities do club members have in this form of membership growth?

Building new clubs: Kiwanis International is asking each Kiwanis district to set a club opening goal each year. The purpose of opening new clubs is twofold. First, to ensure more kids receive the service and mentorship that Kiwanians provide. Second, Kiwanis clubs are organized according to the needs of the community – so, if there's a need in a community, there's a need for Kiwanis.

The governor and governor-elect are being asked to spend 70% of their time working with teams in their divisions to build new clubs, while lieutenant governors are asked to focus 30% of their time on building new clubs. Each new club that opens needs a sponsoring club or clubs to provide support.

One district club opening in progress is in Division 12, led by lieutenant governor LaVone Sneen. River Falls has been identified as a community which needs a Kiwanis club; it is co-sponsored by the New Richmond Kiwanis Club, the Kiwanis Club of Eau Claire, and the Clear Water Kiwanis Club.

District Club Coaches: New Richmond President Michele Wood is co-coaching the new club with former Division

12 lieutenant governor Rebecca Mattson. It takes support from the club, the division, and the district levels to make chartering a new club happen. Lieutenant governor La Vone Sneen is a member of one of the sponsoring clubs, and the co-coaches are members of the other two sponsoring clubs. **Teamwork** is the name of the game. The sponsoring club members, along with the lieutenant governor, support and nurture the new Kiwanis club for at least the first year. Visit Kiwanis.org to learn more about club opening.

Governor Paul Shrode is working on another club opening with the help of past district governor Jean Long Manteufel in Fox Crossing. Jean is leading a strong team of volunteers and will be on the ground in that area in February. We wish them success!

How can your club get involved in the **Build** goal set for our district? If your club has a large membership with confident leadership, we hope you will be interested in sponsoring a new club in your area. Do you have a suggestion for a community that would benefit from a Kiwanis club? Are you willing to team with leadership from your area and the district to open a new club? Please contact your division lieutenant governor, me, or governor Paul Shrode to assist our district in meeting, or better yet, surpassing our club **Build** goal.

We'd love to hear about your club's suggestions on where to open a new Kiwanis club in your area. Training is provided with assistance from Kiwanis International, our KI Club Opening Specialist Angie Dudit, and the district membership and engagement team. There are many benefits to sponsoring a new club.

Stay tuned in the future to learn more about **Nurturing** existing clubs and **Retaining** members. Feel free to reach out to me if your club would like me to personally visit your club to discuss the **Build. Nurture. Retain** initiative.

2025-2026 District Governor-elect Rebecca Mattson can be reached at 218-461-0220 or rmattson711@gmail.com.

JOIN US FOR A DISTRICT MIDYEAR CONFERENCE IN MARCH OR APRIL

Submitted by Executive Director Justin Hahn

Remember to register for our midyear conferences taking place in Wisconsin Dells at the high school on March 28th and in Escanaba at Bay College on April 25th.

These conferences are a one-day event packed with education, training, recognition and fun! Take part in learning how you can strengthen your club and take part in celebrating the accomplishments of your club in the 2024-2025 Kiwanis year.

The full schedule will be posted on our district website soon. Catering is due 10 days before, so the deadline for Wisconsin Dells is March 18th and the deadline for Escanaba is April 15th. [You must register online!](#)



DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN ALL OUR CLUBS PUBLISHED NEWSLETTERS?

Submitted by 2025-2026 WI-UM Kiwanis District Governor Paul Shrode

Years ago, each of our clubs produced newsletters to keep our members informed. They served as a source of communication, documented our good work in Kiwanis, alerted members to upcoming projects and meetings, and provided a lasting historical record of the people, events and contributions we made to the communities we served.

The responsibility to communicate and to know what is going on has shifted from the club's leaders to the individual members as each of us is expected to seek out and keep track of service projects, club and committee meetings and commitments. With the advent of digital technology, web sites, social media, text and instant messaging, many of our newsletters have become a thing of the past. But not for everyone!



A number of clubs have been kind enough to add me to their e-newsletter distribution list and I must confess that their efforts produce some excellent newsletters! These pieces provide an excellent way to inform others, including club members, sponsored leadership program groups, prospective members and others in the community.

I appreciate their outstanding work and would like to recognize it in some meaningful way going forward. If your club produces some form of newsletter, please include your lieutenant governor, our executive director Justin Hahn and me on your distribution list. Our contact information can be found in each issue of *Kiwanews* and on the district website.

2025-2026 WI-UM Kiwanis District Governor Paul Shrode can be reached at 920-809-2872 or psshrode@aol.com.

#KIDSNEEDKIWANIS

THERE'S MAGIC IN INVITING A FRIEND TO JOIN YOU IN DOING SERVICE

Submitted by 2025-2026 Immediate Past Governor Kathy Durner



Kathy Durner

Happy New Year WI-UM Kiwanians! You have had a few weeks to rest after the holidays; now you are ready to move forward to energize and grow your clubs. It is an exciting time when you can look back at last year, evaluate your strengths and weaknesses, and move forward

with new goals and ideas.

It's time to look at your Kiwanis club through new lenses. Like seeing things in a new light when you purchase new glasses with a new prescription. Your everyday life looks clear and you become more excited about new options.

We are three months into the Kiwanis year. This is the time of the year when we need to utilize our new glasses and decide which view or direction we need to concentrate on. Do we need to adjust our goals, modify our directions' or evaluate our attitudes?

So, what is your New Year's Resolution for you, your club, your division, or your district? Your new goal doesn't have to be grand. It can be several small goals that feed into a larger one. It can start with a simple greeting, a smile, an invitation to participate in a small service project, or a small Kiwanis gathering.

Hopefully, one of your holiday gifts included a welcoming attitude and a big smile. With your holiday

gifts in hand, what is a realistic approach that you can take to engage a potential new member or re-energize a member who needs a little holiday spirit to get re-energized? Give these ideas a try:

- Do you greet folks with a simple hello?
- Do you have time for a cup of coffee/hot chocolate?
- I am making food boxes for local families, would you like to help?
- Would you help me deliver boxes of food to needy families this weekend?
- I am visiting an all-inclusive playground. Would you like to join me?
- I am volunteering at an "All Inclusive Children's Play Day". Would you like to help paint rocks, play in the sand, or serve brats, chips, and sodas?
- Would you like to help with our upcoming pancake breakfast?
- Would you like to join me at a Kiwanis meeting where we will be making Valentine cards with elementary students for senior citizens?



You have probably heard many of these suggestions before, but they may stimulate your creative juices and make a move to help grow your club. Wouldn't it be cool if you could be part of growing your club by two, five, seven, or even ten members? Our district will be more awesome when you take part in our growth. Take the next step and smile!

"I HAVE FOUND THAT AMONG OTHER BENEFITS, CHARITY LIBERATES THE SOUL OF THE GIVERS"

– Maya Angelou



NOMINATIONS FOR SOLBERG DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL SOUGHT

Submitted by 2020-2021 WI-UM Kiwanis District Governor Jean Long Manteufel

Do you have a very special Kiwanian in your club? Someone who has dedicated many years to Kiwanis service? Someone who has served Kiwanis beyond your club? Please consider recognizing them for all the things they have done.

Submit them for consideration for the prestigious Bill Solberg Distinguished Service Medal. This award is selected by the past district governors from your submitted applications.

The first requirement is that the nominee has been a Kiwanian for at least ten years. They must have served the WI-UM district at least as a lieutenant governor or district chairperson. Beyond that, service to your club and your community are weighed in. Tell us what they have done for your club, your community and for the district.

Does one of your members come to mind? Submit them! If you submitted your club member previously, you certainly can submit them again. There is only one award



Past District Governor Rogers Krogstad, left, and Kathy Durner, right, congratulate Dale Vannes (Ashwaubenon Kiwanis) for receiving the Bill Solberg Distinguished Service Award in August 2025.

given and there are often several applications. Don't be discouraged. Resubmit. The deadline is May 15th, so get started filling out the form now.

[Here is a link to the form](#) so you can read the rest of the requirements and nominate that special someone.

KIWANIS 'N COPS 'N KIDS STARTS READING AT NEW BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

Submitted by 2020-2021 WI-UM Kiwanis District Governor Jean Long Manteufel



Neenah police officer Joe Benoit read "What if You had Animal Hair!?" by Sandra Markle to children at the new Boys & Girls Club in Neenah.

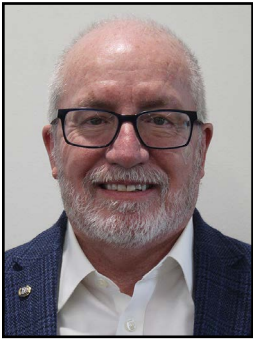
The new Neenah Boys & Girls Club requested to be part of the Kiwanis 'n Cops 'n Kids reading program – and the Appleton-Fox Cities Kiwanis Club was happy to oblige.

In December, Neenah police officer Joe Benoit read "What if You had Animal Hair!?" By Sandra Markle. They learned that a reindeer has as many as 5,000 outer hairs per square inch of skin, keeping it warm and helping it float in the water. They also laughed as he shared that a healthy zebra's mane stands up straight while a sick zebra's mane flops to the side.

For several years, Appleton-Fox Cities Kiwanis has held monthly readings at the Appleton Boys & Girls Club with the Appleton police, as well as monthly readings at the Menasha Boys & Girls Club with the Menasha Police. Club members look forward to reading in Neenah!

SUGGESTIONS TO ENHANCE GROWTH & THE MEMBERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Submitted by Alan Arbuckle, WI-UM Kiwanis District Master Club Coach



Alan Arbuckle

Kiwanis needs your help. **Every year we lose too many members and don't bring in enough new ones.** It's not just this district – all North American districts are losing members. One of the prime directives of any organization has to be continuing to exist. Every club lost is service halting for an entire community. It's up to all of us to help. Consider these five suggestions:

1 Every community has people that will volunteer for service that they are passionate about.

We need to find them and

reach out to them. We need to locate people that have volunteered for kids' sports, schools, Scouts, community events, or any other service. **New retirees or folks near retirement age are looking for a new purpose in life.**

This is different than the idea that we should only be looking for young people. Older people are generally dependable and won't be leaving because of a new job. New members on average leave Kiwanis in about five years. Many older people have five years (or more) of service left in them.

2 **How many of us have asked family about Kiwanis?** We have kids, maybe grandkids, siblings, or cousins that are good candidates.

Maybe there are grandkids or nephews and nieces that are service-minded. I keep hearing that "They are so busy". The Internet and Netflix will still be there, later. The amount of time most people waste being "busy" is incredible. Being a great role model to kids by doing service is more important than living on a screen.

3 **Having meetings that are friendly, productive, and fun is so important.** Building relationships within the club has the benefit of keeping members. Having a real agenda that is focused on the club's purpose is one way to keep members engaged. Does your club meet at a convenient time for most members? Do you keep members that can't attend informed about what is

going on? How is the club keeping in contact with those seldom-seen members?

4 **Is your club affordable to all members and prospective members?** Collecting dues all at once is not affordable to many people. Sixty percent of people are living paycheck to paycheck. If the dues are broken up into payments, it really is best for many people. Think about people of a fixed income. Many retirees have told me they can't swing one big dues payment and don't join or have resigned.



(Inside secret) If club dues are paid by the end of March, Kiwanis doesn't penalize a club. If your club still has meetings with meals, are there no-meal or lower-cost options? Membership costs a lot, especially if you attend conventions.

5 Reminder: Kiwanis is a 501(c)4

organization. **Unless your club has a 501(c)3 Foundation, funds raised for the club can be used to lower club dues.** Insurance costs are a legitimate expense for having projects and can even be taken out of foundation funds (check with a CPA). Some clubs have a fundraiser dedicated to their administrative fund. Another idea is having a fundraiser that states that a percentage of funds raised go to service. 90% is a common amount.

We can do better on building membership and I am confident we will.

Master Club Coach Alan Arbuckle can be reached at 719-502-7853 or leadcoach@wiumkiwanis.org.

SUPPORT THE DISTRICT FOUNDATION WITH A CASE VAN KLEEF AWARD

By Tonya Alling, Kiwanews Editor

The Case Van Kleeef Fellowship award is the WI-UM Kiwanis District’s highest honor. Named for former District Governor and International Past President Case Van Kleeef, the award is given to an individual in whose name a donation of \$1,000 is given to the WI-UM Kiwanis District Foundation (KDF).

Proceeds from Van Kleeef awards support the foundation’s endowment fund, which generates funds for grants and scholarships. Can you think of a club member or friend who is deserving of a Van Kleeef Fellowship? Would you like to honor Case’s legacy by funding your own award? If so, please contact KDF Secretary Mark Finger at 920-361-9954 or markfingerkdf@wiumkiwanis.org.



Case Van Kleeef himself presented a Van Kleeef Fellowship Award to Tonya Alling at the district convention in 2011.

DISTRICT FOUNDATION OFFERS CLUB AND SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS

Submitted by Mark Finger, WI-UM Kiwanis District Foundation Secretary/Treasurer



Every year, the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Kiwanis District Foundation gives out club grants and matching scholarship grants. If you are interested in applying for a club grant or a matching scholarship grant, contact KDF Secretary/Treasurer Mark Finger for more information. The deadline for applications is March 31st.

RAFFLE BASKETS REQUESTED TO BENEFIT THE KDF

The Kiwanis District Foundation appreciates basket donations for raffle fundraisers at midyear conferences. All proceeds help provide scholarships and assistance for local club projects! Thousands of dollars have been raised during midyear conferences and district conventions and the KDF is truly grateful. Our clubs and individual members make this happen. Thank you.



UPCOMING KIWANIS EVENTS

To be determined	Circle K District Convention, Sheraton, Brookfield, Wisconsin
March 6th-8th, 2026	Key Club District Convention, Blue Harbor Resort, Sheboygan, Wisconsin
March 28th, 2026	WI-UM Midyear Conference, Wisconsin Dells High School, Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin
April 25th, 2026	WI-UM Midyear Conference, Bay College, Escanaba, Michigan
May 9th, 9 am to 2 pm	Kiwanis Workday at Camp Wawbeek, Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin
June 24-27, 2026	Kiwanis International Convention, Manila, Philippines
August 2026	WI-UM District Convention, Brookfield, Wisconsin
September 2026	Key Leader, Camp Wawbeek, Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin



Members of the Burlington Kiwanis Club were aided by Key Club members in walking the route of the 2025 Burlington Christmas Parade.

BURLINGTON KIWANIS SPONSOR 43RD ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARADE

Submitted by Michelle Mays, Kiwanis Club of Burlington

The Magic of Christmas was celebrated in Burlington, Wisconsin, and the Kiwanis club was a proud sponsor of the event, which took place on December 5th.

With a theme of "Lights, Camera, Christmas!" the parade celebrated the joy of the season through the magic of our favorite holiday movies. From timeless classics to modern favorites, the evening was filled with festive scenes, music, and community spirit.

The parade also presented an opportunity to advertise the club's fundraiser of guessing when a car will sink through the ice. A clock located inside the car stops when it drops below the surface of the water, and this time is used as the official sink time. If two or more people tie for the official sink time, they will split the first and second place prize money equally. If the car sinks before March 1st, the fundraiser becomes a 50/50 raffle.





Students from the Wisconsin Dells High School Key Club and the Mauston High School Key Club, along with their faculty advisors who are members of the Wisconsin Dells Kiwanis Club, recently met for an interclub.

DELLS KIWANIS HOSTS INTERCLUB WITH BOTH SPONSORED KEY CLUBS

Submitted by Randall Durner, Kiwanis Club of Wisconsin Dells

The Kiwanis Club of Wisconsin Dells recently hosted an interclub gathering with six members of the Mauston High School Key Club and three members of the Wisconsin Dells High School Key Club. The students attended the Kiwanis meeting with their faculty advisors who are members of the Wisconsin Dells Kiwanis Club. The club sponsors both Key Club programs.

Club President Randall Durner thanked the students for taking time to attend the meeting and congratulated them on their community service work.

He acknowledged the Mauston High School Key Club's recent leadership role in promoting a competitive in-school food drive to assist the Mauston Area Food Pantry. That effort provided about 15% of the pantry's goal.

Wisconsin Dells High School Key Club members also actively participate in the holiday market held at the high school just prior to the holidays. Both Key Club advisors, Emily Behn and Molly Carlson, were recognized for their outstanding service and mentorship to the Key Club members each advises.

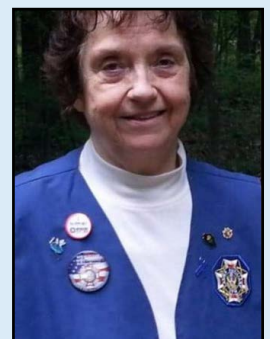
IN MEMORIAM: GERALDINE "GERRY" POTTER

Submitted by Randall Durner, Kiwanis Club of Wisconsin Dells

Geraldine "Gerry" Potter passed away on Thanksgiving Day. She was a wife, mother, grandmother, respected special education teacher, active member of the VFW Auxiliary, community leader, member and two-time past president of the Wisconsin Dells Kiwanis Club.

The Kiwanis Club of Wisconsin Dells had recently honored Gerry with a Legion of Honor Award,

presented to her by WI-UM Kiwanis District Governor Paul Shrode for her 35 years of service to the club and the community. She was thrilled to receive the award and it was prominently displayed at her memorial service.



Gerry Potter

RIPON NOON KIWANIS CLUB MEMBERS HOST 'BREAKFAST WITH ELVES'

Submitted by Brian Reilly, Ripon Noon Kiwanis Club

On Saturday, December 6th, as part of Ripon's Dickens of a Christmas festival, the Ripon Noon Kiwanis Club held its first "Breakfast with Elves" pancake breakfast. The breakfast was a great success, with an estimated attendance of 425 people, which included approximately 125 children under the age of 10 who ate free!

The Ripon Noon club served up fresh pancakes, sausage, eggs and hot cocoa to hungry patrons. The club partnered with Knuth Brewing Company and the Ripon Public Library; the event was held in Knuth's event hall, and the library provided activities and items from its romper room to engage the kids, overseen by Ripon youth librarian and Noon Kiwanian, Linda DeCramer.

Theatre students from the Ripon middle school and high school dressed as elves, interacting with the children in attendance and providing them with opportunities to get "selfies with the elfies". And in a last minute surprise arranged by the Kiwanis club, Santa Clause arrived for the kids to visit with!



Service, camaraderie and fun went hand-in-hand at the breakfast.



Middle- and High School-aged elves interacted with kids at the event.



The jolly old elf posed for pictures with young and old alike.

KDF OFFICERS & DIVISION REPS

President

Jim Burmeister 608-429-2905
burmji@gmail.com Portage

Vice President

Roger Krogstad 715-207-2720
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Secretary/Treasurer

Mark Finger 920-229-2571
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Immediate Past President

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Melissa Loebach 224-730-1558
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Division 2/Term: 2024-2027

Jim Buskel 262-391-8494
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Division 3/Term: 2024-2027

Larry Koziol 262-338-1996
larrykoziol@gmail.com West Bend, Early Risers

Division 4/Term: 2023-2026

Open

Division 5/Term: 2023-2026

Todd Liebergen 920-393-0300
tmliebergen@gmail.com Appleton

Division 6/Term: 2025-2028

Randall Durner 608-356-2915
radforester08@gmail.com Wisconsin Dells

Division 7/Term: 2024-2027

Glenda Lee 608-615-0066
glendalee01@centurytel.net La Crosse

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KIWANEWS SCHEDULE

October/November November 15 Deadline

December/January January 15 Deadline

February/March March 15 Deadline

April/May May 15 Deadline

June/July July 15 Deadline

August/September September 15 Deadline

KIWANEWS

Volume 102, No. 2



Kiwanews is published six times each year in November, January, March, May, July and September by the WI-UM District of Kiwanis International, 1641 Fox River Parkway, Waukesha, WI 53189.

**ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A
DIFFERENCE, AND EVERY
PERSON SHOULD TRY.**

– John F. Kennedy





KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL HOSTS CONVENTION IN MANILA, PHILIPPINES

Reprinted from the Kiwanis International website

In 2026, we're gathering in Manila, Philippines, June 24th-27th, for an unforgettable cultural experience as we discover new ways to serve kids, grow membership, evolve as leaders and more

Register by February 2nd to get the best price

Member registration through Feb. 2nd	\$409
Late member registration Feb. 3rd-Apr. 13th. . . .	\$509
Non-member guest	\$199/\$299
Under 18 years of age	\$109

The registration fee covers attendance at both the Kiwanis International convention and the Asia-Pacific Region convention. Lunches on Thursday and Friday are also included in the registration price.

To attend the 2026 Kiwanis International Convention, you must register by April 13th. To register, [log in to your Kiwanis Engage account at this link](#).

Lei Wang, the first Asian woman to complete the Explorer's Grand Slam – climbing the highest peak on each continent and skiing to the North and South Poles is the **keynote speaker**. Wang is an executive coach who guides high-achieving leaders and their teams to breakthrough insights and tangible, transformative growth.

Manila is filled with history, culture and memories ready to be made. [These three articles](#) will help you plan your travel, see the city during the convention and find further adventures if you extend your stay.

The Marriott Hotel Manila will be the venue for all meetings, events and education. However, a range of hotel options are available within walkable distance. All designated hotels are conveniently located close to the [Ninoy Aquino International Airport](#). **Reserve hotel rooms as early as you can.** We expect some of the hotels to sell out before the April 13th registration deadline.