

KIWANEWS

WISCONSIN-UPPER MICHIGAN KIWANIS DISTRICT

APRIL/MAY 2026



The YMCA and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Fond du Lac recently shared a \$25,000 donation from the Fond du Lac Noon Kiwanis Club.

FOND DU LAC KIWANIANS DONATE \$50,000 TO YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

Submitted by Kathy Strong Langolf, Fond du Lac Noon Kiwanis Club

The Fond du Lac Noon Kiwanis Club works hard year-round to raise funds to make a tangible, meaningful difference to children in the Fond du Lac area.

Members were pleased to be able to see their hard work come to fruition when the club recently donated \$50,000 to three youth-focused organizations in Fond du Lac.

Fond du Lac Noon Kiwanis has been a supporter of the YMCA's Learn-to-Swim program since its inception in 1927. For the past 99 years, the Kiwanis club and the Fond du Lac Family YMCA have been offering free swimming lessons and water safety for youngsters.

The Boys & Girls Club of Fond du Lac provides creative, educational and fun after school and summer programs for youth ages 6-18. The group-based programs are rooted in three core program areas: academic success, character and leadership development, and healthy lifestyles. The club provides support programs to all types of children and families in the Fond du Lac area.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters (BBBS) believes that when Littles (youth ages 6-18) are matched with Bigs (mentors), confidence grows, skills take shape, well-being improves, and new possibilities open up. For families, schools, and community partners, BBBS is more than a program – it's a trusted partner strengthening Fond du Lac County from the inside out.

It's easy to see why the Fond du Lac Noon Kiwanis Club supports these youth-centered organizations!



Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Fond du Lac received a \$25,000 donation from members of the Fond du Lac Noon Kiwanis Club.

MEMBER RETENTION: A KEY TO SUSTAINED KIWANIS CLUB SUCCESS

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



Paul Shrode

Membership remains a singular challenge to Kiwanis and really to all service clubs, organizations and mission-driven groups. It is especially challenging to attract younger members. As I tour the district and visit with clubs, I continue to be delighted and amazed by the vitality,

commitment and creativity of our clubs regardless of size, average age or size of community.

I think we would all like to welcome some new members and we instinctively know we would benefit from the fresh perspectives, new ideas and energy of younger ones. Recruiting new members is certainly important as is opening new clubs, but equally important is retaining our current members. Retention is too often taken for granted.

Our district loses an average of 250 members each year. Some are due to changes in life circumstances and are certainly understandable. Other good and dedicated Kiwanians lose interest in our work, or may become disengaged or distant and eventually question whether their membership is fulfilling their needs. It is more difficult to recruit new members than retain our current ones, so why not consider paying greater attention to the experience of our members?

There are several cues to consider – signs that may indicate a potential loss of a member. Attendance at meetings and service projects is one indicator. Those who rarely attend or miss several meetings in a row, who don't sign up for service projects or participate in fundraisers, or who don't really connect with other members when they do show up, may be feeling some distance from the club.

As a member ages, he or she may begin to feel like they no longer have the energy or resources to contribute.

Members who are passed over for leadership positions or who do not volunteer to serve on committees or planning groups for club projects could be another sign. Don't lose heart however; retention is not a mystery and a club can undertake several things to improve retention.

- An annual club assessment can help identify concerns, what members like and what changes they might suggest. **It is important to identify those who don't respond.** They need a more personal conversation from a caring club officer or member.
- If a member misses a few meetings uncharacteristically, reach out and let them know you missed them. After all, if a member is absent and feels like nobody notices, he or she may wonder if anyone cares.



- Look at the range of service options available to members. Determine whether each member finds something of interest among them and if not, seek new ideas or areas of interest that would result in their participation. Don't be afraid to drop worn out projects and try new things. This sort of vitality not only rejuvenates a club and energizes members, but is also an attractive feature to prospective members.
- Club meetings are usually informative and fun. They are necessary to make sure everyone is on the same page. How do you make sure those who are not present are

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WISCONSIN UPPER MICHIGAN

FAMILY GAME NIGHT

KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

DISTRICT CONVENTION
AUGUST 14-16, 2026
BROOKFIELD, WI

WIUMKIWANIS.ORG/DCON

REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR THE WI-UM KIWANIS DISTRICT CONVENTION

Submitted by Justin Hahn, WI-UM Kiwanis District Executive Director

The theme of this year's WI-UM district convention is **Family Game Night**. The August 14th-16th event will be held at the Sheraton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel, 2375 S. Moorland Rd., Brookfield, Wisconsin.

The deadline to secure the Kiwanis Room Rate of \$139 is July 20, 2026. Plan to gather for an unforgettable weekend filled with Kiwanis fun, education, celebrations, fundraising and conducting district business. **Book your hotel reservations** [at the Sheraton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel here](#).



Friday Kiwanis Family Day at the Zoo (12–5pm with a catered meal at 3:30pm. Price of \$50* includes parking, ticket, and catered meal in picnic group area. Classic Tailgate Menu: angus all-beef burgers and all-beef hot dogs served with potato salad, coleslaw, drinks, chips and cookies. *If you are a Zoo member, the price per person is \$30. [Register online](#) no later than July 20, 2026.

Saturday Family Program (9:30 am–2:30 pm) will feature bowling at Bluemound Bowl, batting cages and mini golf at Prairieville Park, and shopping and restaurants at The Corners of Brookfield. The cost of \$10 per person offsets the shuttle expense. All activities are pay as you go. [Register online](#) no later than July 20, 2026.

We can't wait to see you!

Informative and fun workshops, team-building skills sessions, awards presentations, club leadership education, Miracle Minute, KDF basket raffle, fabulous breakfast, lunch and dinner selections, camaraderie and laughs await you in Brookfield. [Register online](#) no later than July 20, 2026.

2026 DISTRICT RAFFLE: 30 DAYS. 30 CHANCES. ONE POWERFUL IMPACT.

Submitted by Peter Duesterbeck, Division 9 Lieutenant Governor

We're excited to bring back the district raffle, featuring a lineup of prizes awarded over 30 consecutive days. This fundraiser provides important non-dues revenue to help support district operations and offset expenses – reducing the need for future dues increases. Each ticket is just \$10 and gives you one entry on each of the 30 days from July 17th through August 15th. That's 30 chances to win! Purchase as many tickets as you'd like to increase your odds. Prizes will be available for pick-up at the district convention in Brookfield, August 14th-16th.

We need your help in providing prizes for the daily winners. Some examples of last year's goodies included handbags, gift cards, wine, grocery packages, Lego sets and registration and hotel packages for the 2026 midyear conferences. The district is seeking prizes with a value of around \$100 and the prizes can literally be anything. **To submit a prize, [please fill out the online form at this link](#).** Individuals, clubs, and businesses will be



WISCONSIN UPPER MICHIGAN KIWANIS

2026 DISTRICT RAFFLE

30 DAYS. 30 CHANCES. ONE POWERFUL IMPACT.

We're excited to bring back our District Raffle - your chance to win big while supporting District operations! Each ticket is just \$10 and gives you one entry every day for a chance to win a special daily prize. The more tickets you purchase, the more chances you have to win! Winners will be drawn daily throughout the raffle period. Prizes may be picked up at the District Convention, August 14-16 in Brookfield. Any prizes not claimed at the convention will be delivered or shipped to the winners.

JULY 17 - AUG 15, 2026 DAILY WINNERS

ANYONE, ANYWHERE CAN WIN

WATCH OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR DAILY WINNER ANNOUNCEMENTS

HERE ARE JUST SOME OF LAST YEAR'S PRIZES:

- DCON 2026 MEAL PACKAGE
- DCON 2026 HOTEL COMP
- WOLLERSHEIM WINERY
- MIDYEAR 2026 REGISTRATION COMP X2
- KWIK TRIP
- amazon

recognized for their donations during the raffle period. [Raffle tickets may be purchased online at this link.](#)

Member Retention: A Key to Sustained Success...continued from page two

kept in the loop? Communication and connection are essential purposes of meetings, but they do not always provide the opportunity for members to get to know one another better. Club social activities, interactive games and projects, and member introductions or reintroductions are important! Consider the plight of a new member who is introduced to the club upon joining. How does that new member get to know more seasoned members?

- An orientation to the club is essential for new members. How often do we "orient" existing members, review the features of our club website or social media, share the successes of our projects and activities with those members who could not participate? Celebrating successes and engaging all members as fully as possible is essential to retention.

Perhaps the most difficult part of retention is the exit interview. When someone decides to leave, we need

to bring some closure. We need to thank them for their contributions, show appreciation for their service, wish them well and leave the door open for them to return when circumstances allow.

Provide them with the greatest gift they can leave us: open, honest feedback. Without their input and the benefit of their personal experience with Kiwanis, our clubs cannot make the changes we need in order to grow stronger and more beneficial, not only to the communities we serve but to our own members.

Don't let the hard work of recruiting new members be diminished by the loss of seasoned members. Replacing those who leave us is certainly important, but it is no substitution for growth. Let's all work to retain the members of our family.

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

BUILD. NURTURE. RETAIN. REPEAT. BUILD. NURTURE. RETAIN. REPEAT.

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



Becky Mattson

It is hard to believe that eight months of the 2025-2026 Kiwanis year have passed. It is time to reflect on our progress and celebrate our club's growth, which can inspire pride and motivate continued efforts.

Focus on Club Openings

BUILD: the District's goal for this year is to open three new clubs. One successful club opened in Fox Crossing, with their charter celebration held on Tuesday, May 12th. A second new club is gaining momentum (16 paid members) and is much closer to the finish line in River Falls. Their organizational meeting will be held on Thursday, May 28th, at the River Falls Public Library. Current members are starting to recruit additional members through their enthusiasm. Then we will have a Charter celebration to plan. They hope to reach 30 charter members by then.

WI-UM dreams BIG! Do you have a suggestion for Governor Paul Shrode's third club opening? Our Club Opening Specialist, Angie Dudit, is ready to join us on the ground in person for the next club build. Our district is appreciative of the support we receive from Kiwanis International as we move closer to meeting our goal.

NURTURE: The strongest Kiwanis clubs have a culture that emphasizes membership growth and retention. Kiwanis

International's Club Toolbox is available to everyone. Has your club been recruiting new members through Two for Two or by using the ACE tools? Are you marketing your club using your properly-branded Kiwanis logo? My club has a tablecloth with the logo screaming out, "Kiwanis is here! Kids need Kiwanis! We are here to make a difference."

BUILD. NURTURE. RETAIN.

Have you been inviting guests to your club meetings and service projects, and following up with past speakers to gauge their interest in joining your club?

If you have been busy with one or more of these strategies to help nurture your club, then you are ready to focus on retaining your club members throughout the rest of this year and into 2026-2027.

RETAIN: It means we need to focus on ways to consciously keep club members coming back. We need to challenge our clubs to create experiences that encourage member retention. The club president cannot

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OFFICIAL CALL: WI-UM DISTRICT CONVENTION • SHERATON MILWAUKEE BROOKFIELD HOTEL • AUGUST 14TH-16TH, 2026

Article VI, Section 3 of the Bylaws of the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan District of Kiwanis International requires the Executive Director to notify each charter club an official call to the Annual Convention at least sixty days prior to the date of the same.

Your attention is invited to District Bylaw Article 13 Section 1 regarding bylaw amendments to be considered by the House of Delegates at the Annual Convention.

"Proposed amendments, which shall be submitted only by a club in good standing or by the District Board of Trustees, shall be received by the Executive Director at least sixty days prior to the date of the convention. The Executive Director shall send a copy of all proposed amendments to the secretary of each chartered club not less than thirty days prior to the date of the convention." Therefore, any proposed amendments must be post-marked to the district office by Wednesday, July 15, 2026.



THE KIWANIS CLUB OF FOX CROSSING — CHARTERED MAY 12, 2026

Sponsored by the Appleton-Fox Cities Kiwanis Club, our district welcomed a new club on May 12th – The Kiwanis Club of Fox Crossing. President Aidan Mather, left, accepts the Charter document from Governor Paul Shrode.

Build. Nurture. Retain. ...continued from page five

do it alone. Each club needs an elected or appointed membership chair to support a rewarding member experience. And every club member should be a membership advocate.

Have you developed any good habits that will help you retain your members? My club just lost a member because they weren't feeling **ENGAGED**. I had an exit conversation with them, trying to troubleshoot the situation, but it was too late. They had already taken matters into their own hands to fulfill their need to serve in the community, without a connection to our club.

We need club members to stay connected and feel valued. Are you holding regular meetings, club events, and developing interpersonal relationships? Using the "Membership Satisfaction" tool might be what you need to strengthen those bonds and foster loyalty.

Other things to consider are:

- **Member support.** Do you have a system that makes it easy for you to contact members via phone or text – or to send a card if they miss a meeting or two?

- **Public relations committee involvement.** Social media formats that allow you to post photos or events can fill your members with pride.
- **Social events.** Getting together for fellowship allows your club members to learn more about each other.
- **Conflict resolution.** Regardless of what happens during a meeting, service is about unity for the sake of the kids and communities.
- **Display your Kiwanis pride.** Show it with banners at events, on social media pages, on recruitment flyers, and at club meetings.

Visit **ENGAGE** (members) under retention for the list of **10 THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT RETENTION**. It is a good place for club leaders to start.

In closing, remember that a District Leader's key job is to **BUILD** clubs. Division leaders are asked to **NURTURE** new and existing clubs. And Club leaders are to focus on keeping members coming back for more (**RETAIN**).

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



Collaboration in action! Members from neighboring Kiwanis clubs exchange best practices, build connections, and discover fresh ideas during a recent Divisional Council Meeting.

LEARNING, LEADING, AND GROWING TOGETHER: WHY DCMS MATTER

Submitted by Peter Duesterbeck, Division 9 Lieutenant Governor

In the coming months, many of our Lieutenant Governors will be working to organize Divisional Council Meetings (DCMs) for clubs throughout the Wisconsin-Upper Michigan Kiwanis District.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, these gatherings were a regular and valuable part of Kiwanis life, providing opportunities for clubs to connect, share ideas, and learn from one another.

Remember, Kiwanis is much more than an individual club – it is a network of dedicated volunteers working together to improve the lives of children and strengthen communities. A DCM offers one of the best opportunities to experience that larger connection.

Members from neighboring clubs come together to exchange successful service projects, fundraising ideas, membership strategies, and best practices. Club leaders also receive updates on district initiatives and learn about resources available to help their clubs thrive.

Like many service organizations, Kiwanis clubs face challenges such as recruiting and retaining members, developing new leaders, supporting fundraising efforts, and keeping members actively engaged. Many clubs are also seeking ways to attract younger volunteers while adapting to changing expectations about service and participation. The encouraging news is that these challenges are not unique to any one club. Across our division and district, Kiwanians are finding creative solutions and achieving success.

DCMs provide a forum to ask questions, seek advice, brainstorm new ideas, and discover what is working in other communities. Just as importantly, they help build friendships and partnerships that can lead to future collaborations and stronger clubs.

Whether you are a longtime Kiwanian or a new member, attending a DCM can provide fresh ideas, renewed enthusiasm, and a stronger connection to the Kiwanis mission of serving children and communities.

UPCOMING KIWANIS EVENTS

- June 24th-27th, 2026 Kiwanis International Convention, Manila, Philippines
- August 14th-16th, 2026 WI-UM District Convention, Brookfield, Wisconsin



Alan Arbuckle

A PRACTICAL, MEASURABLE, ACTION-FOCUSED GROWTH STRATEGY — PART TWO

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

What follows is part two of a straightforward, business-oriented growth strategy for a Kiwanis club – practical, measurable, and focused on execution. Not every idea will work with every club, but something will work for every club. Part one can be found on page six of the February/March Kiwanews edition on the [WI-UM website](#).

6 Build Strategic Partnerships

- a. Stop trying to grow alone.
- b. Form formal relationships with:
 - School districts and libraries
 - Park districts
 - Chamber of Commerce (attend meetings)
 - Local employers
 - Churches (Youth Minister is a good prospect)

The goal: "Kiwanis becomes the default service organization for people who care about kids."

7 Modernize the Meeting Format (Non-Negotiable for Growth)

- a. Offer:
 - 60-minute max option
 - Hybrid or alternate meeting times
 - Project-based participation for busy professionals

You don't lose tradition – you gain relevance.

8 Leadership Pipeline

- a. Clubs shrink when the same people do everything.
- b. You need:
 - A three-year leadership track
 - Defined roles with term limits
 - A new member on a committee within 30 days

Engagement drives retention.

9 Use a Simple Marketing Message

- a. Not: "We meet Tuesdays at noon..."

Instead say something more like:

"We build the future for kids in (our community).

Join us for one project and see the impact."

10 Quarterly Growth Review (Like a Business)

- a. Every 90 days review:
 - Membership numbers
 - Event return of Investment in time and money
 - Guest conversions
 - Member engagement
 - Exit interview of members that leave
- b. Then adjust.

What Growth Looks Like in Three Years If Executed:

- a. Year One:
 - Stabilize culture
 - +10-20 members (A couple of new members is realistic for a small club)
- b. Year Two:
 - Recognized in community
 - Strong partnerships
 - Younger member inflow
- c. Year Three:
 - Waiting list for membership
 - Multiple sponsored youth programs
 - Financially strong
 - Leadership depth

The Hard Truth

Kiwanis clubs don't decline because:

- People don't care

They decline because:

- The experience is outdated
- Projects are not meaningful to members
- No one owns recruitment
- The values of the club aren't clearly communicated

Fix those and growth is more predictable.

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

KIWANIS WILL THRIVE WHEN YOU VOLUNTEER FOR A LEADERSHIP ROLE

Submitted by 2024-2025 Governor Kathy Durner



Kathy Durner

Welcome to spring! Spring offers an opportunity to take on a Kiwanis leadership role. The district and Kiwanis International will continue to grow and thrive only when we all stretch our opportunities and step into a leadership position.

It sounds scary. Many days it truly is. However, may I suggest that you volunteer for a club officer, division or district position? Yes, it means stepping out of your comfort zone, growing in your knowledge of Kiwanis, traveling, and meeting extraordinary people at the local, division, district or international level.

You don't have to be a master of all things Kiwanis. What you do need is a **heart** for Kiwanis and the **spirit of adventure** to meet amazing Kiwanians while participating in creative, fun, heartfelt and meaningful projects. There are inspiring Kiwanians who are willing to mentor you, to help you succeed in your new position. Many of our senior Kiwanians are hoping that newer or younger members will shadow senior members in order to move WI-UM Kiwanis forward to future generations.

Kiwanians at all levels are eager and willing to guide and redirect you to help you through the most exciting year of your life. The memories you will make are priceless.

Spring is an exciting time of the year! Our communities are blooming with stunning flowers, green grass, fields with sprouting corn, potatoes, beans and hay. It is also the time for Kiwanians to grow and bloom. This is the perfect time to grow your club. As our communities come alive through nature, so Kiwanians need to come alive through a growth in our membership.

What is your plan to grow your club membership? Have you invited the parents of your scholarship recipients to join your club? Have you considered hosting a membership drive? Have you participated in a local

"Senior Fair?" Have you considered acknowledging your local teachers, aides, counselors, nurses, secretaries, maintenance team or cafeteria staff with notes of appreciation during Teacher Appreciation Week?

Have you invited any district staff to join Kiwanis? Have you asked for a representative from a local business, city administration, the YMCA or YWCA? Have you asked a neighbor to join you in one of your service projects?

Have you personally asked someone that you admire to visit your club or help with a service project? I realize that Kiwanis offers many materials to support your journey in club building. Have you taken advantage of the materials and suggestions provided by Kiwanis?



Have you ever attended a Senior Fair; worked at a children's fair; visited an all-ability playground? Showing up at these events could spark interest in community members to join Kiwanis. Sometimes, we need to be reminded of the information that is right at our finger tips. Once you have reviewed your Kiwanis files, is there anyone that you may have overlooked or recognized a name of someone whose life situation has changed and may now have more time available? Invite them! There is always room for new members to join your Kiwanis club!

Immediate Past Governor Kathy Durner can be reached at 814-331-2240 or kathydurner1949@gmail.com.



The Fond du Lac Blue Line Hockey Team was honored to receive a \$6,000 donation from the Fond du Lac Lakeside Evening Kiwanis Club.

FISH FRY PROCEEDS SUPPORT FOND DU LAC BLUE LINE HOCKEY TEAM

Submitted by Kathy Strong Langolf, Immediate Past Division 9 Lieutenant Governor

The Lakeside Evening Kiwanis presented a check in the amount of \$6,000 to the Blue Line Hockey team on March 21, 2026. The hockey players, family and friends are instrumental in assisting the Kiwanis club at their largest fundraiser of the year in June during the Walleye Weekend Festival.

Walleye Weekend, a three-day fishing and music festival held in early June, is the main fundraiser for many service organizations in Fond du Lac, which then give the proceeds back to area non-profits and community organizations. The Kiwanis club serves walleye dinners and sandwiches at the event.

PAST KIWANIS PRESIDENT HONORED WITH CANFIELD HISTORY AWARD

Submitted by Randall Durner, Wisconsin Dells Kiwanis Club

Jean Brew, 2005-2007 Wisconsin Dells Kiwanis Club president, was honored by the Sauk County Historical Society on April 14, 2026 in Baraboo. Jean was the recipient of the 2026 William H. Canfield History Award, in honor of her passion for history as exemplified by Sauk County's first historian, William Canfield. Mr. Canfield was a surveyor by profession and conducted the first surveys and accurate mapping of Sauk County, Wisconsin.

Jean was part of a founding group who organized the Dells Country Historical Society, which was created to save the historic Bowman House in Wisconsin Dells. She served as the society's president, vice-president and program committee chair. Jean remains an active member of the Wisconsin Dells Kiwanis Club and serves as vice president. Congratulations, Jean!



Jean Brew was honored with the William Canfield History Award in June.

DO YOU EVER WONDER IF A SERVICE PROJECT MAKES A DIFFERENCE?

Submitted by Randall Durner, Wisconsin Dells Kiwanis Club

The Wisconsin Dells Kiwanis Club has been providing local senior citizens with fruit baskets prior to the winter holidays since the early 1950s. The point is to remind them that they are not forgotten and to spread some joy and happiness during the holiday season. It is a low cost, medium to high return service project per basket.

How do we know if it makes a difference? Sure, we get a few thank you cards. But this response came to our club nearly four months later, dated April 20, 2026, and we found it both touching and significant. It told us clearly that yes, this service project really did make a difference.

"To all the wonderful folks in the Wisconsin Dells Kiwanis Club. When you get to be my age, time is fluid and flows rapidly. Sometimes details, and even the best intentions dissolve for a while. I recently discovered this card and 'Best Wishes for a Blessed Christmas Holiday Season' greeting in a small stack of papers. I remembered clearly



your delivery of the gorgeous shimmery red bag filled with fruit. Bananas – soft yellow and pale green elongated curves. Pears – firm, matte yellow, juicy, rounded wavy forms. Apples – smooth, shiny, red orbs-both sweet and tart. Oranges – perfect textured globes of deep orange. And, from a children's book, 'glowing with goodness from within.'

They ripened at perfect intervals, so, my enjoyment was prolonged. Meanwhile, they posed as a still life that never came to fruition. Ha! Instead, they brought me happy memories of a childhood apple orchard, white blossom clouds of our front yard pear trees, the fresh smell of citrus.

Oranges shine like jewels when sliced. Bananas to use in my favorite rolled oats cookie recipe! So here is my late thank you note. Your generosity is noted more than you think. Never forget you are instruments of happiness to many." – Sincerely, Elizabeth Rose

Yes, we truly did make a difference! To me, this was another Kiwanis moment!

WIS. DELLS KIWANIAN RECEIVES WMTV'S 2026 CRYSTAL APPLE AWARD

Submitted by Randall Durner, Wisconsin Dells Kiwanis Club

Wisconsin Dells High School mathematics teacher, Emily Behn, was one of five recipients of Madison television channel WMTV-15's 2026 Crystal Apple Award, recognizing her for teaching excellence, drive and inspiration. She has been the Key Club faculty advisor for the last fifteen years at the high school.

WMTV-15 anchor, Leigh Mills, presented the Crystal Apple Award to Behn at an assembly at Wisconsin Dells High School recently. Mills indicated that it was rare that a high school math instructor is nominated for the award. [Streaming video](#) displays Behn instructing students in her classroom. Part of the feature showed Behn with members of the Key Club. She is an exceptional teacher who genuinely cares about her students' success.



District Award Recipients Announced at Midyear Conferences...continued from page 10



Executive Director Justin Hahn has a little fun during the secretary training workshop at the Midyear Conference.

- Division 5 Tom Lindow (Madison East)
Paul Aspinwall (Madison West)
- Division 7 Reinhard Mueller (Sparta)
- Division 9 John Cooper (Fabulous Fond du Lac)
Kathy Strong Langolf (Fond du Lac)
Karen Schneider (Oshkosh)
Ryan Albers (Oshkosh Mid-Morning)
Richard Scamehorn (Ripon)
Jeff Nett (Wautoma Area)
Donna Hoffman (Wild Rose)
- Division 10 Sue Hipple (Appleton)
Jay Stephany (Appleton Fox Cities)
..... Carl Sutter (Grand Chute)
..... Ben Gunderson (Green Bay)
- Division 12 Tiffany Goetz (Eau Claire)
..... Jeff Byron (New Richmond)
- Division 14 Ken Struble (Alger County)
Melissa Bonifas-Ness (Escanaba)
Collin Lake (Marquette)

Financial Viability Award

- Division 1 Jon Wanasek (Burlington)
Ken Miller (Mukwonago)
Phillip Wade (Western Kenosha)
Carri Johnson (Westosha Salem)
- Division 3 Cara Hilzley (West Bend Early Risers)
- Division 5 Larry Ryan (Madison East)
Randy Grobe (Madison West)
- Division 7 Suzanne Hoffman (Sparta)
- Division 9 Michele Haensgen (Fond du Lac)
Glen Pollack (Oshkosh)
Shawn Dockry (Oshkosh Mid-Morning)
Helga Ridders (Ripon)
Jeff Stahl (Wautoma Area)

- Karen Reynolds (Wild Rose)
- Division 10 Jean Long Mantuefel (Appleton)
John Day (Appleton)
Wayne Peters (Grand Chute)
Pat Olejniczak (Green Bay)
- Division 12 Dennis Johnson (Eau Claire)
Marie Gremore (New Richmond)
- Division 14 Arlene Swanberg (Alger County)
Mike Markwell (Escanaba)
Carl Gordon (Marquette)

Kiwanis District Foundation Cornerstone Clubs

- Division 1 Burlington; West Racine; Western Kenosha
- Division 2 Elm Grove Golden K; Waukesha
- Division 3 Menomonee Falls; Milwaukee
Northshore Milwaukee; West Bend Early Risers
- Division 4 Janesville/Blackhawk Golden K
Whitewater Breakfast
- Division 5 Downtown Madison; Madison West
- Division 6 Cambria; Markesan; Portage; Reedsburg;
Wisconsin Dells
- Division 7 Dodgeville; La Crosse; Mineral Point;
Platteville; Richland Center; Sparta
- Division 8 Chilton; Greater Sheboygan; Manitowoc;
Manitowoc Golden K; Port Washington
- Division 9 Fabulous Fond Du Lac; Fond du Lac
Fond du Lac Lakeside; Oshkosh; Ripon Noon;
Ripon Early Birds; Wild Rose
- Division 10 Appleton; Appleton-Fox Cities;
Ashwaubenon; Darboy; Green Bay; Little Chute
- Division 11 Marshfield
- Division 12 Barron; Blue Hills; Eau Claire
- Division 14 Alger County; Escanaba; Gladstone;
Greater Ishpeming-Pioneer; Ishpeming; Manistique Area

Congratulations to all of our dedicated recipients! [More information about the WI-UM Kiwanis District awards and recognition program can be found online.](#)

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Division 7/Term: 2024-2027

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ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE, AND EVERY PERSON SHOULD TRY.
 – John F. Kennedy

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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. 4



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.

LYNN MESSER NAMED FAMILY GOLF WEEK AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR

Excerpts reprinted from familygolfweek.com, written by Cassie Froese

The Family Golf Week Ambassador of the Year Award recognizes a participant who goes above and beyond in supporting their communities through charitable work, nonprofit involvement, and causes that make a lasting impact on the lives of others. Lynn Messer was named the inaugural recipient of the Family Golf Week Ambassador of the Year Award on May 21, 2026.

Lynn – the 2012-2013 WI-UM Kiwanis District Governor – launched the Kiwanis Autism Project, the now-signature project of the Kiwanis district. Since its creation, the project has provided more than 1,815 iPads to children on the autism spectrum, raised more than \$800,000, and changed countless lives through communication, learning, and support opportunities for children on the autism spectrum.

“Lynn and his son, John, have been part of Family Golf Week for years; we are proud to recognize the incredible impact Lynn has made far beyond the golf course,” said Family Golf Week representative Cassie Froese. “It was incredibly special to surprise Lynn and hear more about the inspiration behind this amazing project,” she added. Watch a sneak peek into Lynn’s story on [YouTube](#).



2012-2013 District Governor Lynn Messer, left, is the inaugural recipient of the Family Golf Week Ambassador of the Year Award.

Lynn is planning to speak during Family Golf Night in mid-July where attendees will have the opportunity to hear more about the Kiwanis Autism Project and the lives it continues to impact.

YOUTH PROTECTION TRAINING IS ESSENTIAL (& REQUIRED) IN KIWANIS

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

In order to provide the safest environment for the young people we serve in Kiwanis and be faithful to our insurance expectations, each Kiwanis club is required to hold a training session for members annually. Kiwanis International provides excellent resources to share with club members on the KI website.

A power point presentation can be tailored to the specific needs of the club and form the basis for a meeting program. Club secretaries should report the completion of this training by checking the box on Kiwanis Engage located in the section for Service Leadership Programs on the club menu.

In a recent review, very few clubs had checked off completion; when asked at the midyear conferences by a show of hands, the majority of club officers and members present reported not having done the training this year.

It is never too late! Please schedule a training session for your club and record your completion. The training is informative and will most likely stimulate some thinking among your members and better inform your planning for activities involving youth. Thank you for your help!

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