

Minnekotan

MINNESOTA
DAKOTAS DISTRICT
◆

March 2024



A message from the Secretary Treasurer

Welcome to the new format for the Minnekotan! This along with our new website, begins a new era for the Minnesota Dakotas District of Kiwanis.

I think both this format and the new website are cleaner and have a more modern look. That's just my opinion, but I'm willing to hear what you all have to say after you've taken the time to look around.

I'm not married to this format so your input is appreciated.

If you have some feedback on either this Minnekotan format or the new website, you can call or email me. My contact information is on the last page.

I will return with my usual updates and news in April. We will be at the half way mark by then. Keep up the good work!

Yours in Kiwanis Service

Cynthia Braseth

In this newsletter you can expect:

A message from
Governor
Bradley

Kiwanis
Children's Fund
Update

Key Club Update

Highlights From
Our District
Clubs



A Message from the Governor

When I was growing up in Bottineau, North Dakota, I had two wonderful role models – my Mom and Dad. They taught me, by example, the importance of working hard, and giving back to our schools, community and church. They both volunteered their time to be part of local and State volunteer organizations and clubs. That lesson stuck with me, and I have continued their legacy throughout my life in several service organizations of my choice.

Outside my work, I was only a volunteer member because I never felt I could aspire to a leadership role. My father was a leader and held many leadership roles. After his passing in June of 2011 I felt it was important to take a walk in his shoes. Later in 2011 I was asked to join a Kiwanis club as a charter member and improve the lives of children in our community. I still want to do this but in more communities finding more like you and me. I need your help building new clubs and boosting clubs. If you have been a past club or district officer and want to help me, get involved with the MNDK Club Building Team.

#5 Governor goal; To improve the recognition of Kiwanis in communities we serve.

There are many ways a Kiwanis club serves the community and there is no reason to stop your current service projects, but be willing to listen to the new and younger members and the ideas they present.

In essence, this means growing and supporting those small new service project ideas. I could list many, but the ones that get noticed by the community are the service projects that are community and club original service projects.

Not every project will attract new members but being consistently involved in community events your club will get noticed and those that show interest need to be asked if they want to help.

Does your club have a social media presence within the community? If you want to get noticed by the younger community this is a necessity. Find a couple current members that have some experience with multiple social media platforms and give them administrator rights, as a board, establish media policies and let them introduce your clubs service thru post, live club videos, lots of photos and tag the members involved so their friends see what they do and have fun.

[Learn more](#)

Traditional media such as television, radio and newspapers are still powerful ways to communicate your club's mission. Create a Media release story about your club or upcoming event and find a club member who can respond to media and be available for an interview, if needed.

[Learn more](#)

I urge you all this year to continue the great work that you do at whatever level in the organization that you are, and continue to support and enhance the lives of children and families in our communities and elsewhere around the world.



A Message from the Kiwanis Children's Fund Kathleen Welle

Greetings to all MNDAK Kiwanians. Here's hoping everyone had a great month in February. It has been a bit unusual with little or no snow, so far. The real test is making it through the month of March without a snowstorm. It is so unusually warm in some places, that golf courses are inviting golfers to come out and warm up their golfing skills already.

So, moving on, Kiwanis held the second annual **Day of Giving** on February 21st. The overall giving response was going so well, they extended the Day of Giving an extra day, and the final total is \$130,000.00. The Giving Day Goal was set at \$75,000.00.

A follow-up to our MNDAK District placing 4th in the top 5 of average per member giving for the 2022-2023 year, the required info due by March 1, 2024, was submitted in mid-February to the Children's Fund for the extra two \$1000.00 Awards to be used for additional District annual scholarships. The payment will be sent directly to the District Educational Foundation.

Now, in addition to the exciting response for the *Kiwanis Day of Giving*, we have the annual President's challenge during this fiscal year, for a chance to strengthen our Kiwanis Family and showcase our leadership to the entire organization and our communities.

Achieving the challenge will determine if our District qualifies for the annual rebate, which is 5% of the club and individual contributions for the year. This rebate is also used for District awards to high school students for continuing education.

The Challenge is:

1. 10% increase in the number of clubs in the district supporting the Children's Fund.
2. 10% overall increase in the total amount of club giving.

Note: If your club has not participated in giving to the Children's Fund in past years or missed last year, any amount will have a tangible impact on the lives of those who need our help.

**Stay excited, stay motivated and let's
make this year great.
#KidsNeedKiwanis**



Hello Kiwanis,

I am Maria Nelson and part of the MinnDak Key Club Kiwanis Family Networking (K-Fam) Committee. This month, our District Board is eagerly planning, and anticipating MinnDak's 2024 DCON. The convention runs from the 22nd to the 24th of March and will be in Fargo, North Dakota. The convention will host officer training for newly elected members, and the district board has put together a great lineup of workshops ranging from building relationships, learning about different service projects, preventing burnout, and even learning to deal with difficult people.

Within the K-Fam committee, we have been hard at work planning a virtual meet-up to connect the builders' clubs in our district with Key Club. The event will be held in Our goal with this project is to educate and familiarize Builders' Club members with the different aspects of Key Club and create a strong community between Builders' Club and Key Club within our district. During the event, we will have a brief presentation discussing what Key Club is about, introducing the District Board, and highlighting Key Club's different opportunities. Following the presentation, we will have several fun activities for the kids like Kahoot and Blooket.

Overall, the event will be very fun and easily accessible, so we on the K-Fam Committee would love to see as big a turnout as possible. All builders members in our MinnDak District are invited to attend, more information will be sent out in the coming weeks with the specific details.

Sincerely, the MinnDak Kiwanis
Family Networking Committee



Key Club Honors Martin Luther King Jr. through Service Project

The Two Rivers H.S. Key Club is one of four Key Clubs that the WaKota Kiwanis Club supports. And while the Two Rivers High School Key Club has regular weekly service projects, one of their recent events was covered by WCCO News for their efforts towards honoring Martin Luther King Jr Day.

"We've got people writing cards for their families, for service members, teachers," said Sam Amundson, a Key Club member. "We continue his legacy by serving our community, giving back to everybody, and spreading love and positivity,"

Key Club President Anna Wilson says they invited the community to do good deeds and make a difference because that's what King would want. "It really is to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. He made such an impact on our lives and gave back so much to us and it's our responsibility to do that too," Wilson said.

This school year, the Two Rivers High School Key Club has grown from 30 to 100 students.

For the full story on CBS:

<https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/two-rivers-high-school-students-honor-dr-martin-luther-king-jr-through-service-projects/>

Highlights From Our Clubs



Kiwanis NE Metro Golden K representatives Roger Williams, Jim Bowyer, and Keith Carlson (L) deliver a check to Little Canada Principal Jose Becerra-Cardenas and Jodi Seifert (Associate Principal) for purchase of teaching aids to enhance student reading comprehension

NE Metro Golden K

Kiwanis Golden K Gifts Support Youth Education In late January the Kiwanis Northeast Metro Golden K Club contributed \$4,140 to Little Canada Elementary School for use in purchasing teaching aids requested by school leaders. The materials purchased through this contribution will enhance the reading comprehension program. The Golden K Club has a long history of working with Little Canada School, tutoring students in reading and math. In acknowledging the gift, Jodi Seifert, Little Canada Associate Principal commented "We are so grateful for the continued support from the Kiwanis Club. The volunteers support our teachers and students in so many ways. It is a gift to have these incredible partners."

Also in January, the club awarded funds to the Roseville-based Kids in Need Foundation (KINF) for use in purchasing equipment used in packing school supplies. KINF provides school supplies free of charge to teachers locally and across the U.S. This award follows earlier funding from the NE Metro Golden K Club for purchase of volunteer registration and sign-up software. Golden K immediate past president Jim Bowyer noted that the Kiwanis Northeast Metro club, now in its 42nd year, supports a number of children and youth-oriented causes in the area each year through donations and volunteering. He said that actions of his club and Kiwanians everywhere are guided by the Kiwanis mission: To improve the world one child and one community at a time.

Greater Elk River Club Hat & Mitten Drive



We donated 40 pairs of gloves and six balaclava facemasks to The Wave Youth Center in Big Lake. Thank you to all who put time in to make this a successful event! A big shoutout to N'Ice Caps for giving an awesome deal to us:

<https://www.nicecaps.us/>



Kiwanis Holiday Lights: Kiwanis Club of Mankato

KIWANIS HOLIDAY LIGHTS HAS RECORD ATTENDANCE YEAR AND DONATES \$100,000 TO 70 AREA NONPROFITS AND ANNOUNCES 2023 EVENT STATISTICS

The Kiwanis Holiday Lights Board of Directors is pleased to announce that a record amount of \$100,000 will be donated to the 70 non-profit organizations that assisted with the event this past year.

“Even though we had no snow for the first time in the 11 years of the event, this year we still drew record crowds. The warm weather allowed more people than ever to walk through Kiwanis Holiday Lights.” said Scott Wojcik, Kiwanis Holiday Lights President. “We are extremely pleased to be giving back a record \$100,000 to the volunteer groups that assist us during the event.” Wojcik added.

Additional statistics include:

- Over 225,000 people attended the free event in 2023.
- The event remains completely volunteer driven.
- All set-up was completed over 10 days during the five weekends prior to opening.
- All tear-down was completed in three days in early January.
- \$100,000 will be donated back to the non-profit groups that assisted with set-up, tear-down and evening volunteer help during the event.
- 70 non-profit groups participated, providing 14,500 volunteer hours with 3,000 volunteers participating.
- For the eleventh year, visitors were encouraged to vote on their favorite non-profit tree this year. Winners were.
 - 1st place – Mankato Family YMCA - \$300 prize
 - 2nd Place – Mankato Area Youth Baseball Assoc. - \$200 prize
 - 3rd Place – One Bright Star - \$100 prize
- Over 3,250 children visited Santa, and each received a free Kiwanis Holiday Lights Coloring Poster

- OVER 2 MILLION ENERGY-EFFICIENT LED LIGHTS GLOWED BRIGHTLY THROUGHOUT THE EVENT.
- 41 AREA RESTAURANTS DONATED FOOD TO HELP FEED THE VOLUNTEERS DURING THE EVENT, AS WELL AS DURING SET-UP AND TEAR-DOWN.
- THE OPENING PARADE AND LIGHTING CEREMONY FOR THE 2024 KIWANIS HOLIDAY LIGHTS SEASON WILL BE NOVEMBER 29TH, 2024.

THE IMPACT OF KIWANIS HOLIDAY LIGHTS SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 2012

140 TONS OF FOOD HAS BEEN COLLECTED FOR AREA FOOD SHELVES.
 \$690,000 HAS BEEN DONATED TO THE NON-PROFITS WHO HAVE PROVIDED VOLUNTEERS.
 OVER 1.8 MILLION PEOPLE HAVE VISITED THE EVENT TO DATE.
OVER 21,000 VOLUNTEERS FROM OVER 125 NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS HAVE PARTICIPATED.
 OVER 180 BUSINESSES HAVE BEEN INVOLVED AS SPONSORS, VOLUNTEERS, OR IN-KIND DONORS.

ABOUT KIWANIS HOLIDAY LIGHTS:

THE MISSION OF KIWANIS HOLIDAY LIGHTS, INC. IS TO CREATE A CELEBRATION OF HOLIDAY LIGHTS AND DISPLAYS THAT IS 100% VOLUNTEER DRIVEN, PROMOTES THE GREATER MANKATO, MINNESOTA COMMUNITY AND RAISES FOOD/CASH DONATIONS FOR THOSE IN NEED.

Thank you for reading!

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