

# Minnekotan

Minnesota Dakotas District of Kiwanis  
International  
January 2025



I will be attending the Governor's Conference in January in Indianapolis. I truly appreciate the support and resources offered by Kiwanis International.

I am looking forward to continuing my year as Governor as we Celebrate our Successes! Happy New Year MNDAK Kiwanis,

Carol Nitschke  
2024-2025 District Governor

## A Message from the Governor

MNDAK Kiwanians,

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas with your families and friends. It is always a special time of the year and a time to enjoy a few days off from work and our daily routines.

I am looking back at the first few months of our Kiwanis year and truly am grateful for all the good service we do in our communities and will continue as we start our New Year.

We need to continue to focus on our existing clubs and our efforts to bring in new members and work toward opening new clubs in MNDAK. We started our Kiwanis year by asking each of the Divisions to look at least 3 communities for possible new clubs. I will be reaching out to the Divisions again to continue working on getting new members and opening new clubs.

Past Governor Brad Knudson, who is also our District Club Membership and Club Building Chair has a good start on a couple of clubs, and we will continue to build on those.

## MNDAK District Needs You!

Are you a past Lt Governor looking for other ways to serve in another leadership role? Have you considered moving up to Governor Elect? If you are, we are currently looking for candidates for 2025-26.

You can contact me, Cindy Braseth, [kiwanisdistrict.mndak@outlook.com](mailto:kiwanisdistrict.mndak@outlook.com) with your intent to run or if you have any questions. Governor Carol or Past Governor Bradley are also available to talk with you about this opportunity and answer questions. I can put you in touch with either or both of them.

I would love to hear from any interested candidates and introduce you to the membership in the next February issue of the Minnekotan. As a past Governor myself, I can say that it was the best experience of my Kiwanis journey. There is lot's of support from those of us who have been there. THINK ABOUT IT!



## A Message from the Secretary Treasurer

**Happy New Year!** I hope that your Holiday gatherings were filled with good food, blessings of family and friends and fun.

This is the time of year that most of us reflect on the accomplishments of the last year and what we want to accomplish next year. This applies both to our personal and professional lives and should include what our goals are as a Kiwanis member.

This is also a great time for your club to evaluate the goals they set for the new year and begin to plan how they will be accomplished. If one of those goals is adding new members, and it should be, Kiwanis has numerous tools available to help you do that. Pick one that fits your club and make plans to implement it. I have links to all of them on our MNDAK website at <https://k13.site.kiwanis.org/resources/>

Have you looked at your service projects lately? Are they still relevant for your community or do they need a facelift? If you have some new members, do they have ideas for a new project? New service projects are a great way to bring in new members and create excitement in current members.

My goals for this year are to support you and your club to reach your goals. I'm here to answer questions and point out resources that are available. You're not alone out there. You can reach me through the website contact form, email me or call. My contact information is below.

### Now to some business for Club Secretaries:

- I am planning to provide some short training sessions for club secretaries that will give you some practical information beyond the formal training from KI. Watch your email for those notices.
- February 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for all U.S. Kiwanis family clubs and districts to file IRS tax returns (Form 990, form 990- EZ or Form 990-N).
- Has your club distributed the MNDAK Educational Foundation Scholarship Applications to high schools in your community? If not, they are located here: <https://k13.site.kiwanis.org/mndak-foundation/>
- The 2025 Signature Project contest The contest opens at 11:59 a.m. EST on Tuesday, January 7, and closes on Thursday, January 30, at 11:59 p.m. EST. Entries can only be received by completing the online forms found at: [www.kiwanis.org/signatureproject](http://www.kiwanis.org/signatureproject). This link will be open on January 7<sup>th</sup>.

### My contact info:

[kiwanisdistrict.mndak@outlook.com](mailto:kiwanisdistrict.mndak@outlook.com)

Cell phone: 218-230-9924



## **Kiwanis Club Building in 2025**

Establishing a new club in a community brings numerous benefits. It fosters a sense of unity and belonging among members, providing a platform for individuals to connect, share interests, and support each other. Service clubs also play a crucial role in community development by promoting civic engagement and volunteerism, addressing local needs and challenges through collective action. Overall, the formation of a new club can significantly enhance the social and economic vitality of a community.

Our district is embarking on a significant project that involves the establishment of several new clubs. This initiative requires meticulous planning, building, and nurturing, especially through the critical first three years. We are seeking dedicated members who are eager to contribute their time and skills to make this a success.

We are currently focusing on developing new clubs in three communities within our District, Division 1 Williston ND, Division 2 West Fargo ND and Division 6 Faribault Mn. While travel is optional, there is a designated budget available for on-site club building activities. Your involvement could significantly impact our progress and help us achieve our goals. Exploring ways to contribute from home can be just as

impactful as traveling to the community.

One effective method is to assist in organizing and creating a list of potential names and contact information in a community. Community and Chamber websites are good sources for these contacts. This list can then be used by others who will call them to set appointments to explain Kiwanis and why we are building a club in their community.

These tasks aid in streamlining the process by creating appointments already scheduled for those who will do the on-site work. Following these steps and providing ongoing support also helps to ensure that Kiwanis reverses the number of new clubs closing in the first 3 years.

All that's required is a bit of your time and a computer with WiFi. If you're interested, just let us know, and we'll arrange a training session at a time that works best for you. This is a great opportunity to volunteer and enhance your skills from the comfort of your own space.

Bradley Knudson District Membership and Engagement Coordinator

Text, call or email for more information on how you can help.

bknudson57@gmail.com  
701-871-8921

Sharon Scudder  
District Leadership  
and Development  
Coordinator



## Start the New Year With Education

I hope you had a great holiday and hope your New Year is successful in 2025. There are many opportunities for you to broaden your education in Kiwanis this year so I hope you will take advantage of what Kiwanis International and the MNDK District has in store for you.

Kiwanis is working on a new system called Kiwanis Engage. Watch for more on this.

Also 2025 Amplify will be kicking off about the second week in January. The cost will remain \$50 for Kiwanis members and the cost to non-members is well over \$500 so it could be used as a membership tool to sign up new members and get training and still save money. If you are working with a community center or a group your club sponsors, they can also get Amplify for \$50. Please contact me if you have such a project that can benefit with Professional Development.

We are looking to do Lt Governor training between April and June but details are not available yet as to if it will be virtual or in person. Stay tuned in and start working, if you have not already done so, to get your Lt. Governor Team together.

May through August will begin our Club Leadership Education (CLE) training. Updated materials will come out in April. Kiwanis International recommends that we provide in-person training in the district in addition to the online sessions they provide. However, that will be discussed at the January Board Meeting and further information will follow.

Please take advantage of what is being offered to learn and become a knowledgeable Kiwanian.

Minnesota-Dakotas

Kiwanis Educational  
Foundation, Inc.



Submitted by Dan Leikvold, President

As the new President of the Minnesota Dakotas Educational Foundation Board of Trustees, I want to say thank you to all of the clubs and individuals who have already donated for the 2024-2025 Kiwanis year. Your generosity and support of our young people is much appreciated and so helpful in assisting our youth in reaching their full potential.

Entering the new calendar year is a wonderful time to check to make sure your club budget includes a donation to the Minnesota Dakota's Educational Foundation. If it is in the budget, that is great. Keep in mind, you do not have to wait until the end of the year to send it in. Do it now and cross it off your to-do list. If it is not in the club budget, please consider having a conversation about adding it at your next board meeting. In addition to club giving, individual members are also encouraged to make a personal gift to the foundation to assist in providing scholarships for our youth.

We are all aware of and immensely proud of the achievements and accomplishments of our students. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints, it is not easy for all these wonderful leaders to pursue their dreams. Your investment in the Minnesota Dakotas Kiwanis District Educational Foundation is an investment in our students and in our communities. We need you to build our endowment, so our children can build their futures.

Let us make 2025 a record year for giving to the Minnesota Dakotas Educational Foundation!



## Kiwanis International Children's Fund

### BUILT FOR SERVICE

BY: Kathy Welle, District Children's Fund  
Chair

As we get ready to wrap up our Kiwanis December activities and say goodbye to the 2024 calendar year, here's wishing all of you a splendid, peaceful, healthy, and safe holidays, with time to spend with those you love and care about.

The District Giving report is available through 11/30/24, showing the Total Giving from MNDAK in 23-24 is \$54,488.00. I received an email informing us that our district is eligible for a Grant Rebate of \$2,724.00. The check will be mailed directly to MNDAK Educational Foundation, Attn: Lowell Disrud.

**Thank you, thank you** for clubs getting an early start with the contributions. I hope you all realize how grateful the Children's Fund Board and Trustees are for your support.

Along with the District Giving for 23-24 information, the report also shows a total of \$9,499 has been sent to the Children's Fund for October and November. This includes both Club and Individual giving.

All funds sent to the Children's Fund are counted towards the Possibility Project. The

Project has collected over \$6,000,000.00 already, with our District contributing a total of \$124,856.00 as of November 2024.

The Project goal is \$25,000,000.00 to serve 10 million children. That is \$2.25 per child. Are we all ready to make a commitment to continue participating in the Possibility Project for the next 4 to 5 years? I will forward the Commitment form to all clubs and Lt Governors to share with others and discuss clubs' plans to participate. Visit the MNDAK District website at: <https://k13.site.kiwanis.org/foundation/> to see a video about the Possibility project.

The Kiwanis International website also has reports about the grants issued. Remember the micro grants are easier to apply for, and the grant amounts are smaller than the traditional \$25,000.00 grants.

Yours in Service  
Kathy Welle District Chair

**the**  
**POSSIBILITY**  
**PROJECT**

## International Convention Update



**New Year, New You - New Kiwanis Heights!** By Courtney Fallway

As you reflect and rev up on all the ways you want to be better this year, make sure to include a Kiwanis resolution. Set a goal for volunteer hours, make a list of friends and colleagues to invite to club events, and book your registration at the **2025 Kiwanis International Convention**.

This event will take place June 25-28 in Pittsburgh, PA. You can plan to regale your club with stories of the people you met, ideas for increasing your club impact, and a newfound love of Kiwanis. Get started now at <https://tinyurl.com/23axzz6s>

## What Makes Your Club Stand Out in Your Community?

Does your club have a project that everyone in your community can point to and say, "Kiwanis does that?" If so, we want to hear about it.

What makes it special? What makes you proud when people talk about it?

To submit it here, simply attach a word document and some pictures to an email or it can even be in the body of an email. Email it to [kiwanisdistrict.mndak@outlook.com](mailto:kiwanisdistrict.mndak@outlook.com)

## Pierre-Fort Pierre Kiwanis Club



Members of the Pierre-Fort Pierre Kiwanis Club donated about 25 different grocery and household items for

Christmas Gift Bags for people on their Meals on Wheels delivery route. Among the Meals on Wheels recipients being delivered gift bags from Kiwanis Santas Larry Johnson (with beard) and Dave Bonde was Goldie Kelly.

## 2025 Rose Parade Float



See article on next page

## Granite Falls Popcorn Stand Completes 106<sup>th</sup> Year



The Granite Falls Kiwanis Popcorn Stand has now completed its 106<sup>th</sup> continuous year of operations. The Popcorn Stand was started in 1919 by local business owners and brothers Fred and Julius Ernston, and was owned by the same family for the first 62 years.

Subsequently, the Popcorn Stand was bought and sold several times until 2002 when the business was donated to the Granite Falls Kiwanis by then owners, and Kiwanis members, David Kafka and Jill Prahm. For the past 24 seasons, the Popcorn Stand has been owned by Granite Falls Kiwanis and operated by its Kiwanis volunteer members.

The Popcorn Stand is open seasonally, every evening from May 1 to Labor Day and weekends in September, 7:00 to 9:30 pm. Not only is the Popcorn Stand the major fundraiser for Granite Falls Kiwanis, but the business also provides a community service as a destination and summer activity for many families throughout Southwest Minnesota, and beyond.

In 2024 this fundraising activity generated \$39,200 net revenue all of which was donated back to the community youth and

related youth organizations. Also, in 2024, through community businesses and individual donations, a new Popcorn Stand facility was built, doubling the size of the building and adding extra amenities.

The Granite Falls Popcorn Stand and Kiwanis are known synonymously for providing a great service to the community.

If questions, please contact Les Bergquist, 320-226-7878

Thanks, Bradley Peterson, Lisa Streich, Jeremy Blackwelder and Leslie Bergquist, Granite Falls Kiwanis, Popcorn Stand Co-Managers

## Granite Falls Kiwanis Club Member will Ride the KI Rose Parade Float

Kiwanis International has been given three seats on the 2025 float to award to a club president, a district membership coordinator and a district governor for outstanding membership growth during the 2023-24 year. Winners have been announced and one of our District Members won!

Congratulations to Lisa Streich, representing the Kiwanis Club of Granite Falls, Mn. Watch Lisa on the Kiwanis International Float New Years Day!

The Rose Parade will be broadcast live in the U.S. beginning at 10 a.m. Central Time, on Wednesday, January 1, 2025. Please check your local broadcast listings for more information.

## Fairmont Early Risers Bring Vision to Life



There are many great things that Kiwanis does all around the world, and it's always so wonderful to get to see Kiwanis makes a difference in our own communities also. This project took our whole club working together to make the vision of one Kiwanian, Chuck Anderson, come to life.

We were able to add a permanent structure to our wonderful Frisbee Golf course in our town. Fairmont, MN has a wonderful multi route frisbee golf course. It's a destination for many that participate in tournaments and the fun of the game. We found a need with an area of the park not having shelter.

So, what better way to use Kiwanis' know how than to put our brains, hands, and hearts together to help the community in a practical and wonderful way. Now everyone that goes to throw those holes doesn't have to worry about getting caught in the rain.

Members of the community can now come and sit and watch people participate. It's so wonderful to be a part of a club that sees value in the small things. We had so many companies come together to help us accomplish this project. Take a moment to say thank you to these wonderful entities in our community.

City of Fairmont - Nick Lardy & Team  
Schmeeckle Foundation Grant and Committee  
Martin County Area Foundation Grant and Committee  
Local Lumber & Team  
Fairmont Roofing & Team  
Fairmont Disc Golf Club  
Brian Ruschy Construction & Team  
Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors

Now on to our next project to make an impact in our community! 2025 is looking good to be a Kiwanian!

Sincerely,  
Jacob Wurster  
President of the Early Risers Kiwanis of Fairmont, MN