

# Minnekotan

Minnesota Dakotas District of Kiwanis  
International  
**June 2025**



## A Message from the Governor

Greetings to MNDK Kiwanians!

We are heading into a busy few months. Kiwanis Intl. convention is this month - June 26-28 in Pittsburgh. I want to thank those of you who are planning to attend and encourage any member who is still interested in attending to get registered. We are looking forward to our District Friday night social at the baseball game in Pittsburgh.

Jason Stewart is busy getting our District Convention organized. We will be in Willmar, MN Aug. 8-10th. We are finalizing the events, breakout sessions and agenda. Registration is available on the MNDK website. I have enjoyed working with Jason on our convention and look forward to a wonderful time with our District Kiwanians. Hope to see you in Willmar!!

I continue to enjoy working with the Lt. Governor teams and meeting monthly for our Fireside Chats. Please carefully consider a Lt. Governor position in your division. This is a wonderful opportunity to work with and meet Kiwanians in your Division. If you have an interest in serving in this leadership

role – contact your current Lt. Governor for information.

I continue to enjoy hearing and reading about the service projects and activities in our great Kiwanis Clubs. Thanks always for your good work and dedication to serving the youth in our communities.

Have a wonderful Kiwanis month as we continue to Celebrate our Successes!

## The Minnesota-Dakotas District of Kiwanis International Needs You!

Does this sound a little like Uncle Sam during World War II? Maybe, but we are in dire straights for leaders to step up. I know you're out there, so now is the time to take that step.

Scared you can't do the job? Do you know what the main qualification is for any leadership position in Kiwanis whether it's club officer or Lt Governor?

**LOVE WORKING WITH KIDS AND BE  
PASSIONATE ABOUT OUR MISSION!**

That's it. If that's you, We want to hear from you!



## The Importance of your Club's Annual Meeting

May and June are traditionally the time Clubs have their Annual Meeting. Hopefully your Club has already had this event. Its importance permits a point of reflection similar to New Years Eve and its related New Years resolutions.

This meeting permits members to reflect upon their past year and to envision what they might accomplish within the upcoming year and perhaps five years ahead. As members begin to talk, the future begins to unfold as new possibilities come into focus. This sets the stage for your election of officers, which is the first concrete event for tomorrow.

Your Annual Meeting can be an extremely important event for all. If you have not had your Annual Meeting, I encourage you to do so. It can create great cohesiveness, opportunity and insight about the future.



## A Message from the Secretary Treasurer

June is upon us and lots of exciting things are happening. We have 27 members and guests registered for the International Convention in Pittsburgh June 25-28. The educational opportunities are going to be fantastic, I can't wait. I'm looking forward to a spirited debate about remote voting at International Conventions again this year. If passed it could be a game changer! Look for more information on our MNDK website <https://k13.site.kiwanis.org/icon/>

Planning for our District Convention is coming together under the leadership of Governor Carol and Jason Stewart, Convention Director. Watch for some exciting news about breakout sessions and some changes that I think you will like. I'm posting new stuff each week on the webpage at <https://k13.site.kiwanis.org/dcon/>

One last thing, club election results are due June 1. If you haven't entered those into your secretary dashboard yet, do so today. And if you haven't had your club elections yet, GET ER DONE!



## Welcome Kiwanis Club of Williston Basin!

### Kiwanis Club Coaches,

There are many ways for a Kiwanis club to succeed. Each club has its own strengths, traditions and community presence. Whether it's a newer club that can't quite get off the ground or an established club that once enjoyed growth and excitement. You can help! Ultimately, you're providing a mix of practical and inspirational ideas – and several things in between. Your expertise will be crucial in driving the success of our Kiwanis club building initiatives.

### What do club coaches do?

- Help the club develop long-term goals for service and membership.
- Evaluate member satisfaction and member involvement.
- Assist the club in conducting a survey to evaluate community needs.
- Help the club's officers and board develop an annual plan and budget.
- Promote continual sharing and inviting.
- Encourage participation in division, district and Kiwanis International activities.
- Monitor progress and assist with improvements.
- Support selection and transition of new officers and directors.
- Celebrate successes and recognize member achievement.

Kiwanis Club Coaching Guide can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/mukrpucd>

If your name is not on the list below and were a past coach or are interested in becoming a coach, please register for the June 10th training session.

Club Coaching Module Tuesday, June 10, 2025, 7pm Central time or 6pm Mountain  
<https://tinyurl.com/y6ruc3fe>

### Below is a list of current Club coaches in our district:

Cynthia Braseth, Jacquelin Lageson, Karen Davis, Sharon Scudder, Theresa Lee, Laura Tjomsland, James Probst, and Brad Knudson.

Bradley Knudson, District Membership and Engagement Coordinator  
425 5th Street SE  
Bottineau, Nd 58318  
bknudson57@gmail.com  
701-871-8921

## New Service Leadership Clubs Chartered Congratulations

There are several new Service Leadership Clubs that have been chartered or reactivated:

- Ben Franklin Middle School sponsored by Fargo Rough Riders Kiwanis Club
- Shakopee High School Key Club sponsored by St. Louis Park Kiwanis
- Sheyenne High School Key Club in West Fargo, ND sponsoring club unavailable.

Sharon Scudder  
District Leadership  
and Development  
Coordinator



## Brain Awareness Month

June is the month of Brain Awareness, which is perfect for Kiwanians as we have so many educational training opportunities both at Kiwanis International Level and MN-DAK District Level.

**Engage**, the Computer program that will replace Connect for Kiwanis Reporting will debut in Pittsburgh during the International Convention. Training will be shared at the District Convention in Willmar, MN in August so you don't want to miss this opportunity to help you make reports and seek information.

**Amplify** is now online again for those people who have registered. You will have until September 30th to complete all the modules. Also, all those going to the International Convention in Pittsburgh and have registered for the Amplify Capstone Session are in for a treat of learning leadership and development skills beyond the program through instruction and networking. This session will be of great value to you emphasizing development. Hopefully you signed up for the June 25<sup>th</sup> session.

**Club Leadership Educations (CLE)** will be offered at the District Convention in Willmar, MN as well as on the Kiwanis International Website for club officers, Lt Governors and District Officers and Directors. It is very important to keep yourself informed to make it easier to

operate and help your clubs, divisions and districts with the functions that are your responsibility as officers. You can feel more comfortable and confident in serving and teaching others.

Lt Governor Training will be offered one day earlier for new Lt. Governors and their teams at the District Convention in Willmar, MN. We will conclude our virtual training with special celebrities from Kiwanis International, namely, Brad Boyd and Dawn Puderbaugh sharing their knowledge and experiences in membership, club retention and other subjects.

You don't want to miss these training opportunities to learn and use your brains during the month of June and beyond. Hope to see you in Pittsburgh and Willmar, MN.

**Respectfully**

**Sherry Scudder**

## Added Note on Engage

All club leaders should have received an email from Kiwanis International giving you access to the training materials to the training site for the new Kiwanis Engage program.

Please take some time to review the program and familiarize yourself with it so that when it goes live, you are prepared. Especially if you are a club officer. The training videos are short, and the site is for training so you can't break anything.

**CHECK IT OUT!**

As Sherry commented in her article, there will be more opportunities for learning. Watch for those and more emails from KI about live training in mid-June.



Submitted by John Rheinberger, Minnesota-Dakotas Governor Elect

## Why does MNDAK have a Foundation?

MNDAK has a foundation since it acts as a "force multiplier" for one of our important activities, scholarship grants. MNDAK has thousands of volunteers but by having a strong educational policy we create a strong and quick positive image to the public of an important thing that we believe and that is the importance of education. The Foundation adds value to our Kiwanis experience and acts as an icebreaker to the public telling them of who we are.

Additionally, our foundation structure offers a vehicle for economic collection, accretion in value through investments and a mechanism for perpetuity in benefit. Finally it has IRS Section 501(c) (3) status which means donations can be tax deductible.

If you are unaware of our Foundation google Minnesota Dakota Educational Foundation and learn more. Or visit the webpage at <https://k13.site.kiwanis.org/mndak-foundation/>



By Courtney Fallway, International Convention Chair

## International Convention Update

Have you registered for the 2025 Kiwanis International Convention in Pittsburgh, PA? Don't panic! You can still register until June 20 online or in person once the convention begins. Join fellow Kiwanians to learn, network, and celebrate 100 years of Key Club International and so many other great Kiwanis achievements. The convention will take place June 25-28.



## Crookston Pioneer 100 Kiwanis Honors Terrific Kids

Crookston Kiwanis continues to sponsor

the "Terrific Kids" program for 5th graders at Highland Elementary. Every month, a student from each of the three fifth grade classes is selected by the teacher based on achievement and service. Pictured are two of the "Terrific Kids" from the recent April ceremony.





## BUILT FOR SERVICE

BY: Kathleen Welle, District Children's Fund Chair



The update for our District Giving for April 30, 2025, is showing a total of \$35,253.00

which is \$3K more than in April 2024. *More clubs* are submitting their contributions earlier than past years. That is greatly appreciated by the Kiwanis Children's Fund (KCF) Board.

If possible, all clubs should consider submitting their contributions during the next 2 to 3 months. If the Children's Fund receives funds in September, sometimes it doesn't get counted for this fiscal year, because of processing time.

**Reminder:** The Children's Fund has Micro Grants available for clubs looking for extra funds for projects. Check out the details on the [www.kiwanis.org](http://www.kiwanis.org) website under Children's Fund.

### **Exciting news:**

A micro grant was approved for the Litchfield, Mn Kiwanis Club earlier this year. The number of kids impacted: 190. The Club partnered with a local middle school.

Students completed a career assessment and learned about educational opportunities, which high school classes would suit them, and how to prepare for a job interview. The program included writing a resume and a cover letter.

The Kiwanis Club also established an interview closet for those who could not afford the necessary clothing. The program concluded with a celebratory dinner.

**Note:** This is a condensed overview of the KCF grant that supported the project.

**the  
POSSIBILITY  
PROJECT**

*the Possibility Project* is going strong. Total funds raised so far, is \$7,555,000.00

## ***KidsneedKiwanis***

**Reminder:** This would be a good time to complete the Impact Club form and submit it to KCF to become an Impact Club for this project. You can decide what amount your Club plans to contribute while participating with the **Project** during the next 4 years.

"Every day may not be GOOD... But there is something GOOD in Every DAY."

author unknown

# Update from the Minnesota-Dakotas District of Circle K International

By Jason Stewart, District CKI Administrator

The Minnesota-Dakotas District of Circle K International (CKI) is eager to expand our reach and cultivate the next generation of service leaders. We currently have six clubs across Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota, with a strong presence at institutions like Minnesota State Mankato, Dakota State University, and North Dakota State University. These clubs are dedicated to fostering Service, Leadership, and Fellowship within their college communities and beyond.

## Why Chartering a CKI Club Matters

Chartering a CKI club is a fantastic opportunity to strengthen your local community and the Kiwanis Family. CKI members are passionate about service and frequently collaborate with local Kiwanis chapters on impactful projects.

For example, the Mankato University CKI club is a vital partner for Kiwanis Holiday Lights, consistently providing volunteers to help set up and decorate. Similarly, our SD Mines CKI club in Rapid City not only works with their local Kiwanis but also collaborates with organizations like for blood drives and assists the Raptor Center with their annual Spaghetti Feed.

## The Benefits of a Stronger Kiwanis-CKI Connection

Beyond increased volunteer power, CKI clubs offer numerous advantages:

- Community Enhancement: CKI clubs bring fresh energy and more volunteers to local initiatives, enriching your community.

- Future Kiwanis Leaders: CKI exposes college students to the values of service, leadership, and fellowship that are core to

Kiwanis. By nurturing their involvement now, we encourage them to become active Kiwanis members later in life.

- New Perspectives & Outreach: CKI members, being digital natives, can help your club leverage social media and other platforms to reach a wider audience, crucial for membership growth in today's world. They can also introduce your club to campus-based volunteering opportunities you might not know about.

- Proven Success: Our Dakota State University CKI club, chartered just last year, has already reported over 150 service hours, demonstrating the immediate impact new clubs can have.

## How You Can Help

We are actively seeking to charter more CKI clubs in college towns throughout our district. Your experience and connections within your local communities are invaluable. By helping us identify potential colleges and connecting us with interested students or faculty, you can play a crucial role in expanding the Kiwanis Family.

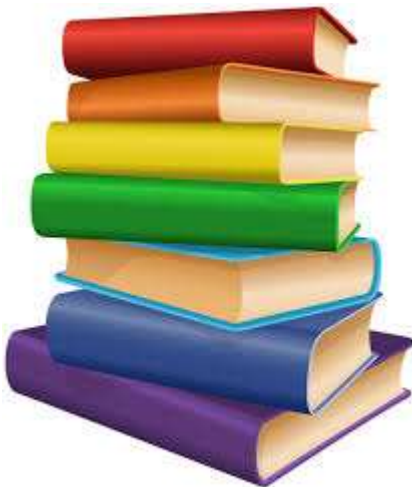
Let's work together to empower more young people through service and ensure the continued vitality of Kiwanis for years to come.

Please reach out if you're interested in learning more or discussing how we can collaborate to charter a new CKI club in your area.

In service,  
The Minnesota-Dakotas District of Circle K International



## Join Us at the 2025 District Convention



## Used Book Sale is Back

Once again, we are asking members to come to convention to clean out their bookshelves and donate to the used book sale. It's a great way to get rid of books that are taking up space and checking out some new authors to refill that space. Laura Tjomsland is also looking for some volunteers to help her man the sale table during convention. If you have some brown paper bags lying around, bring them along too!



## Annual Memorial Service

District Convention Memorial Service Plan on attending the Sunday Morning Kiwanian Memorial Service at the upcoming 2025 District Convention in Willmar, MN. This service is a time for us to remember all the Kiwanians who have passed away since last year's convention.

To make this a memorable service we ask for your help by sending the names of those in your Club who have passed away. These may be current members or those who were dedicated members but due to health or other reasons they dropped their membership over the past few years. For the Memorial Service we will be creating a PowerPoint program with a slide for each recognition including a picture and short obituary.

We ask the Club Secretary, Club Officer, or Club member to send a list with the name and a link to the funeral home who provided the burial service. In most cases we can pull the information from the Funeral home obituary for the personal Power point slide. If a funeral home online obituary is not available, please send what you have available for the PowerPoint slide. Please email your Club list and information soon to Dave and Paulette Odette at [odette@wiktel.com](mailto:odette@wiktel.com).



## Bring School Supplies to District Convention (DCON)



Every year we work with many generous people, businesses, and organizations to collect thousands of donated school supplies to distribute to students in need throughout West Central Minnesota. With the help of many, we are able to bridge the gap and help families who may otherwise struggle to access or afford the expense of new supplies at the beginning of the school year. We feel that it is important for kids to start the school year feeling confident and prepared! These supplies are handed out discreetly by trusted adults, so kids don't feel judged by their peers.

The service project for the 2025 DCON will be School supplies. This year rather than bringing school supplies, individuals and clubs can donate to the United way of West Central Minnesota, an agency that administers a Stuff the Bus Program in West Central Minnesota. I know that this does not afford the photo opportunities that past projects have afforded, but it does fulfill a well-administered need in West Central Minnesota, please open your hearts to this much needed Service Project. Watch for more information on how to donate.

## Pierre-Fort Pierre Kiwanis Club Serves Meal



The Pierre-Fort Pierre Kiwanis Club served the Community Banquet on May 22 in Pierre. Sixteen Kiwanians pitched in and served about 200 meals, with the food

donated by Kiwanian and Perkins owner Diane London!

## Rochester Day Makers & SMIF Reading Program



What an amazing month of reading! Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) and Kiwanis Day Makers distributed over 700 books to local schools and preschools. Most of these books were read one-on-one or two with student(s), and each student received a book. Some were read aloud at the classroom level and others were simply handed out. Done over several days during the month of May.

## Ben Franklin Middle School Builders Club



Sponsored by the Fargo Rough Riders, celebrating their official charter and first semester of community service.

# Kiwanis Club of Hendricks Bike Rodeo



On a beautiful, sunny day on Monday, May 12, the Kiwanis Club of Hendricks, MN, was ready for the annual Bike Rodeo. At 4:00 pm the set-up committee consisting of Rolland Digre, Orv Johnson and Jerry Nolz prepared 6 challenging bike lanes on the street west of Hendricks Public School.

Shortly after 5:00 pm with all the students registered, Lincoln County Sheriff Bob Bushmen shared a list of the important rules for Bike Safety. He engaged the students with interactive responses to many of the points. He finished by telling them to stay around at the end because he had some special gifts.

Each Kiwanis member helping was assigned to one of the six challenge lanes. As each student completed that section, he/she was scored on a scale of one to ten. Most points were lost because of balance, stepping down, or going outside the chalk lines or failing to stop properly at the sign place at the end.

Deb Browning, registrar, helped calculate the score of each student as soon as they finished the course. An immediate reward was the choice of a beverage.

With the final participant scored, the winners were announced for each grade category. First place received \$5.00 cash. All participants received one dollar cash. Also, each student who wore a bike helmet received one dollar cash.

As the award ceremony ended, Sheriff Bob stepped up and announced that he had two more items for anyone participating in the Bike Rodeo. First of all, he distributed a packet of safety information. Secondly, with great fanfare his two deputy helpers brought out a large box of brand-new Bike Helmets. The County had applied and received a grant so that helmets could be given without cost to all who had a need.

## Brag About Your Club

Is your club doing interesting projects or innovative ways to raise funds for those projects? Other members just might be interested in hearing about what you're doing.

Consider putting together an article or sending some photos to me for this newsletter. These club contributions make the Minnekotan way more fun to read!!

Just email me at

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

# You're Invited! Celebrate 50 Years of the Otter Risers Kiwanis Club!

Get ready to mark your calendars! The Kiwanis Club of Otter-Risers, Fergus Falls is throwing a spectacular summer bash to celebrate five decades of community service, friendship, and fun! Join us for our **50th Anniversary celebration** at the picturesque **Spies Riverfront Park and Market Pavilion (117 S Union Avenue, Fergus Falls, MN)** on **Tuesday, July 22, 2026**.

The festivities kick off at **5:00 p.m.** with light refreshments, setting the stage for an unforgettable evening. We'll be celebrating by the beautiful Otter Tail River, complete with **music, laughter, and heartwarming stories** from our amazing members and special guests. Whether you've been with us from the beginning, are just getting to know us, or are a former member, this is the perfect opportunity to relax, reconnect, and reminisce. Don't miss out on this milestone event!

All Kiwanians and guests from MN-DAK and around the world are invited to join us to help us celebrate. Otter Risers Kiwanis was sponsored by the Fergus Falls Noon Kiwanis Club and was chartered on July 23, 1975. As far as we know we were the first morning club, or breakfast club, in the MN-DAK District, and have been meeting from 6:45 to 8:00 AM Wednesday mornings since 1975.

In addition, when Kiwanis International approved women as members, Otter Risers was one of the first clubs in MN-DAK, if not the very first, to induct women in membership. Come help us celebrate 50 years of service to the Fergus Falls area and beyond. Questions about the event? Email us at [otterrisers@gmail.com](mailto:otterrisers@gmail.com)



## Lake Region Takes Root Receives Grant

The Kiwanis Club of Otter-Risers, Fergus Falls MN recently awarded \$1,000 to support the Lake Region Takes Root (LRTR) Community Garden Greenhouse project. The LRTR program raises nearly 15,000 pounds of food annually to support area food shelves and the Salvation Army.

The community garden also provides volunteer and service opportunities for hundreds of kids through local schools and faith community youth groups. The LRTR greenhouse project has raised about 98% of their fundraising goal of \$115,000 to build a greenhouse and implement utilities in order to enlarge and extend the growing season, producing even more food for families across the Lake Region Healthcare service area of West Central Minnesota.

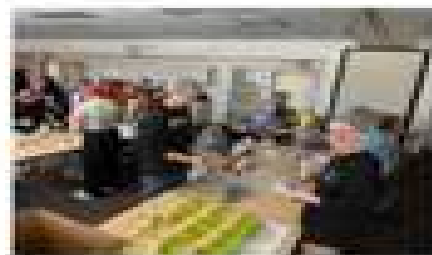
The LRTR Community Garden Fund is hosted by the Lake Region Healthcare Foundation, a public charity established to advance the mission of Lake Region Healthcare, where "we partner to enrich lives through health."

Featured in the (attached) photo are members of the Fergus Falls Otter Risers Kiwanis Club (L to R): Karla Connelly, Wayne Link, Jackie Hendrickson, LRTR Garden Coordinator, Jason Bergstrand, OR Kiwanis Club President, Jeff Drake, Kiwanis club member and LRH Foundation Development Director, Kate Bjorge, and OR Kiwanis Club members Peggy Underwood and Barb Zempel.

## Key Clubbers in Action

### Community in Action

The event was a shining example of what happens when different generations come together for a cause. **50 enthusiastic Key Clubbers** took the lead in running stations, pouring oats, sealing bags, boxing meals, and keeping the energy high!



But they weren't alone in this mission. Ten members from **Builders Club** (our amazing middle school service leaders) rolled up and worked with focus and pride. From the adult side of the Kiwanis fam, **10 Kiwanians** joined in, **7 from CH/Fridley Kiwanis club** and **3 more from NE Kiwanis Club**. Each volunteer brought something special to the table, whether it was experience, speed, encouragement, or just a knack for scooping oats without spilling!

