

Minnekotan



A Message from the Governor

What is the dollar value for our Volunteer hours?

There are of course different methods as to how to value volunteerism. The best that I have seen comes from the Benevolent Order of Elks. This organization measures both member contributions as well as helpers. It uses the "Current Value per US Government Agencies rate" which is defined as "an appraised valuation determined by a governmental body for official purposes". The current rate is \$29.95 per hour. It is then multiplied by the donated hours for all Elk programs.

This organization also uses the current US Government rate for transportation at \$.59 per mile times the estimated number of miles driven to perform these services. Finally, it records contributions other than cash such as books, blood donations, glasses, etc. The ratios of these contributions come to about 80% for labor, 6% for transportation and 14 % for the other noncash items.

Minnesota Dakotas District of Kiwanis International
February 2026

Our Kiwanis activities has to be pretty close to the same ratios. In fact, our service contributions are likely to be much higher per capita than those of Elk members. Using their ratios, my guess is that our total volunteer activities likely exceed \$50 million per year. This is something that we clearly should be proud of as members.

The above should illustrate why it is important to report your Kiwanis actions monthly to your Club Secretary and for the Club Secretary to report these activities to KI. This effort can make us all feel better that our actions have significant value, which they definitely do!

In this new year, let's showcase all the good things Kiwanis brings to our own communities and beyond!

MNDAK District Openings

The Lt Governor position for Division 3 in NE Minnesota is currently vacant. If you are interested in moving into this leadership position, please contact Cindy Braseth at kiwanisdistrict.mndak@outlook.com or call 701-740-8121

We are also recruiting for Lt Governor Elect positions for 2026-27 in Divisions 1, 2, and 3. If you are interested, contact your Lt Governor or Cindy Braseth. The Leadership Directory with contact information can be found here:

<https://k13.site.kiwanis.org/leadership/>

It's the best job you'll ever have and you get to work with amazing Kiwanians.



A Message from the Secretary Treasurer

January is over, WHEW. It's been a cold one and some of us might be getting "cabin fever." It's been hard to get out and about when the high during the day is -20. But as we here in the Northland know, we can't let a little thing like the cold stand in the way of providing service to our communities. Thanks to all of you who are out there doing just that.

Last month we had a push to get clubs to complete their membership plan and submit it to KI. At the time we only had 9 clubs recorded as having completed that process. I'm happy to report that we currently have 42 clubs with completed membership plans. That's great!! Kudos to all of you who responded. Now, the fun part starts. Implementation.

If your club has not created your plan yet, it's not too late. There's some help if you need it. Check out Bradley Knudson's article below for the links to the worksheets and resources for implementing your plan.

THE DISTRICT PHONE NUMBER IS CHANGING! MY NEW NUMBER IS 701-740-8121. I think I've changed everywhere it's posted, but if you see the old one somewhere, please let me know.

More business items:

- Feb 15th is the deadline for clubs to file your 990, 990 EZ or 990 N for the 2024-25 year. This is required to keep your tax-exempt status.
- Some of you are updating your bylaws to the new 2025 form. If you're not, you should be. **NOTE:** If you are using the "Optional Section," the verbiage is limited and will decrease your font to being barely readable. I have been suggesting that clubs put those items like committee etc. in a Policies and Procedures document that is much easier to manage than bylaws revisions.
- Your club officers should all be entered into Engage by now. If yours are not, contact me and I will help your secretary get them entered.
- Kiwanis International dues are due. Check the Finance link in Engage for what your current invoice is. If dues are not paid you are in danger of losing your charter.
- Start thinking about **the International Convention in Manila**. Registration is open now and deadlines are earlier than normal this year. There are also some international travel requirements to be aware of. Here's the link to all of the information and preliminary schedule of events: <https://www.kiwanis.org/members/kiwanis-international-convention-manila/>
- It's never too early to start planning for our 2026 District Convention in West Fargo, ND August 7-9, 2026. I would love to see every club represented this year. There are going to be some changes this year, so watch for more information.

As always, I'm here to support clubs and members. Contact me before you get frustrated. I can help!



Bradley Knudson
Membership &
Engagement
Coordinator

Membership is Service

Don't let your club fall into this scenario:

After more than 60 years of serving the local community, “Your club's name” Kiwanis Club members are leaving a legacy, after deciding to shut down the local service organization.

It's essential for every club member to be involved in the growth and enrichment of the Club. By working together, leveraging diverse strengths and networks, we can effectively stop the membership decline. This collaborative effort not only helps in attracting new members but also in building a robust support system within the club itself.

How can you help your club continue in your community?

1. To ensure our success into the future, it's crucial that we focus on actively recruiting the next generations. Let's commit to nurturing and integrating young members into our vision.
2. Create a club membership recruiting statement and media release available to all members. This statement serves as a powerful tool to engage potential members by expressing the benefits and opportunities of belonging.
3. Create club membership growth plans in conjunction with service events. Every plan helps a club get

engaged, active and excited about inviting others into the Kiwanis family. Important links for club growth:

[Create Your Club's Membership Plan](#)
[Choose your Clubs Recruitment Resources](#)
[Order a club boost box](#)

Help your district strengthen clubs and build new clubs by becoming a club coach or opener. To achieve the mission and vision of Kiwanis, we embrace challenges and work as one and show the world we can open and strengthen clubs in our District.

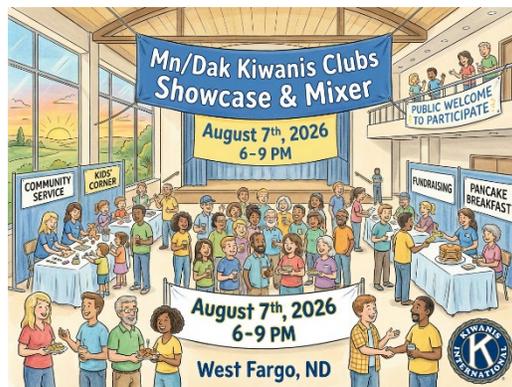
Your input is important!

Join Zoom Meeting: Weekly Tuesday at 1pm CT

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83521811066?pwd=2DhMDmToKabk2CLar6y4VR4IjYaQk.m.1>

Meeting ID: 835 2181 1066

Passcode: 575289



Get ready to connect and celebrate at this year's District Convention in West Fargo on August 7-9 2026! We're excited to announce a special Showcase & Mixer on Friday evening, hosted by our District Club Building Team. It's the perfect opportunity to boost your club's visibility, network with fellow members, and enjoy an evening of camaraderie and inspiration. Don't miss out on this fantastic event to enhance your club's growth and success!

Sharon Scudder
District Leadership
and Development
Coordinator



Love of Learning is in the Air

Opportunities for Learning are available. Lt. Governor Training dates are April 11 and 25, 2026 by zoom at 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM MT and in person at District Convention (DCON) in West Fargo in August.

Club Leadership Education (CLE) training has recently been updated and can be found in Engage under Education in the left column menu. This will assist officers and membership chairman of individual clubs. My wish is to see each Division to hold CLE training for their clubs in person.

Kiwanis Amplify opens February 1st at 7 AM Eastern time. There are 7 modules but 5 will earn you a certificate. For registration visit www.kiwanis.org/amplify.

This month let Love and Opportunity be your guide to Learning.

Governor Elect for 2026 - 27

Have you been thinking about being more involved in district leadership and are a past Lt Governor? We are currently recruiting members for the position of Governor Elect for the 2026-27 year. If this sounds like you, please submit your application to Cindy Braseth at the district office by emailing kiwanisdistrict.mndak@outlook.com by February 15, 2026.

Albert Lea Day Breakers Lose Charter Member



Submitted by
Lois Ahern,
Secretary

Richard "Dick"
Polley passed
away on
January 17,
2026 at the
Good Samaritan
Care Center in

Albert Lea, MN. Dick was a charter member of the Day-Breakers Kiwanis Club of Albert Lea, MN, joining Kiwanis International and the Day-Breakers in 1976. He attended weekly Club meetings through February 2025 when health issues prevented him from getting to our 7:00 AM meetings.

Dick served the Day-Breakers in many ways, including President, Secretary and Chairperson of many committees. He participated in every service project and social event sponsored by the Day-Breakers. Dick also received a Division Star Award in 2016. Dick will be remembered as always being a gentleman, always positive, always proud of his family and community.

Funeral services were held on January 24, 2026. Full obituary can be found at www.bayviewfuneral.com



A Message from Kiwanis International Children's Fund

By Kathy Welle

The Possibility Project Update.

What we've raised!

There are nearly 180,000 Kiwanis club members in 85 nations. What if everyone in our global network came together to make an impact?

Here's what The Kiwanis Possibility Project has achieved so far.

us \$10,125,000 RAISED TO DATE

WHAT IMPACT CAN YOUR DONATION HAVE?

- \$150 can establish a **home library for up to 20 children.**
- \$400 can secure **non-perishable food, school clothes and school supplies for five children.**
- \$1,000 can provide **6 months of academic tutoring to children with learning challenges.**
- \$1,500 can feed a **hungry child breakfast and lunch for a year.**

Kiwanis Day of Giving

Make a club or individual gift online on February 25, 2026, to help us reach our fundraising goal of US\$125,000 in one day! Gifts support The Kiwanis Possibility Project and help the Children's Fund meet the greatest needs of kids around the world.

Note: If a check is sent in, include a comment that it is for Kiwanis Day of Giving!

Exciting News:

Many Kiwanis Clubs and Individuals continue to submit their contributions early during our fiscal year. During the first 3 months, Mn-Dakotas District submitted over \$31,590.

#KidsNeedKiwanis





Donate to the Minnesota-Dakotas Educational Foundation

Submitted by Denis Cornell, Trustee

Has your club sent a Century Club donation?

The Century Club program of the Minnesota-Dakotas Kiwanis Educational Foundation can be considered an ongoing youth service project for every club. A Kiwanis Club in the Minnesota-Dakotas District can become a Century Club member with an annual suggested contribution of at least \$100.00 that can be taken from Youth Activities funds, Project Profit Funds or Administrative Funds.

The Minnesota Dakotas Educational Foundation exists solely for the purpose of distributing scholarships to students who will be attending post-secondary schools in the Minnesota Dakotas District. These Scholarships are distributed annually across the three states.

The foundation depends on Century Club contributions of at least \$100.00 from clubs in our district to build the endowment of the foundation to continue providing scholarships to high school students throughout the district. Last year the Minnesota-Dakotas Kiwanis Educational Foundation awarded fifty-four \$850.00 scholarships to high school students in the district. The Century Club contribution should be included in the annual budget of each club and sent to the foundation

secretary/treasurer as soon as the club budget is approved. The Century Club contribution form is available on the MN-DAK District Kiwanis web site under the Foundations tab. Mail your Century Club contribution to:

Minnesota-Dakotas Kiwanis Educational Foundation
Attn: Lowell Disrud
1106 14th Street N
Fargo, ND 58102

Contributions may also be made by clubs or individuals through a "Vantine Life Fellowship" with a contribution of \$100.00 or a "Joseph E Messer Fellowship" through a contribution of \$500.00 payable in two installments of \$250.00. These fellowships are a great way to recognize exemplary service of club members and officers or other individuals. Information describing these fellowships is available in the Minnesota-Dakotas Educational Foundation brochure which can be downloaded from the Minnesota-Dakotas Kiwanis website under the Foundations tab. **Remember that this is "YOUR" foundation.**

Pierre-Fort Pierre Celebrates 104 Years



Submitted by Jeff Mammenga
Members of the Pierre-Fort Pierre Kiwanis Club celebrated the club's 104th birthday on January 20! The club was chartered on January 19, 1922. Club Secretary and Historian Jeff Mammenga shared some of the

highlights of the history of the club, including the famous beer-drinking bear incident at the District Convention in Grand Forks, ND, in 1922. President Don Hoepfer posed with a special "Keep it Booming!" cake made by club member Hillary Larsen. "Keep it Booming!" is a popular song sung at club meetings.

Still Time to Plan Your Trip of a Lifetime

Submitted by Courtney Fallway

The 2026 Kiwanis International Convention in Manila will take place June 24-27. The lower-cost registration has been extended to March 2. The fee is \$409 per attendee. Registration from March 3 through April 13 will be \$509. Non-member guests can register for \$199 before March 3 and \$299 after. Children under 18 have a discounted fee of \$109 through April 13. On-site registration will not be allowed in Manila at the time of the convention. Delegate forms are due by April 30.

Your registration fee includes a variety of unique events. Opening day, current and past Amplify participants are invited to a Kiwanis Amplify Capstone Experience, and first-time convention attendees are invited to a gathering to meet other newbies, ask questions, and collect tips for the best convention experience possible. On the second day, attendees get to attend a joint Kiwanis International/ASPAC opening session. All week, districts from the Asia Pacific Region will host a cultural showcase, sharing their projects, culture, and more. Additional ticketed events are available each day of the convention.

June 25

- Kiwanis Children's Fund Luncheon \$40
- The Colors of ASPAC: A Night of Unity and Recognition \$80

June 26

- Kiwanis Service Leadership Programs Luncheon \$40

June 27

- Kiwanis International/Kiwanis Asia Pacific Gala: The Culture of Asia Pacific \$80



Hotels for this convention have not been assigned to specific districts. The convention itself will take place at the Marriott Hotel Manila. For more information about hotels and everything else related to this convention, go to

<https://www.kiwanis.org/members/kiwanis-international-convention-manila/>

After all that fun in the Philippines, be sure to show up to the Minn-Dak convention in August in Fargo to regale us with stories from your trip!

Christmas With Dignity Event



Submitted by Katie Landwehr

On December 12th 2025, 19 key clubbers from two schools and six Kiwanians partnered with the local hospitality house to

volunteer at their annual "Christmas with Dignity" event. It is an event where low income parents can come and purchase gifts for their children at 10% of the retail cost. Brings so much joy to help parents find gifts for their children and to hear the stories of

just how much it means to them! The smiles on their faces are priceless!

Otter Risers of Fergus Falls Celebrate Community With Two Projects



Submitted by Gerry Worner, Membership Chair

Otter Risers Kiwanis has continued to serve the greater Fergus Falls community in a number of ways. When Kiwanis International announced its Celebrate Community program, encouraging Kiwanis clubs to partner with other service clubs in their community,

Otter Risers reached out to two Lions Clubs, two Rotary clubs, and the Fergus Falls Noon Kiwanis Club. As a result, Otter Risers partnered with the Riverside Lions of Fergus Falls to jointly clean trash from the Downtown Riverwalk along the Otter Tail River in downtown Fergus Falls. Four Lions and ten Otter Risers quickly cleaned litter from the walk and even retrieved a bicycle that had been thrown into the river.

Expecting the bike had been stolen, it was taken to the Police Department to hopefully be returned to its owner. Photo shows the crew prepared to start the cleanup process.

Otter Risers Kiwanis also partnered with Fergus Falls Noon Rotary on building the Community Garden Greenhouse. Noon Rotary had made a major contribution to the Community Garden, and two members became construction superintendents for the new 70 ft by 30 ft greenhouse.

The community garden is part of the Lake Region Healthcare Foundation. This program, named Lake Region Takes Root, provides garden produce for the area food shelf and the Salvation Army, and the new greenhouse will enable an increase in annual produce by about one third.

Otter Risers made a significant contribution toward funding the greenhouse and provided manpower for assembling the structure and the tables that will be used inside the greenhouse. Photos show the assembly crew in action.





Help Sponsor DCON

Sponsoring a Key Club helps build strong youth leaders in your community and creates a meaningful connection between students and Kiwanis. It allows Kiwanis clubs to expand their impact by supporting service, leadership, and student growth.

What is DCON:

DCON provides valuable leadership training, officer education, and opportunities for students to network with Key Clubbers across the district.

Location :

Aberdeen, South Dakota

Date :

March 13-15 2025

You could help by :

- Helping cover registration costs for your Key Club
- Support travel and lodging when needed
- Make DCON accessible for more students
- Encourage attendance so clubs can grow and learn



Reach out to YOUR Key Club today to start discussing this opportunity!



For any questions please email:

gov@minndakkeyclub.org
& treas@minndakkeyclub.org

www.minndakkeyclub.org

