

# Minnekotan

Minnesota Dakotas District of Kiwanis  
International  
March 2026



## A Message from the Governor

There has been much talk about how AI (Artificial Intelligence) may affect all of us in the future. A recent *Wall Street Journal* editorial (Dec 23, 2025) gives us some insight into how I think it might benefit Kiwanis. The editorial's author presupposes that with AI, entry level jobs will end and then ponders how companies will train employees for middle and higher-level jobs, i.e., How will employees learn "judgement" and "strategy" skills required for management positions.

The answer surprisingly is Kiwanis.

Kiwanis offers a wonderful environment to learn both "judgement" and "strategy" skills as well as other managerial skills. Kiwanis members have opportunities to learn from testing their thoughts against real events.

Many of our volunteer actions start with basic things: How many pancakes will we serve? What might the weather be and if necessary what adjustments should be factored in? How many volunteers will be

needed for a specific event? What if some fail to show up? What kind of money might be generated? These are just a few of the questions and response decisions that build "judgement" and "strategy" skills.

Because of this skill building, Kiwanis offers a wonderful experience for ambitious employees who want to move ahead within a tough and rapidly changing business environment. Kiwanis could be a game changer for these young people. We should let them know that their future might pass through us. Encourage a young person to join by explaining the benefits in doing so for both their community and their future.

**NOTE:** Another leadership benefit of being a Kiwanis member is access to Kiwanis Amplify for only \$50.

[Check It Out Here](#)

## 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](mailto: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/>



## A Message from the Secretary Treasurer

Is it Spring yet? At least we are having some relief from below 0 temperatures right now. We all know that it can change quickly. We're not out of the woods yet.

**THE DISTRICT PHONE NUMBER HAS CHANGED TO 701-740-8121. IF YOU HAVE THE OLD NUMBER SAVED, PLEASE CHANGE IT TO THE NEW ONE! THE OLD ONE IS DISCONNECTED.**

### Some business items:

- Feb 15<sup>th</sup> was 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. If you didn't get it done, do it now. You could incur daily penalties for delaying further.
- 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.

- 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.
- Thinking about going to the International Convention in Manila? **Registration costs go up tomorrow.** 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.
- Do you have a great service project your club is dying to share? Watch for information about the Service showcase that is being planned for Friday night August 9<sup>th</sup> at district convention.

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

## 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 and an article to introduce yourself to Cindy Braseth at the district office by emailing [kiwanisdistrict.mndak@outlook.com](mailto:kiwanisdistrict.mndak@outlook.com) by March 15, 2026.



Bradley Knudson  
Membership &  
Engagement  
Coordinator

## District Club Membership Plan

The latest summary of the Districts 2025-26 Club Membership Plan, as of January 15, 2026, shows significant insight into our clubs membership growth plans. We appreciate the clubs that have shared their strategies and progress in membership growth and retention. Your efforts are crucial in building a vibrant and sustainable community. Keep up the great work!

A club dedicated to growth and member retention through strategic growth plans demonstrates a commitment to community service and leadership development. By increasing membership, enhancing community projects, and fostering partnerships, we aim to extend our reach and deepen our impact on communities around the world.

Join us for the district's Membership Committee weekly meeting every Tuesday at 1 PM Central. It's a great opportunity to ask questions, voice your concerns, and share your club's accomplishments with the committee. Your participation is valuable to us!

Topic: Minn-Dak Membership Committee Zoom Meeting

Time: Every Tuesday at 01:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83521811066?pwd=2DhMDmToKabk2CLar6y4VR4IjYaQkm.1>



Sharon Scudder  
District Leadership  
and Development  
Coordinator

## Marching Into Learning

We have some wonderful and upcoming opportunities to learn and grow in the next couple of months.

Lt. Governor Training via zoom will be held on April 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> both at 10-12 PM (MT). Connie Schroeder will be co-facilitator on the April 11<sup>th</sup> zoom gathering. It is important to attend both zoom training as a preliminary overview for the Lt. Governor Training in Fargo, ND on August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026. We will have many experienced presenters that will be sharing their knowledge. So put the dates on your calendar.

Amplify will begin in May so be sure to register. If you are Lt. Governor for the years 2026-2027, you may register free with code LG2026 only 200 will be allowed but if it is full, code will not be accepted and a \$50 registration will be required. Give it a try, it will be a great investment for your future.

Certified Leadership Education (CLE) training will be offered at District Convention (DCON). However, I would encourage each Division to hold a live in-person training for officers and those seeking leadership opportunities.

Don't SKIP out on these learning opportunities if you want to MARCH into the knowledge of the Kiwanis future.



## A Message from Kiwanis International Children's Fund

By Kathy Welle

During the teaser with Spring warm temps for a week, it seemed like flowers would be visible soon. Well, that has now disappeared and we are back to some winter snow and colder weather too.



**Kiwanis Day of Giving – February 25, 2026**  
Goal is \$125,000.00. Total funds raised to be reported soon. All funds raised will be added to:

**the Kiwanis®  
POSSIBILITY  
PROJECT**

**US \$10,223,000** RAISED TO DATE

The Kiwanis MNDK District Giving total went from \$39,208 for December to \$45,735 for January.

A huge THANK YOU to all who have contributed so far, this fiscal year.

Kiwanis Children's Fund provides a grant of 5% of total club and individual contributions each year.

The grant payment for over \$2900.00 has been sent to MN-Dakotas Educational Foundation to be used for District Scholarships for continued education.

To continue our strong support for the Project, We are in need of a Champion for each the following Divisions: 1; 2; 4; 5;

Lt Gov.'s for these 4 Divisions, would you consider being a Champion for a few years? It helps to keep the flow of updated Project information to all the clubs in each area. As each of you visit your clubs, the Possibility Project could be part of your agenda. Please contact me if you are interested.

*"Kiwanis Children's Fund contributions are results of good people doing good things"*

Frank Heitzman "When good people get together and do good things, good things happen"

**#KidsNeedKiwanis**





## Your Donations Go Far

Submitted by Bill Lardy, Trustee

For most of us reading this newsletter article, worrying about how to pay for our postsecondary education is long in the past. The way I paid for my college expenses was Summer jobs and part time jobs during the school year. And a little help from my parents.

So, I really didn't worry about college costs too much. Perhaps the same was true for many of you.

But how times have changed! Now it is nearly impossible for post-secondary school costs to be met the way I met mine. Nowadays, it takes at least summer jobs, part time jobs, help from parents and outside help from a variety of sources.

For many students, a primary source of outside help is scholarships. And competition for scholarships that are available is very keen as it seems there are fewer available.

That is where your gifts to our District Foundation really help. Every gift goes into the Foundation's corpus and only the income generated by the corpus is used to fund our scholarships. Thus, your gift continues giving year after year after year.

Another way, and often not considered, is your support of Kiwanis International's Children's Fund. This Fund returns a portion of money our District contributes to it to our Education Foundation, which uses these dollars to award additional scholarships to our own graduating seniors.

This year the Children's Fund returned \$3,000 to MNDK Foundation. We, in turn, created 6 new scholarships by adding \$500 to each of the 6, making 6 \$1,000 scholarships

Each of us stand on the shoulders of those who have preceded us. Please do your part to give a leg up to the next generation of leaders so they too may stand on our shoulders

## Columbia Heights-Fridley Valentines



Eleven Kiwanians and 12 Columbia Heights Key Clubbers enjoyed making 60 valentines for the Fridley and Columbia Heights Fire and Police departments in appreciation for their service to our communities!

## 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. Below are some events that are not included in your registration but may be purchased separately:

### 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/>

## Kiwanis Children's Fund Club Grant Stories of Impact

By Kathy Welle

Do the dollars that you and your clubs send to the Kiwanis Children's Fund benefit you and your clubs? The answer is YES. Over the past 3 years, over \$40,000 has been granted back to the Minnesota-Dakotas District, impacting over 17,500 children.

### **Below are some Kiwanis Clubs receiving grants:**

**St. Louis Park** - cause: Health/Nutrition - Kids impacted -105 provide Thanksgiving meals to families

**Litchfield** - cause: Youth Leadership Development -Kids impacted -190 Organize a career program for 8th grade students

**Rochester Sunrisers** - cause: Health/Nutrition Kids- impacted - 300 Cooking for kids - Jeremiah Program Dinner service

**South Sioux Falls** - cause: Health/Nutrition Kids- impacted -300 Expand Library for children with special needs

**Albert Lea Noon Club**- cause: Health/Nutrition Kids- Impacted - 300 Inclusive Playground Play Zone

**Mitchell** - cause: Health/Nutrition Kids Impacted - 70

Kiwanis Cozy Blankets of Comfort

**Minot** - cause- Health/Nutrition - Pediatrics Play Therapy Equipment

**Minnesota-Dakotas Education Foundation** -cause: Education/Literacy Scholarship Awards for continuing education, impacting several hundred kids

We think more clubs would qualify for a grant if they just applied. [Visit the Children's Fund Website](#) for more information.

## Mitchell Snack Pack Program



Members of the Mitchell SD club joined forces with the Mitchell Aktion Club on February 11 to help address food insecurity in their community. Together, they packed snacks for the Mitchell Weekend Snackpack Program, which serves more than 500 students in Mitchell schools from pre-K through 8th grade.

Each Friday, participating students receive food items tucked into their backpacks—simple, kid-friendly options they can prepare on their own over the weekend. For many children, school provides their most consistent and nutritious meals. When they are home for the weekend, those resources may not be as readily available.

Thanks to the incredible teamwork of our Kiwanis family volunteers, more than 500 snack bags were packed in short order, with each bag containing five snack items. Their efforts will help ensure local students head into the weekend with a little extra support and care.

## Albert Lea Clubs Annual Book Project



Members of the Albert Lea Noon, Daybreakers and Golden K Kiwanis clubs last week placed labels on books donated by Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation for the clubs' annual book project.

The clubs annually read to all of the preschool and kindergartners at Albert Lea, Alden-Conger and Glenville-Emmons schools, as well as Hollandale Christian, St. Theodore Catholic School and United Preschool. They also read to children at area day cares, HeadStart and The Children's Center. After the Kiwanians read, they leave a book for each child to take home and keep.

## Crookston Builders Club



On January 24th the Builders Club in Crookston went to the Villa St. Vincent to do art projects with the residents. They loved their time there and want to go back again.

## Rochester Golden K Promotes Kids Reading at Home



Pictured: The Golden K book sorting volunteers paused for a photo at the conclusion of their work.

A dozen or so members of the Golden K club in Rochester met recently to sort and divide over 600 children's books which they then donated to the Rochester Boys and Girls club and 5 elementary schools in Rochester. About 200 of the books were given to the club by the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation [SMIF].

SMIF's Early Literacy Grant program is designed to support early literacy efforts that enhance school readiness for children birth to age eight by providing children with books. SMIF donates books annually to interested Kiwanis Clubs [and others] to assist them in getting these books distributed.

The additional books this year were unclaimed new and used books from the Rochester Community's Christmas Anonymous event. The Golden K Club offered to take them and add them into their book distribution effort this year.

Here are the donation stickers we put in every donated book



Discover the Joy  
Of Reading  
Donated by  
Kiwanis Golden K

## Kiwanis Club of Fargo Holds 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Pancake Karnival



The Kiwanis Club of Fargo proudly hosted its 68th Annual Pancake Karnival on February 14, welcoming nearly 7,000 attendees for a day of food, fellowship, and community impact.

This year's event set a new record for sponsorship revenue and combined with record attendance, resulted in the most successful fundraising Pancake Karnival in

the event's history. Powered by more than 350 dedicated volunteers, the Karnival served nearly 50,000 pancakes, poured over 12,000 ounces of syrup, dished up 1,600 pounds of our Famous Kiwanis Sausage, and served more than 20,000 ounces of milk, juice, and coffee.

A highlight of the day was the presentation of our annual Community Champion for Kids Awards. The Individual Award was presented to longtime Fargo Kiwanian Margie Bailly in recognition of her



unwavering dedication to children and her years of hands-on service within our club and community.

The Organizational Award was presented to Fill the Dome, whose large-scale community effort to combat food insecurity continues to make a meaningful difference for families across our region.

The Pancake Karnival remains our largest annual fundraiser, with proceeds supporting efforts to combat food insecurity among children in our region, including Bridging the Gap, Great Plains Food Bank, and Churches United.

This event does not happen without the incredible volunteers who give their time and energy each year. The Pancake Karnival truly represents the perfect marriage of community celebration and purposeful fundraising in support of remarkable causes.