

Minnekotan

Minnesota Dakotas District of Kiwanis
International
June 2026



A Message from the Governor

Summer is upon us! This is the time for you to think about coming to the District Convention, better known as DCON. Attendance provides an opportunity to enhance your Kiwanis experience. This event is normally three days but you can attend just one day.

I started out by just attending one day. I drove to the Convention early in the morning and returned late that evening. I chose Saturday which had the awards banquet and District elections. It gave me a good flavor of what the three-day convention would be like. I met Dr. John Button, our International Trustee advisor for the district that year. Within a couple of years, he would become International President.

I attended some of the learning sessions and met people who would become friends. It was my "icebreaker" and it helped better connect me to the organization and make me more aware of the wonderful experiences Kiwanis offers.

This year DCON will be held in West Fargo, ND on August 7-9. Check the MNDAK Web site for more details.

It is an opportunity worth experiencing!

John



2026 District Convention Registration is Open!

You can register for the convention, book your room and find more information about what's being planned on the [MNDAK Convention](#) page. There will be updates as plans are finalized so check back often.

Our goal this year is to have all clubs represented so make sure your club has the district convention as a line item in the budget. Also watch for information about what to bring with you to convention.



A Message from the Secretary Treasurer

Summer has finally arrived in NW Minnesota. We were complaining about the cold temperatures in May, and now we're complaining that it's too hot. Some of us anyway. Me, I enjoy the heat and being able to sit out on my patio as I write this.

It seems that summer brings a whole bunch of club projects and outdoor activities. We also have lots of family activities during summer as well. Balancing them all can be a challenge but balance them we do. We're Kiwanians after all, it's what we do.

There's lots happening around the District as well this summer. We have 4 members heading to the Philippines this month for the International Convention. They will represent our District as delegates and bring back lots of memories, I'm sure.

CKI and Key Club members are making plans to attend their International Conventions in Dallas the first week in July. Perhaps your Key Club and CKI members are some of them. They will also be joining us at our District Convention in August. The energy they bring in contagious and I'm looking forward to it!

A team of people have started making appointments in the Forest Lake, MN area where we plan to build a new club in the third week of June. If you would like to be a part of that effort, either making phone calls

or joining the team in Forest Lake, it's not too late. Contact me or Bradley Knudson and we'll get you started. It's a great experience and a great opportunity to share your love of Kiwanis with others.

You and your club should also be thinking about District Convention. Check out articles from me, Bradley Knudson and Katie Landwehr our Public Relations Coordinator, on some activities you should be doing right now to prepare. You will also see a reminder from Dave and Paulette Odette about the Memorial Service and how to submit names of those who have passed from your club. My personal goal is to see all 97 clubs represented. I love making new friends so if I haven't met you yet, introduce yourself. I'll be the one running around!

Some business items:

- Club elections should have been held in May, and the results of those elections need to be recorded in Engage by today, June 1st.
- 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 9th at district convention.
- The Call to Convention notification has been sent to all clubs via email. If you did not receive it, let me know.
- I am still seeing clubs that don't have monthly reports filed. It seems that the numbers are higher since the transition to Engage. If you are having issues with the new platform, let me know. I can help.

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



Get Ready to Brag About What Your Club Does!

Get ready to connect and celebrate at this year's District Convention in West Fargo, happening 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!

We're inviting the public to join us in a unique opportunity to connect, participate, and make a difference. Local clubs, this is your chance to boost your membership and showcase your commitment to service by sponsoring an in-house service project. Don't miss out on this chance to shine and grow together!

Reserve a table now and present your community service projects through engaging illustrations, dynamic PowerPoint presentations, and informative flyers. This is a fantastic opportunity to highlight the hard work and dedication of your members while inspiring others to **join** in making a difference. Don't miss out on the chance to shine spotlight on your club's contributions to the community!



June Brings Training Opportunities to You

We have a wonderful opportunity for you this month and information for upcoming training. Amplify is open for those who have registered so that you can begin your module study prior to end date of September 30th, 2026.

Certified Educational training will be presented by Kiwanis International by zoom or saved recordings, this is still under consideration. However, I encourage all divisions to host a club leadership training for all the new incoming officers and for those who are contemplating a leadership role in the future. Knowledge is priceless and provides you with the confidence to move forward. Please contact me if you want to set up a Cub Leadership Education (CLE) training course for your division. Also, we will be offering CLE training in West Fargo at the District convention in August.

Lt Governor training is scheduled for August 6, 2026. Be sure to register and book your hotel room a day early. It will be important to get your team registered so we can conduct our plans for 2026-2027 year with Governor-Elect Karen Davis.

Don't forget the many videos and documents available to you on Kiwanis International website.

Hope to engage with you in June. If you have questions, contact me at ShareKiwanis@gmail.com



Katie Landwehr
District Public
Relations
Coordinator

Greetings Everyone,

We are actively
preparing for our

District Convention this year, which is August 7th-9th, 2026 in West Fargo, ND. As part of the District Convention, we will be hosting an outreach fair at the hotel for the Fargo- Moorhead communities to come and check out what Kiwanis is all about. As part of this, we are asking each club to prepare to have a table where they can talk about their club. We would like to ask clubs to put together a photo display on a medium of their choice (trifold, poster board, running PowerPoint, etc) to have on their table to demonstrate what their club does.

Additionally, I would like to put together a video highlighting each club. I know that technology can scare people, but what I am asking doesn't have to be scary.

I am requesting each club put together a short 1-minute video highlighting something special about their club. Be creative - some ideas would be filming something in your city that your club supports (ex. a park that your club sponsors), an ongoing project that your club works on regularly (ex. volunteering at a food shelf, serving meals for the homeless), a joint project with your club and a sponsored circle K/key club/builders club/k-kids/or aktion club, or just a member(s) explaining briefly some key highlights about your club.

This video does not need to be done on a fancy camera - a cellphone camera will do. If

you have questions regarding this, please let me know at katesland2@aol.com.

You can upload your video to the google folder: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/111k1FGEEFWB-CaKSYaH_eGKaxcLzIEnf?usp=sharing

Please have your video uploaded by June 15th.

Thank you!

31,680 Meals Packaged -
WOW



Submitted by Katie Landwehr

Members of Columbia Heights-Fridley Kiwanis, Northeast Minneapolis Kiwanis, Fridley Key Club, Columbia Heights Key Club, and Fridley Builders' club participated in their 5th annual food packing event! They volunteered with a local non-profit, Harvest Pack, to pack 31,680 cinnamon oatmeal meals for students in the local communities.

These bags are given to another non-profit organization, Every Meal, who will distribute them into students backpacks in their lockers on Fridays so that they can have breakfasts over the weekend. This is a great K-family event and it is a highlight of our year!



A Message from Kiwanis International Children's Fund

By Kathy Welle

Hopefully Spring is here to stay this time. Green lawns and many flowers now decorate the gardens and yards.



Possibility Project continues strong. Total funds raised so far, is 10,669,000.00 since fiscal year 2022-

2023

KidsneedKiwanis

Good news for MNDK District – 82 of 97 clubs are participating in The Possibility Project and the total gifts as of March 31, 2026 (Club and Individual) equals \$237,164.00. This total represents gifts starting in the fiscal year 2022-2023.

Remember, when recognizing club officers and members with a Hixon Award or Bleichman Award, or other KI awards, all funds are counted toward the The Possibility Project (TPP).

There are many clubs that have already met the KI goal of \$100 per member per year but have not submitted the Impact Club form. For your special club recognitions, this would be a good time to complete the form and

send to: Kiwanis Children's Fund, PO Box 6457 – Dept. #286, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

[Access the new Impact Club Form here](#)



"Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is courage to continue that counts."

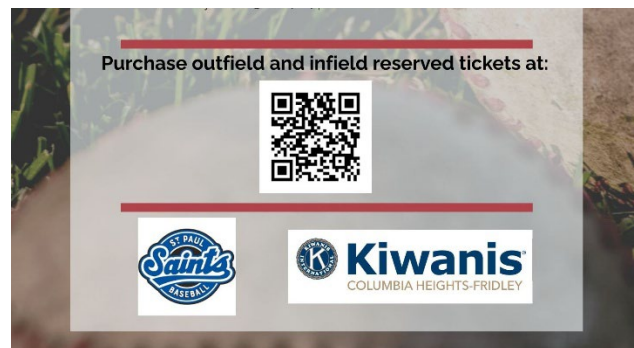
By: Winston Churchill

Columbia Heights-Fridley Kiwanis Partner with the St Paul Saints Baseball Team

Submitted by Katie Landwehr

For it is 1, 2, 3 strikes you are out at the ol' ballgame! Who doesn't love a good baseball game in the summer?

The Columbia Heights-Fridley Kiwanis Club is partnering with the St. Paul Saints for a fundraiser in the month of June. A portion of any reserved outfield or infield ticket sold for any June game will come back to the club if you use this link: <https://www.gofevo.com/group/Kiwanis2026> or the QR code below will come back to the club. Please consider making a trip to CHS field and supporting the St. Paul Saints and supporting the Columbia Heights-Fridley Kiwanis Club this June!





Minnesota Dakotas Kiwanis District Educational Foundation Makes a Difference

Submitted by Karen Davis, 2025-26
Governor Elect Minnesota Dakotas District

The Minnesota Dakotas Educational foundation is making a lasting difference in the lives of students across our district through its annual scholarship grant program. Each November, scholarship applications are sent to the president and secretary of every club. From there, the success of the program depends on us. Club members play a vital role in ensuring this information reaches local high school counselors and ultimately, the students who would benefit from these opportunities.

This past year alone, The Foundation awarded more than 50 scholarships totaling nearly \$55,000 to students pursuing higher education in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. Each scholarship provides \$850, and clubs are encouraged to contribute an additional \$150 to create a \$1000 scholarship for a deserving student.

The impact of these scholarships is significant. A single opportunity can profoundly influence a student's future and create a lasting positive change.

How and why should you get involved?

Your support helps open doors for the next generation of leaders, professionals, and community servants. Contributions through the Century Club Membership for Kiwanis Clubs, the Van Tyne Life Fellowship for individuals award, the Joseph E. Messer Fellowship or memorial gifts honoring a loved one or a fellow Kiwanian all help sustain and grow these scholarships for years to come. With our District convention approaching soon, please consider your donation. The money donated towards the scholarships and the awards given will make a lasting impression for years to come.

When we invest in students, we invest in the future of our communities. Together, we can continue creating opportunities that inspire hope, achievement, and possibility.



Pierre - Fort Pierre Kiwanis serves community banquet

Members of the Pierre-Fort Pierre Kiwanis Club served the community banquet on May 21, About 225 meals were served. Kiwanian Diane London, owner of the local Perkins Restaurant, donated all of the food, which was greatly appreciated!



District Convention

Memorial Service

Submitted by Dave and Paulette Odette

Plan on attending the Sunday Morning Kiwanian Memorial Service at the upcoming 2026 District Convention in West Fargo, ND. 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 Power Point slide. Please email your Club list and information soon to Dave and Paulette Odette at odette@wiktel.com.

What You Need to Know About the 2026 District Convention

Submitted by Cindy Braseth

Am I the only one obsessed with preparation for the District Convention in August? Probably, it's my job! Well, anyway, there are some things I want to share that you as a members and your club need to be aware of and get ready. So, here's a laundry list:

- The Mitchell club will be there with their T-shirts again and they tell me that they will have some new items. They donate a portion of their proceeds back to the Foundation so come prepared to update your swag.
- The Kiwanis Children's Fund will have their annual raffle. Bring an item to donate either individually or from your club. You will get credit toward the Possibility Project pledge for your club. Also, bring all those K dollars you have been collecting. If you can, bring a check for Kathy, she gets nervous transporting all that cash, but she'll take it.
- The Educational Foundation will have their Annual Silent Auction. Bring one or two items for that as well.
- We will be building birthday cake kits for local food shelves. They will need cake mix, frosting, candles, cards, anything that will make a child in need feel special on their birthday.
- Bring information, videos, handouts, picture boards etc. to share at the Friday night showcase. We will have table for clubs to share the cool things they do in their communities to serve kids. See Bradley Knudson's article for some more information.

That's enough for now. See you there.

Telling Your Story Pays Off

Submitted by Vern Hagedorn

I am the current President of the Kiwanis Club of Black Hills, Hot Springs and have been for several years. Like many small clubs, we have struggled to fill Officer and Board positions the last few years. I was determined that this year I would find my replacement. I discovered that if you keep moving and telling your story, you never know what will happen. So we started telling our story about how we have served our community for almost 105 years. I've listed some of our annual projects below:



1. Every Easter we make little Easter Bunny treats filled with jelly beans and

Cadbury chocolate eggs. We alternate between two facilities and this year the retirement community received 65 Bunny Baskets.

2. During our community Christmas kick-off called "Christmas in the Hills" our annual club fundraiser features homemade goodies, and our famous Buffalo Stew and Potato Soup. They are secret recipes developed especially for this function.

3. With the American Legion Auxiliary, we share the cost of \$3000 to have the Delta Dental Bus for one week in the Spring. We had 68 children apply for assistance with only 40 available "time slots". We served 48 students totaling \$48,648 worth of dental work.

4. We collected over 1000 articles of winter clothing including hats and gloves during our annual drive, most were brand new coats donated by citizens. The youth size clothing is stored in one location in the school district for access by staff. The larger coats are given to the VA Volunteer Program, which are also available to other community agencies.

5. Two scholarships are presented at Honors Night at the end of the school year. A \$1000 scholarship is presented to a senior to help with collage expenses. The second one will change from year to year based on need. During this presentation, I take the opportunity to share with the parents what our club does for the community.

The end of the story, because we made an effort to tell our story, a former member has agreed to re-join our club and take the President role under my mentorship. You never know. You just have to let people know what they would be missing if our Kiwanis Club wasn't here.





Live to Give MN!

Submitted by Jason Stewart

This summer I will be competing in a 4-day version of the show Survivor hosted by [Live to Give MN!](#) Each contestant represents and fundraises for a local charity. I have chosen [Bridging](#). Division 7 has an annual day of service to build dressers for Bridging! Bridging provides basic household goods for individuals and families exiting homelessness.

We have so many people in our community that are homeless that put in a ton of effort to find employment and be able to afford an apartment/home but then can't afford to outfit their new home. Bridging collects everything from furniture, dishes, small appliances, and artwork and allows their customers to come into their warehouse and "shop" just like you would at a store and pick quality items to furnish their homes.

My wife and I have been involved with Bridging for the past 10 years helping them with their fundraising Gala and volunteering with them. I've had the opportunity to interact not only with their staff, but also many of their clients and have gotten to see

firsthand just how powerful their work is. Bridging allows people to not just have a place to live, but a place to truly call home.

If you're interested in donating to Team Jason and Bridging, you can make your donation [HERE](#). Please note that the amount raised on Jason's personal page will always show as \$0 so that contestants can't see

how much others are raising. All donations will go to Live to Give MN and then will be given to Bridging in a lump sum after the conclusion of the July event.

The 4-day event is recorded and will be aired over several months on YouTube starting in late 2026!

Questions? Reach out to Jason (jstewartcki@gmail.com)